

THE QUIVER:

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XUM

THE QUIVER.

AN AMICABLE ARRANGEMENT.

BY ANNIE S. SWAN.

CHAPTER I.



ON a summer's evening two figures were pacing slowly to and fro a country lane, and too deeply engrossed in conversation to be observant of the beauty of their surroundings. It was an old-fashioned lane, leading from the back grounds of an old-fashioned mansion-house by a circuitous route into the small market-town of Silchester. The month was June, and every hedgerow was white with may, while lilac and laburnum hung in fragrant clusters over the high wall which enclosed the Priory grounds. The meadows were clothed with the waving hay harvest, and every green bank was carpeted with wild flowers. The old house in the lane stood on a slight eminence which commanded a view of the town, over which there hung a haze left by the smoke and heat of the day. Silchester was a small town, but a busy and populous one. Its deep and winding river turned the wheels of more than one factory. Conspicuous among the tall chimney-stacks was one rising from a perfect beehive of works. It pertained to the old-established firm of Vance, Vance and Company. The big house in the lane was the residence of Mr. Joshua Vance, one of the magnates of Silchester. The other Vance was dead, and his widow, while living abroad, still retained a share in the business.

The two figures were pacing up and down the lane very leisurely, the girl with her hand over the young man's arm, just in the old approved fashion. They were lovers, of course, and a handsome, well-matched pair. We may look with interest at the young lady, she being Mr. Vance's only daughter, and the greatest heiress in Silchester. She was a slender, graceful girl, with a fair face and a mass of light golden hair: a pretty girl too, with a certain style and haughtiness about her. Miss Vance of the Priory was a person of no mean importance in Silchester, and she knew it. She could be wholly sweet when she liked, but she could also be cold, reserved, and unamiable when it suited her. Miss Vance was sometimes capricious. She had never had a whim crossed nor a desire unfulfilled in her life—not the best development for the character of any woman. Clara Vance required a softening touch to her nature. She was altogether too imperious and exacting. Even her lover was struck and saddened at times by her selfishness. It was accounted an extraordinary piece of luck in Silchester for young Carew to have won the proud and rich Miss Vance. He was a young and struggling lawyer, with whom cases were none too plentiful. He was of poor extraction too, his father having been nothing but a manager at Vance's. The announcement of their engagement took Silchester by storm. Even had Miss Vance been less proud, there was her father, one of the most unapproachable and ambitious men in the county. How had he ever given his consent? The answer is simple. Mr. Vance idolised his daughter; her slightest whim had ever been his law. Then young Carew had a good appearance and a winning personality. It was impossible to resist him; therefore he became the



"'You *won't* go on with the law-suit, papa?'"—*p.* 8.

affianced of Clara Vance. I am not sure that his position was one for unmixed envy. He was received at the Priory as an accepted lover, but he was always uncomfortably conscious that he was the recipient of a great many favours. Mr. Vance was kind, but

condescending, Clara capricious, exacting, boastful of her charms, her influence, and her fortune. Graham Carew, though gentle and unassuming, keenly felt his position. There were, indeed, times when he almost regretted the step he had taken. It was improbable that he could ever hope to offer Miss Vance a fortune equal to her own, and he felt that these were the only terms on which a man could be thoroughly at his ease and happy at the Priory. There were other times, however, when he forgot these drawbacks, when he felt that he really loved Clara, and knew no shadow on his happiness. It was not on this June night, however. Perhaps the hot weather tried her, but she was particularly cross and out of sorts.

"How stupid you are, Graham!" she said petulantly. "You have not said one agreeable or entertaining thing to-night. I am sick of this lane. Let us go back to the garden."

"You were sick of the garden a minute ago, Clara. You are difficult to please," said Carew, a trifle absently. He was thinking of something else, and she was quick enough to note his listlessness and to resent it.

"You look insufferably bored, Mr. Carew," she said scornfully. "We both are; a pleasant prospect for the future, is it not? Pray, if you are sick of the Priory, don't put yourself to any trouble to come up. I daresay its inmates will survive your absence."

"If you would rather I stayed away, I can do so," returned Carew, rather meekly. He was by nature quiet and gentle, and never argued with his lady-love. To use an out-of-the-way but very expressive phrase, he was very much put upon in consequence. Had he taken a firmer stand, he would have found her much more amenable to reason.

"Are you going in, then?" he asked, holding open the garden gate. She swept through it, and up the narrow path through the shrubbery, with an air of offended dignity. Graham Carew was not a demonstrative lover by any means. The spoiled heiress missed in him much of the homage to which she felt herself entitled. Carew closed the gate and joined her as she emerged on to the wide and beautiful lawn which lay behind the fine old house.

"Do you know what I heard in Silchester to-day, Clara?" he said presently.

"No; how can I possibly know?" she answered coldly.

"I heard that Robert Gay had bought the Gryffe Mills, and that he intends to begin operations at once."

Miss Vance curled her haughty lips in amused scorn.

"Nonsense; the Gays are as poor as church mice—besides, papa would soon put a stop to that. The right to the river has always belonged to the Vances. But for that the Gryffe would have been sold long ago. If Robert Gay has bought it he is a fool, and the representatives of old Slade have woefully taken him in."

"Do you know Robert Gay, Clara?"

"No; the Gays are not in our set," she answered indifferently. "There is a sister, a dowdy thing: a kind of Dorcas or something in the town. Is she paid by any society to look after these low kind of people?"

Graham Carew winced. The tone of the remarks jarred upon him. "No. Miss Gay does a great deal of good, and spends a great deal, I know, only out of the kindness of her heart," he said, a trifle warmly. "Do you not consider her a pretty girl, Clara?"

"I oh, I never saw her. Lady de Lindley was speaking of her to me the other day," returned Miss Vance carelessly. "There is papa; shall we go in?"

"Presently. When are you coming to see my mother, Clara?"

"I don't know. Don't bore me, Graham."

"She often asks. It is natural she should wish to see you sometimes, and she is not able to go out."

"Your house is so poky and dull; but there, don't look so distressed. I'll come some day and pay the old lady a duty visit. Let us go in."

CHAPTER II.

IN Graham Carew's private room at his office in the Market Square, sat that gentleman and his future father-in-law the following afternoon. It was very warm, and the casement was wide for the wall, and the pleasant hum from the street came sounding through the stillness of the drowsy summer air. Market Square was only really noisy on market days, when the farmers stood about in groups beside their corn-sacks, while their wives and daughters shrilly bargained with the towns-folk for the produce of the dairy and the poultry-yard. Mr. Vance was very warm. He was a stout gentleman, with a large red face and a spotless expanse of white waistcoat, across which glittered a heavy watch-chain, adorned by sundry expensive seals and other trifles. Mr. Vance was not a particularly gentlemanly looking man, nor very prepossessing in his appearance. When he was angry he was very formidable. Graham Carew looked as if he were not particularly enjoying the interview.

"Young Gay is an upsetting puppy, and I'll fight him to the last farthing, if need be," fumed Mr. Vance. "Begin operations at the Gryffe, indeed! why, everybody knows it would have been sold long ago if they'd had the shadow of a right to the water. If the young idiot really intends to contest it, he'll find himself ruined; though, as far as that goes, I don't see how he can have anything to lose."

Graham Carew was silent a moment, pondering the thing in his mind. "He certainly intends to question your right to the water just below the bridge, Mr. Vance. Pardon the question, but how did absolute right to the river become yours? Is it only use and wont?"

Mr. Vance's face grew redder at the question.

"Use and wont! it's mine, I tell you, and was my father's before me. The Vance Mills have always had the right to that part of the river."

"Then how came it that the Gryffe was ever built at all? Why did you not prevent it?" asked the lawyer quietly.

"The ground wasn't ours, of course, only the right to the river. The man that built the Gryffe, a Bradford speculator, was ruined by it. He always

talked of making a case of it, of wresting our rights from us, but he never did; I expect no respectable lawyer would take it up for him."

Graham Carew was silent a moment, looking absently out of the window. This case did not commend itself to him. His sympathies were entirely with Robert Gay.

"Is there not enough water in the river to work the other mills, Mr. Vance?"

Mr. Vance frowned.

"That isn't the question, Carew. Do you think I'm going to have that abominable Gryffe going on under the very shadow of *my* mills, taking the very bread out of my mouth?"

Graham Carew could hardly repress a smile.

"I should think there is not much fear of that. If I might presume to advise you, sir, I should say let the thing alone."

Mr. Vance started.

"I don't want your advice, Carew. I want you to do work for which you'll be paid, and handsomely too," he said, in his most offensive manner. "Young Gay has got to be interdicted from working the Gryffe, and if you won't fight the case for me, why, I suppose another will."

"Will you give me until to-morrow to look into this case, Mr. Vance?" asked Carew quietly. "I must tell you plainly that, so far as I understand it just now, I am afraid the successful issue would rest with Mr. Gay."

Mr. Vance rose haughtily to his feet. To say he was disgusted and annoyed scarcely expresses his state of mind. It did not please him that young Carew should have any opinion of his own, especially one opposed to his.

"Very well. You can make me aware of your decision. Don't imagine it is of the slightest consequence to me. I know very well Wynyard would do me more good, but I didn't want to put the job past you," he said stiffly. "But of course you understand that your decision decides also the relations between us. I cannot be expected to give my daughter and heiress to a man who as good as tells me I'm a rascal, for I suppose you mean that. I suppose it's your conscience that won't let you take up a case like mine. Keep your conscience, then, young man, and I'll keep my daughter."

So saying, Mr. Vance bowed stiffly, and strode pompously out of the office. Graham Carew smiled slightly, and then bent over his desk. He was troubled in mind, but he had work to do. Nevertheless, the question remained uppermost, distracting his attention, until he found himself compelled to stop the work he was at. He leaned back in his chair, and tried to think the matter out. He was not quite prepared to give Clara up, and yet of late his heart had whispered to him that that wild infatuation which had resulted in an engagement with her was quite a mistake. There was nothing in common between him and the Vances; at the Priory he was out of his element—even with Clara he felt sometimes as if he were acting a false part. Mr. Vance was a worldly man, if not an unscrupulous one in certain circumstances. Graham Carew was not only sure that his claim to the river would never stand the test of the law, but he felt that selfishness and unrighteous greed were the millowner's motives. Robert Gay was his dear friend, a young man whom everybody in Silchester loved and honoured beyond his fellows. But for Graham to refuse to conduct Mr. Vance's case meant standing in his own light, for that magnate's countenance would be entirely removed from him, and his influence in the town was very considerable. Wynyard the attorney would gladly and thankfully take up the work, Graham knew, because he was not in the least troubled with qualms of conscience. Graham Carew had a high principle; he had resolved that in his professional life he would have nothing to do with any wrong or questionable dealing, and he knew that to fight Mr. Vance's case would be to fight his own conscience. And yet he was a young, struggling, comparatively unknown practitioner; he had much to lose. It was a hard struggle, a difficult question to decide. He rose at length with a quick, troubled sigh, took down his hat, and went out of doors. It was his mother's afternoon tea hour, and he felt that he would like to see her for a moment. The house which Miss Vance had designated as poky and stuffy was a small cottage standing back in an old-fashioned garden at the head of the High Street. It was certainly small, but it was cheerful and homely; there were some in Silchester who thought Mrs. Carew's sitting-room the pleasantest place in the world. She was a widow and an invalid, but one of those bright, sunny natures whom no amount of care or trouble can make gloomy or sad. She was sitting among her flowers in the low window with her tea-table beside her, books and papers on the ottoman, and her work in her frail, fair hands. She looked up with a sweet, bright smile when her son entered. It was not often she had his company to tea.

"Come, my boy, this is an unlooked-for pleasure! Tea is just in. Do let me give you a cup. I don't often have the pleasure."

"If I wasn't uncommonly bothered, mother, I shouldn't be here to-day," he said, as he poured out his mother's tea, and waited on her with all the gentleness and deftness of a woman. She looked anxious and sympathetic, and in a few minutes the whole story of her boy's perplexity was laid before her.

"I don't think you need have much hesitation in deciding, Graham," she said quietly. "If there is a doubt in your mind about it, I think it is decided for you. So far as I can judge, Mr. Vance cannot advance a righteous claim."

"I am sure of that; but there is Clara, and other things, mother. Mr. Vance will not be a pleasant enemy."

"Enemy! why should he be your enemy? How many in Silchester will believe anything bad of you?" asked the fond mother proudly. "And so long as you do not fight on the other side, Mr. Vance cannot have a word to say."

"You do not know him, mother, as I do," he answered, and then, as a light footstep sounded in the garden path, he looked up with a smile. "Why, here is Miss Gay."

"Don't let me frighten you away," said a pleasant young voice in the doorway. "Mrs. Carew, I will make a clean confession. It is not to see you, but to ask a cup of tea, I have come. I am so tired."

"You are welcome, whatever brings you, my dear," was the invalid's hearty response, as the graceful figure in grey stole up to her side. As Graham Carew looked, he could not but be struck by the quiet womanly charm about her. Perhaps she was not pretty, certainly she had neither style nor dignity, but she was a sweet, fresh-faced English girl, about whom there was no nonsense nor affectation. Mary Gay would never shine in society nor create a sensation in a crowd, but at home she was perfect; there was no womanly attribute she did not possess. Graham Carew lingered long over that pleasant tea-drinking, and when he went back to his office, the memory of Mary Gay's sweet face and quiet voice was curiously uppermost in his mind.

CHAPTER III.

NEXT morning Mr. Vance was called away to Manchester on urgent business, which would detain him for a day or two, consequently there was a respite for Graham Carew. He had time to ponder the matter over and over in his mind, but his decision remained unaltered. His mother's words, "If there is a doubt in your mind, I think it is decided for you," had really settled the thing, and he had faced all the possibilities which a breach with the Priory might involve for him. He did not go to see Clara in her father's absence, and that young lady, wondering perhaps what had become of him, took a walk up to Poplar Cottage on the afternoon of the second day of her father's absence. She found Mrs. Carew alone. The old lady looked up a trifle nervously at her entrance, and her colour heightened. Nevertheless, she had a kind smile and a warm welcome for her, though she did not quite understand the visit, and was not sure how matters stood between Graham and the heiress. Miss Vance did not kiss Mrs. Carew, but shook hands cordially enough, and threw herself into a low chair opposite to her, and drew off her gloves, languidly letting them fall to the floor. Then she took off her white-plumed hat, laid it on her knee, and leaned back with an air of weariness.

"Oh dear! it is so insufferably hot!" she said, fanning her face with her lace handkerchief. Mrs. Carew had nothing to say. She did not feel at home or at ease with Miss Vance.

"Did you walk up, my dear?" she asked kindly.

"Oh dear no. Kirby drove me, but I told him not to wait nor come back—that I should walk down in the cool of the evening. Are you feeling any stronger, Mrs. Carew?"

"I? oh no, much the same. There is seldom any change, dear," returned the invalid pleasantly. "The heat and the sunshine are very grateful to me. I grudge the summer passing, Clara."

"Ah, I daresay it must be rather dull here in the winter time," said Miss Vance, glancing rather suggestively round the little room.

Then there was a short silence.

"Is your father well, my dear?" asked Mrs. Carew then.

"Oh, yes, thanks, quite well. He is from home, you know. But I think he will be back to-morrow."

"You will be glad of that. Will you ring the bell, please? and Kitty will show you up-stairs to lay aside your hat, then we can have tea. Shall I send a message to Graham, dear, to tell him you are here?"

"Oh dear no; I have come to see you to-day, and I shall not mind going up-stairs, thank you."

"Well, Graham comes in to dinner at five, so we will just have a cosy cup of tea and a chat before he comes. It is so long since I saw you."

"Yes, I ought to be ashamed; but really, Mrs. Carew, one's engagements are so many. I am going to Scarborough next week to spend a few days with Lady de Lindley. They are at the Hawk's Nest just now."

"Indeed!"

Mrs. Carew spoke quietly, and did not seem at all impressed. Presently Kitty brought in the tea, and they chatted about all sorts of indifferent matters, but neither alluded in the most distant manner to the Gryffe question. The fact, however, that it was uppermost in both their minds, caused a little constraint to creep into their conversation. The time seemed long till five o'clock, but the hour passed and Graham did not come. About half-past five the office boy came down with a message from his master to the effect that he had gone up to Bradford by the five-fifteen train, and would not be down till eight.

"That is a disappointment, my dear, but if you could wait it would not be too late to walk down. Suppose you and I eat Graham's dinner for him?" said Mrs. Carew.

"I don't mind about dinner, thank you. We dine at eight, you know," said Miss Vance. "But as I don't know when I can be back, I shall stay a little longer. Let me do that stitch for you, Mrs. Carew. I like having something in my hands."

She took up the dainty piece of fancy work as she spoke, and began to put in an idle stitch or two.

"Has Graham told you anything about the Gryffe affair?" she asked, after a moment.

"He spoke to me about it," answered Mrs. Carew, and the nervous colour rose a little in her cheek again.

"Don't you think it's absurd of that Robert Gay to think of setting up in opposition to papa? Somebody ought really to give him sound advice. If he goes to law with it, papa and Graham will ruin him."

"I don't know what to say about it, my dear," said Mrs. Carew in a low voice.

"Do you know Robert Gay, Mrs. Carew?"

"Very well. His mother was my dear friend when we were girls. She was a March of March Court, you know, when I was at home at the Rectory at Main March."

Miss Vance elevated her eyebrows. "Indeed! I thought they were quite common people. Lady de Lindley led me to believe so when she spoke of them."

A slight smile touched Mrs. Carew's lips at this speech.

"When Lady Lindley was at Main March, the

Marches did not visit her, my dear," she answered quietly. Miss Vance looked slightly put out.

"What kind of a man is he? I have never seen him, Mrs. Carew."

"I consider Robert Gay a very handsome man. He is very like his mother, and Emily March was a beauty once. But, my dear, I need not enlarge, because here he comes down the street; and, yes! he is coming in here!"

having done no wrong, and his only feeling at the moment was intense and sincere admiration for the lovely woman before him.

"Is Graham not in, Mrs. Carew? I wished particularly to see him," he said, in his easy, pleasant way.

"Graham has gone up to Bradford on business, I think. Johnny came down with that message a little while ago. He will be down at eight-fifteen. Is Mary well to-day?"



"The two were pacing up and down the lane very leisurely."—*p.* 1.

Miss Vance suddenly sat up, and looked very dignified and haughty. She looked lovely, too, in her cool white dress, with her heightened colour, and the golden locks straying a little on her brow. Then Robert Gay entered the room. Mrs. Carew felt very nervous, but she introduced them calmly to each other. As Miss Vance rather distantly acknowledged Robert Gay's salutation, she could not but admit that he was a very handsome man. He was tall, and carried a fine, well-made figure with a manly grace. His face was rather dark in hue, and while the features were strongly marked, the keen, pleasant grey eyes, and the sweet, kind mouth, relieved it from sternness. He did not feel at all embarrassed at meeting with Miss Vance. He was conscious of

"Quite well, thanks.—We are having lovely weather even for August, Miss Vance."

"Yes."

Miss Vance answered briefly enough, and kept her eyes fixed on the work she had again taken up. She felt unspeakably drawn to Robert Gay, but she imagined it behoved her to be very distant in her manner towards him. But he was so very different from what she had expected.

A half-hour passed very pleasantly in the little drawing-room. Robert Gay could talk well on most subjects, and his manner was singularly winning. His manliness and quiet self-possession commended it to Miss Vance; there were times when she had wished Graham Carew less subservient to her will.

She could not help comparing the two. Robert Gay, she felt sure, could love a woman very truly and unselfishly, but he would never step down from his own dignity, nor allow even the woman he loved to make a toy of him.

"I really must go now, Mrs. Carew; it is past seven," she cried, springing up at length.

"So must I. If you are walking home, Miss Vance, and will allow me, I will walk with you. I have a man to see in the Mile End Walk," said Robert Gay in that easy way of his.

Miss Vance did not demur. So Silchester was electrified that evening by the sight of Robert Gay, and Mr. Vance's daughter walking side by side through the town, and looking as if they quite enjoyed it, too.

CHAPTER IV.

"WHERE 's Miss Clara? Tell her I want to speak to her, and be quick about it, girl!"

So said Mr. Vance in his loudest, most peremptory tones, meeting a housemaid in the hall at the Priory as he entered it one afternoon, a day or two later.

"I am here, papa; what is it?"

Clara had heard the angry tones, and appeared at the library door, wondering what had happened to upset her father. He followed her into the room and shut the door. His face was very red, and his eye very terrible; but Miss Vance did not appear at all disconcerned.

The mill-hands dreaded the flashing eye of the master; not so his daughter.

"The man's an ass, a perfect fool, and will die in the workhouse, and serve him right too. I told him so," he fumed angrily, as he took a turn across the room.

"What man, papa?" asked Clara serenely, although she had a good guess as to whom he alluded.

"Carew, of course; who else could I mean? and I'll tell you what—he'll come no more here. You must be done with him, Clara."

"Why?" Still Miss Vance did not seem at all put out. She even smiled.

"Why! because he had the coolness to tell me to my face to-day he thought I hadn't right on my side in that Gryffe affair. His conscience, forsooth, won't allow him to act for me. I told him not to alarm himself, that I could get plenty to serve me without injuring their precious consciences. I've put the thing in Wynyard's hands. And of course I've washed my hands of Carew, and so must you."

"Very well, papa. Shall I write to him to-day, and break our engagement?"

"You can write what you like. *I* broke the engagement, and I must say the fellow took it very coolly. It strikes me *you* never cared a straw about him, either. You should do better, any way. He was never a match for you, Clara," said Mr. Vance, with a return of his pompous way. He was quite pleased with his daughter's behaviour, but it rather surprised him. He had expected opposition, and had been prepared to act the stern parent. Graham Carew had given him a mortal offence.

Clara Vance wrote to Carew that night an exemplary little note, the very coolness of which told how very little her heart was engaged in the matter. The coquette had had her day of Graham Carew, and had grown tired of the chain which bound her. How much that evening walk along the Priory lane with Robert Gay had to do with it I cannot tell.

If Mr. Vance had guessed the current of his daughter's thoughts his surprise could only have equalled his indignation. The following day she went away to Scarborough to visit Lady de Lindley, and when she returned, litigation in the case of Vance *v.* Gay had commenced. Mr. Vance was in his element. He was by nature a trifle aggressive, and dearly loved a law-suit. It was his talk in-doors and out-of-doors; but in spite of Mr. Vance's position, it was astonishing how much public opinion was in favour of Robert Gay. On a certain evening early in September, Miss Vance happened to be in Silchester, and seeing the light in Mrs. Carew's drawing-room window, felt impelled to go to Poplar Cottage. She was feeling strangely out of sorts; her head was filled with a vague mist for which she could not account. She had never seen Graham since before their engagement was broken; perhaps she had a slight curiosity to know how it had affected him. She was shown directly into the room where Mrs. Carew sat, and, at sight of her, strange unwonted tears sprang to the eyes of the heiress. She had no mother, and somehow to-night her heart went out to the sweet invalid who bore her cross with such cheerful patience. She crossed the room, and kneeling down swiftly by the invalid's chair, leaned her head on the arm, and spoke in low, trembling tones. "Dear Mrs. Carew, forgive me coming; I have no right to come, but I felt so miserable I could not pass the door."

"My dear, you are as welcome as ever; why should you not come if you wish?" said Mrs. Carew, with all the old kindliness. Her hand touched the girl's shoulder gently, and Clara lifted grateful eyes to her face. Mrs. Carew thought at that moment that she had never seen a lovelier or more winning face. "How good you are! Oh, Mrs. Carew, I am so vexed about all this law-suit; I think everybody in the town looks coldly on us about it," she said in a low voice. "Will you tell me, please, how Graham is? Was—was he very much vexed?"

"My dear," said Mrs. Carew quietly, "I think you both made a mistake, and that you will be much happier as friends than you would have been as husband and wife."

So Clara learned that Graham had not been seriously cast down by the cancelling of their engagement; but, though her heart was not at all touched, it made her feel very forlorn.

"I am very sorry about this law-suit, Mrs. Carew," she said, after a little pause. "Will you think it very dreadful of me to say I think papa is quite wrong?"

"I cannot think the opinion I hold myself very dreadful, Clara," said Mrs. Carew, with a slight smile. "I am very sorry for the Gays. They cannot afford to lose any money, but Mr. Gay will fight the case now. He thinks it a matter of conscience."

"I should think he could be very determined," said Miss Carew thoughtfully.

"Yes; and yet he is the kindest and gentlest of men. His devotion to his sister is a very touching thing. But she is a sweet girl."

"She goes about among the poor, and that sort of thing, doesn't she?"

"Yes; nobody knows the good Mary Gay does in Silchester, Clara."

"Everybody seems to be of some use in the world but me," said Clara dismally, as she rose to go.

Mrs. Carew looked searchingly for a moment at the girl's beautiful face.

"My dear, have you ever thought what opportunities you have? If you are anxious to do something for the Master, you have not far to seek."

Miss Vance's face flushed.

"I would, if I knew how. I am tired of being so useless. Tell me what I could do, dear Mrs. Carew."

"You have a home influence, my dear; see that you use it lovingly and wisely. Who knows but that a word from you might end the Gryffe dispute?" said the invalid, with a swift, tender smile.

Clara smiled too, and bending down, kissed the pale cheek.

"Good-bye, dear Mrs. Carew, and thank you. Would you ask Graham not to think very hardly of me? I was never good enough for him. Tell him I honour him for being true to his own idea of right and wrong. *You* will be friends with me yet, I hope."

"Always, my dear; and you are welcome here at any time," returned Mrs. Carew warmly.

So they parted.

"There is the making of a good woman there," said the invalid to herself as she heard the outer door close on her visitor.

The moon was up when Miss Vance stepped out into the little garden, and just then a tall shadow fell across the gateway, and she started and blushed hotly, thinking she was face to face with Graham.

"Good-evening, Miss Vance. This is an unexpected pleasure."

It was Robert Gay who spoke, and it was impossible to mistake the satisfaction both face and voice expressed. Clara gave him her hand with a strange shyness, and after a moment's talk, Robert Gay opened the gate again, and they passed out together. Miss Vance did not demur. Her heart beat, and she knew that she felt happier walking the narrow streets with Robert Gay by her than she had ever been in the company of Graham Carew.

CHAPTER V.

"I DON'T know what Silchester will say, Mr. Gay," said Miss Vance, with a smile of amusement on her beautiful face. They had just passed the corner of the busy High Street, and Miss Vance saw the exchanging of glances among the loungers under the lamps.

"It matters very little to me what Silchester says," returned Robert Gay, with an answering smile.

"We ought to be enemies, I suppose," said Miss Vance frankly. "But I feel very friendly to you."

"Thank you." The words were brief, but they were earnestly spoken, and the man's honest eyes were fixed as earnestly on the sweet face by his side. Somehow Robert Gay felt much less interested than he used to be in the issue of the fight between himself and Mr. Vance.

"May I tell you, Mr. Gay, I am dreadfully sorry about that wretched Gryffe affair?" said Miss Vance softly. "Couldn't you settle it up amicably somehow? It is such a stupid thing to go to law at all, and it costs so much money."

"You are right. If I lose the case I shall be ruined," returned Robert Gay gravely.

"Have you ever seen papa?—I mean have you had any talk with him about it?"

"No; I am not personally acquainted with Mr. Vance."

Clara was silent a moment. Judging from her own experience, she felt sure that were her father to meet with Robert Gay, all his animosity would quickly fade away. But how could that be accomplished? A new interest had crept into the life of Clara Vance. Henceforth she had an aim in view—something to plan and work for. She would put an end to this quarrel between her father and Robert Gay.

"How nice Mrs. Carew is, Mr. Gay. Do you not think so?" she asked presently, changing the subject.

"Most certainly I do. She has been a mother to Mary and to me for many years."

"And she would have been to me had I allowed her. Do you know, Mr. Gay, I have been a very selfish, horrid girl all my days!"

Robert Gay smiled at this girlish confession. This sweet woman was not the Miss Vance whom he knew only by repute.

"May I ask you a question, Miss Vance?"

"As many as you like." Somehow these two felt on the footing of old friends.

"Are you engaged to Graham Carew?"

"I was, but I am not now," she returned in a low voice. "We both made a mistake, and we are both glad to be freed."

Robert Gay said nothing, but a deep and earnest satisfaction crept into his eyes. It was a case of love at first sight with Robert Gay. He had already told himself that no woman but this one should become his wife. But how was this to be accomplished? It was as great a problem in its way as the question Clara had asked herself concerning the Gryffe dispute. That walk to the Priory in the cool, dusky autumn night was dangerously sweet to both these young people, and they were sorry when it came to an end. They reached the Priory by the lane, of course; though it was a longer, it was a pleasanter way than along the high road to the lodge gates. They lingered at the old-fashioned gateway in the lane, and were thus standing when Mr. Vance, taking an evening stroll in the grounds, suddenly appeared from out the shadow of the trees.

"Is that you, Clara?"

"Yes, papa."

Clara's voice shook, not with fear, but with laughter. The comical side of the thing struck her,

"Who is this with you?" he asked, peering over the top of the gate.

"Good-evening, Mr. Vance."

Robert Gay gravely lifted his hat, and turned his face fully toward Mr. Vance, who, recognising him, was too much astonished to speak.

"Mr. Gay, papa," said Clara's ringing tone. "He has been good enough to escort me home from Mrs. Carew's. He may come in, I suppose, and chat a little with you?"

"Gay! Robert Gay! come in! Oh, certainly!" said Mr. Vance, rather incoherently, for he was quite taken aback. The effrontery of these young people subdued him altogether. He held open the gate, and when he heard Robert Gay's cheerful, easy tones he did not feel at all certain that there was any law-suit in hand. Clara had taken a daring step, but she did not regret it. In ten minutes her father and Robert Gay were sitting in the library discussing the Gryffe question in all its bearings. This was the opportunity for which Robert Gay had longed, but Mr. Vance had repeatedly refused to see him at the mill. Young Gay spent the evening at the Priory, and when he left it was under agreement to meet Mr. Vance in Wynyard's office next morning.

If his parting word and hand-clasp to Clara were very marked in their earnestness, it need not be very much wondered at. Love is a curious plant, which in sound soil takes sudden and permanent root.



"Her hand touched the girl's shoulder gently."— *p.* 6.

"What do you think of Robert Gay, papa?" asked Clara, seating herself on a stool at her father's feet, and looking up into his face with a most innocent and winning expression.

"Think of him! I think that you and Robert Gay, between you, are going to make an ass of me," said Mr. Vance grimly.

Clara laughed.

"And you *won't* go on with the law-suit, papa?" she said coaxingly. "Though the Gryffe were working

to-morrow, papa, it would make no difference to us. And they are very poor. If he lost the case, he would be ruined; he told me so to-night."

"H'm, it seems to matter a good deal to you whether he is ruined or not. Have you thrown over Carew to take up with this penniless young fellow? I won't consent to it, Clara; though, I must admit, that of the two I should prefer Gay. He has plenty of courage and independence. You wouldn't pull him along in leading-strings, my lady."

Clara's face crimsoned, and she quickly changed the subject.

Next morning the interview took place in Wynyard's office, with the result that all proceedings in the law-suit were arrested. It was explained to the authorities that the parties had come to an amicable arrangement. Within the year the whole matter was made clear, when the owner of the Gryffe was married to Mr. Vance's heiress on the same day that witnessed the union of Graham Carew and Mary Gay. Of course a man could not very well continue a law-suit against his intended son-in-law, Silchester said; and those interested were all glad that the Gryffe dispute had ended in such an amicable arrangement.

"THE SEVEN LEAVES OF THE VINE."

THOUGHTS UPON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF OUR LORD UPON THE CROSS.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM ALEXANDER, D.D., D.C.L., LORD BISHOP OF DERRY AND RAPHOE.

I.—THE WORD OF HUMAN SUFFERING (St. John xix. 28):

"I THIRST."

[This word is the *fifth* in order; I have found it more convenient to begin with it. The meditations upon the other six words will not always follow in historical sequence.]

ALL who have been sick themselves, or who have been called upon to watch over the sick, know how much the least selfish patient is necessarily absorbed by self and by suffering. This in every case is, of course, a proof of human weakness. The great poet represents the Roman nerving himself for the assassination of Cæsar by calling to mind Cæsar's fever in Spain, when "the tongue that bade the Romans mark him" cried "as a sick girl, Give me some drink, Titinius!"*

In some cases sickness is accompanied by that peculiar irritation of the weak so well known as peevishness. The Scotch master of romance, in a once famous passage,† describes one who had borne in society for years the reputation of being a stately and courteous gentleman as screaming out reproaches against his gentle niece and her attendant because he himself had broken a tea-cup upon a table which was placed a little too far from him. God forbid that we should forget the marvellous power of sanctifying grace in sustaining the sick children of God. But when one reads anecdotes of the superhuman patience of the sick, one is sometimes tempted to think that the doctor and the nurse might have something more to say if they could be cited as witnesses.

Among the last words of Jesus bodily pain claims one only—the fifth in order, "I thirst!"‡ Let us consider what this word teaches of our Lord's manhood, of the history of His Passion, and of His character.

1. This fifth word teaches the reality of His bodily pain.

One school of modern spirituality seems to consider it a point of honour to depart from the general feeling of Christians in relation to this. He who knew no sin could not know sickness. But, as no sorrow was like His sorrow, so Christian feeling, the heart of Christendom, has held, not as an article of faith, but as an instinctive sentiment, that no suffering was like His suffering. And Scripture seems to fall in with this conception. One of the primary points of St. Paul's witness was, "how that the Christ is subject to suffering."*

It does not appear to be true reverence to minimise any part of Christ's sufferings. It has become fashionable to argue that the crucified thieves upon Calvary suffered more than the Redeemer. But the lower mental and moral organisation, even when the bodily system is stronger, suffers *less*, not *more*, than that which is more delicate and refined. The Chinese robber or rebel, dying of slow starvation, has been known to laugh and jeer day after day through the bars of his iron cage at the fierce mob which yelled at him. The exquisitely delicate and sensitive nature of our Lord's humanity may be included in the Psalmist's words as they are taken up by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews—"When He cometh into the world, He saith, A body hast Thou prepared for Me."†

After the agony in the garden; after the successive tribunals to which He had been dragged, from Annas to Caiaphas, from Caiaphas to Pilate, from Pilate to

* Cassius, in *Julius Cæsar*, Act i. sc. 2.

† "Chronicles of the Canongate." Chapter the First.—"Mr. Croftangry's Account of Himself."

‡ διψῶ.

* Acts xxvi. 23, R.V. marg. The word is a most remarkable one, παθητός, *passible:* one who has suffered or is subject to suffering.

† Psalm xl. 6; Heb. x. 8.

Herod, from Herod back again to Pilate; after the mockery by the Jews, by the Roman soldiers, by Herod and his men-of-war; after the scourging by the tremendous Roman lash, stiffened with bone or steel; after the pressure of the crown of acanthus thorn; after the cramps which came with the terrible tension and rigidity of the position so long continued; after the parting with human love, and the dereliction continued through the sultry darkness for three long hours; after the slow exhaustion from the ebbing away of the drops of blood upon the dust of Golgotha, the raging thirst of crucifixion set in. The Saviour does not dwell upon His sufferings. From those white lips there drops just one word, summing up in itself all the physical suffering which He endured, "I thirst!"

Let us here note that there are two opposite extremes to be avoided by the Church, in teaching of the physical anguish which accompanied the crucifixion of Jesus.

1. The first is that of which travellers tell us in foreign countries.

A procession in the south of Spain, was described by one who witnessed it on a Good Friday some twenty years ago. It was a hard, cold night in March. The lights carried by the multitude showed wan against the sinking sun and the steel-blue sky. The figure of the Christ was carried in the dim square, nailed to the cross, scarcely lit by the flaring torches. But it could be seen that thin streams of real blood ran down over the livid face and white form.* Or we may turn to a widely circulated biography, that of the eloquent Dominican Father Burke. One Friday morning the novice found his preceptor, in the grey light of dawn, in a terrible intensity of prayer, as if half-dead, at the foot of a crucifix, the bare white wall splashed with blood from a whip which lay by his side. It becomes us to speak low and lovingly, in days when martyrdom is looked upon as a form of obstinacy, and self-sacrifice as a form of monomania; yet we may wish that someone could have come in and tenderly whispered to the devotee—"Who, *His own self*, bare our sins in *His own body* on the tree, by whose stripes" (the original words point to a blue, livid weal) "ye were healed."†

This form of sensationalism is like many others. This materialism may obscure the very sacrifice which it pictures or dramatises.

2. But much of the thought and feeling round us is at the opposite extreme.

Old expositors of St. John's writings tell us much of the Doketic heretics of the Apostle's time. Taking their start from the essential evil of matter, they denied the reality of our Lord's body, of the flesh of Christ. The Christ set forth by St. John is not one who left no footprints upon the earth; who did not really eat and drink; who had a spectre nailed to the cross in His stead; who melted away like mist in the illusive pageant of an ascension. He is one who came in the reality of flesh, in the likeness of sinful flesh. As He is not a common-place Christ, so He is not a shadowy Christ.

Much supercilious criticism on hymns which speak of the blood of Jesus is almost Doketic in essence.

The blood of Christ implies three realities—the reality of His manhood, of His suffering, of His sacrifice. It is dogma made pictorial, passionate, pathetic. This objection to all loving, adoring mention of the "blood of Jesus" is out of touch with St. Paul, who speaks of Christ having "made peace through the blood of His cross"; out of touch with St. Peter, to whom we owe the tender expression, "the precious blood"; out of touch with St. John, who announces that "the blood of Jesus keeps cleansing from all sin"; out of touch with the redeemed, who sing "Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood."*

II.

THIS fifth word from the Cross teaches us further that we are contemplating a momentous point in the history of the Passion.

"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now *finished*, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, "I thirst." The brightness is beginning; the victory is already commenced in His soul. We may profitably note here the unity of the character of Christ as presented to us by St. Luke in the record of the Temptation with that which is given here by St. John. "In those days He did eat nothing; and when they were ended He afterwards hungered."† First, in both cases, comes the spiritual struggle, afterwards, in both cases, the conflict with the bodily need. A comparison has been drawn by a great Protestant German writer‡ between our Lord and some hero who, through all the dust and heat of battle, either does not feel, or does not give expression to, his exhaustion. But when the smoke begins to drift away from the lines, and the long roll of artillery is exchanged for dropping shots, he passes into his tent and calls for drink. Let it be noted that the verb (rendered *accomplished* § by the A.V. in the twenty-eighth verse) is the same as that translated "it is finished," the sixth of the last words preserved in the thirtieth verse. The text should be rendered by the same English equivalent in both places, as in the R.V. The two taken together indicate that the victory recognised as begun in thought in the first passage has been won, and is expressed verbally in the second.

Nor shall we fail to note the attestation which is given to the sacredness of the Old Testament—"Jesus,

* Forde's "Untrodden Spain."

† οὗ τῷ μώλωπι αὐτοῦ· (1 Peter ii. 24.)

* Coloss. i. 14—20; 1 St. Peter i. 19; 1 St. John i. 7; Rev. v. 9.

† St. Luke iv. 2; St. John xix. 28.

‡ Lange, "Life of Christ," vol. iv.

§ τετέλεσται, ver. 28.

that the scripture might be fulfilled." The *that* * does not denote conscious determination. It is the same word which we find four verses above. "The soldiers said among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it whose it shall be; *that* † the scripture might be fulfilled." The meaning cannot be that the soldiers acted with a *deliberate purpose* of ensuring the accomplishment of Scripture; but with the *result* of its being fulfilled.‡ In a history of such transcendent significance in the spiritual world, nothing is mean, nothing fortuitous. The Roman guard of four for an execution was turned out with the usual precision of that faultless military machine. There was the vessel of vinegar (*posca*) for the cheap refreshment of men in a hot country. There was the sponge for cleansing the accoutrements which might be splashed with blood, and the hyssop stalk. If those splendid soldiers had been told that these details of drill and parade were part of a Divine chapter in the history of the world, they would have laughed with the rude laughter of the barrack-yard. Yet, according to St. John, these things must be, and to *thirst* was part of the martyr-image of Messiah in the mirror of the Psalms.§

III.

BUT the word from the cross is also a revelation of the *character* of the Sufferer.

1. How truly human He is!

There are three draughts on the cross mentioned. The first is the proffered opiate, refused because He meets death without respite or alleviation. The second is the mock wassail-cup, the caricature of the imperial coronation wine. The third is that on which we meditate.‖ Jesus complies with the claims of the body —with the duty of seeking refreshment when resistlessly needed. The Stoic sheathes himself in marble. The Indian brave has been known to refuse his enemies the satisfaction of asking for a little water, when he has been fastened to the stake, ringed round with fire, and his lips black with agony. The Fakir hangs silent on his dreadful hook. Such is the difference between "free self-sacrifice and crazy suicide."

In our Lord, then, as this word proves, there is no affected superiority to bodily pain or bodily need; He is truly human.

2. But there is something more in it.

What must have been the temptation for a lofty nature at that supreme moment? His friends, John and the three Maries, were no longer near. None but enemies are within hearing. "He will not condescend to appeal to them"—so pride might surmise. No! Peace is being made by the blood of His cross; the work of atonement is all but over; the breath of reconciliation blows upon Him as He hangs there. "I thirst!" is the hint and signal of forgiving love.

In man's nature, as it is, there are two elements, a *fact* and a *possibility*. The *fact* of man's nature is, that it is fallen. Of this fact Jesus had a terrible knowledge. How could it be otherwise with Him who knew both *man* and *men:* both man in the abstract, and the individual men who came across His path?* How could it be otherwise with Him who, starting from the lowest and most abject fatalities of man's physical being,† threw that ray of light upon the other abysmal cloaca of an unrenewed human soul?‡ But Jesus also recognised another and loftier element. That ear, which was so keenly sensitive to all the discords of sin, was at the same time the first which ever heard the one chord which was yet capable of keeping time and tune in the harlot's passionate heart. That insight which saw, as never moralist or physiologist of the platform, how in all sensual sin the impulse waxes as the pleasure wanes, saw also that man's nature was capable of an expulsive pleasure of a loftier kind, which might yet win for him the victory. Jesus had a deathless belief in the possibility of man's recovery, in the existence within him of the germs of an undying life. With that belief He inspired His Church. All evangelical believers hold that there is a real Fall, that we are not "born good," that we are "very far gone from original righteousness." Yet the believing Church speaks her sweet invitation wherever there are men—to the thief, the harlot, the savage. As she reads history, she says, "I am human, and nothing human is alien from me." Christians believe in virtue. Contrast with religious historians of the Church that great master of epigrams whom the course of his vast subject brought into contact with the origin of Christianity. They can recognise the dignity of truth and goodness wherever it is to be found. He may talk of the dignity of human nature, but his spirit is like that of Vivien when she reveals her nature to Merlin. If any man renounces the world, it is, according to Gibbon, because it has become evident that he would not succeed in it. For him the virgin is not so pure, nor the saint so holy; the martyr is not very disinterested, and the doctor is not very learned. He looks along the line of men whose forms rise from the mist of ages. He spurts his vitriol into every eye that is lifted heavenward. He plunges the stiletto of his epigram into every heart which beats for God.

The Master of the Church believed in the recovery of man; and, therefore, in the existence of something recoverable within him. He came to make men more human, to give humanity to man. He appealed to His executioners as men; He gave them credit for the

* ἵνα. † Ver. 24.
‡ In the language of criticism—*ἵνα ecbatic*, not *telic*.
§ Psalm xxii. 15; lxix. 21.
‖ 1 St. Matt. xxvii. 34; St. Luke xxiii. 36; St. John xix. 29.

* "He knew all men. He knew what was in man." (St. John ii. 24—28.)
† St. Mark vii. 18, 19. ‡ St. Mark vii. 21—23.

possession of humanity. "I thirst!" He said, as though He would remind them—"These hands are nailed; I cannot use them; cannot raise a cup, if I had one, to My lips. I know that there is humanity among you. I thirst!"

It is often overlooked that this word was not without effect. The great cry, just as the dereliction was passing away at three o'clock, was misunderstood by some of the bystanders. "Behold! He calleth Elias." Then St. Mark, in his vivid way, paints the effect produced upon one of the soldiers. "And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink, saying, 'Let alone: let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.'"* It may well be that there is something of mockery here, at least of an affected mockery. Such is often the cover for growing conviction in its first stages. But we feel that there is genuine pity and sympathy underlying the act. Pity was abroad. The pathos of such a death for such a man was widely felt. "All the people that came together to that sight"—we have the touch from the soft pencil of St. Luke—"beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned."† Pity is nearly always contagious. There was pity in the movement of those who "filled a sponge with vinegar and put it round a hyssop stalk, and lifted it to His mouth."‡

But if there was pity, there was something more than pity at work. The darkness had awed them. That patience such as never saint, that delicacy such as never virgin, that courage such as never soldier, that dignity such as never king had displayed, was not altogether unnoticed or unfelt. In the "Eli" cry there was a tremendous reality of prayer. Even to the Roman legionaries, in a country such as Palestine then was, something was known of Elijah. They, very probably, when they were told that "He calleth Elias," thought of the spectral form of the prophet of retribution, who came of old for vengeance, with the sweep of fire and the rush of rain. "Let alone: let us see whether Elijah cometh to take Him down." They half expected to see him come through the dust-cloud of the earthquake just passing away, and they cover their terror by an affectation of wit. There is room for so many contradictions in a human heart. The soldiers despise the crucified Galilean. Perhaps. But they pass the cooling sponge over the parched lips—therefore, they pity. What they say is frivolous. Possibly; for they jest. But it is tremendous; because, as we listen to the hearts that beat behind those abrupt, broken words, we feel that they tremble.§

St. John's words, if they are to be literally pressed, would lead us to suppose that more than one took part in that act of pity. They were the first-fruits of the appeal in the fifth word from the cross. Its result has been the finer feeling, the readier sympathy, the instinctive tenderness, of Christian men and women. "We first knew that we were women when we came to know Christ," was the exclamation of a group of Chinese women to a devoted missionary. Men first knew manhood when they knew Christ. Here was the pledge and beginning of it: the first tiny ripple of that great springtide of sympathetic helpfulness and charity which is breaking upon every shore. The first sweet movement of philanthropy thus comes from the lips of Jesus.

Is this to be rolled back by the morality of a new philosophy? The realm of evolution broadens with a vengeance. From the animal and vegetable world, from the worlds of space, it takes in, in its ever-widening circle, the world of feeling and of duty, the world of society. The suppression of the unadapted and the unfit is the cynical secret of social evolution. We build hospitals, asylums, infirmaries, refuges for children; our weakness is rebuked by the wholesome yet awful cynicism of Nature—which excretes suffering and sickly specimens of humanity.

Nay, as long as Christ crucified is worshipped, as long as His words are the charter of Christendom, the sick and suffering will be cared for and ministered to. It may be thought too severe to say that not only alcoholic excess, but luxury, much kitchen-talk, and the like, are rebuked by the poor drink of our dying Lord. But, at the lowest, Christians feel that luxury is to be ransomed by paying a large price for it. Christ is seen in His poor. He gives us a key to the interpretation of the fifth word from the cross—"I was sick, and ye visited Me; whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."* The sweet appeal of Jesus rolls round the whispering-gallery of the Church. "I thirst!" says Christ. The feverish, the consumptive, the cancerous, the little children with poor hot fingers and bereaved faces, say so too. And He takes it up again from their lips, and repeats it in their pathetic voices. In all His words there are heights and depths which are not for us. So of this word one said of old—"*Sitit sitiri Deus*," "our God thirsteth to be thirsted after." But it *is* for us to hear Christ in hearing His afflicted ones. And each gift, given in this spirit, is like raising the sponge to pass it over those pale and dying lips.

* St. Mark xv. 38.
† St. Luke xxiii. 48.
‡ St. John xix. 29.
§ St. Mark xv. 36.
* St. Matt. xxv. 35—37; x. 42.

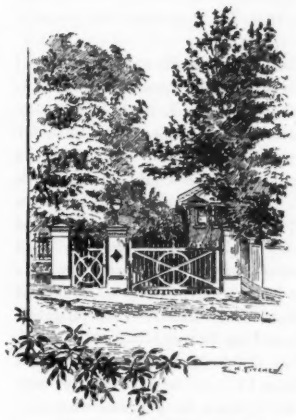
FIRMNESS OF FAITH.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.



MR. SPURGEON'S STUDY.



ENTRANCE GATES TO MR. SPURGEON'S HOUSE.

"IT'S a great thing to learn to trust in God. At first it is wonderfully like walking on a tight-rope, but afterwards it is the simplest thing."

So said Mr. Spurgeon, in the course of a conversation with the present writer, one dull summer evening not long since. But, be it understood, there was nothing in the slightest degree irreverent in the illustration. The tone of the voice, and the manner, absolutely forbade it. And it struck us that this was an instance of one source of Mr. Spurgeon's great power—viz., his remarkable faculty of apt, homely, and forcible illustration. The thought he wishes to convey is sent swift and straight to the understandings of his hearers by some remarkable yet easily comprehended metaphor, and the idea can be grasped at once.

For instance, if the mind dwells for a moment on the illustration we have just mentioned, its aptness will be seen, and can be apprehended by even the meanest intelligence. The difficulty of learning to walk on a rope, or even of doing so when one has learned, is at once apparent; the feeling of the insecure hold, and the dangers of slipping and sliding, are perceived at once. And it will be a help and a consolation to many a tried and weary heart to know that such a Christian as Mr. Spurgeon fully admits the difficulties which they may find in the life of faith.

But he does not believe that faith is to sit still and do nothing. He is eminently practical, and his idea of faith seems to be to do as much as you can yourself first, and then leave the rest to God. A story will illustrate this.

One morning, a few years ago, he was presiding

at a meeting of the trustees of the Orphanage which he founded, and it was announced that there was only sufficient money in the bank to pay the bills then due.

"Well," said he, "we 're cleared out. We must go to the great Chancellor of the Exchequer; but before we pray, I want to know what you are going to give. I will give £25."

Each of the trustees present gave the same amount, and as there were five in addition to Mr. Spurgeon, £150 was raised at once. Then he prayed. It was a short and simple prayer, asking plainly for what was wanted.

That day was Friday. On the Sunday following he saw the trustees, and they came to him and said—

"Well, sir, did you get the money?"

In his answer he was able to say that £850 came in that very Friday, and almost as much for other institutions.

A remarkable incident had occurred on that same Friday. A gentleman came to the College, and asked Mr. Spurgeon if he was in need of money.

"Always in need of money here, sir," was the brisk reply. Then he mentioned the College, for which the stranger gave £100; and then the Colportage Society, for which he gave another £100.

"Ah! but," he said, "there is something for which you have greater need than these."

Then the Orphanage was mentioned, and for it the stranger gave a large sum.

"But," he said, "you must sit in your chair for five minutes after I am gone; you must not try to find out who I am. I promised God to do this some years ago, and I have never done it till now; and now my conscience is relieved."

From that day to this Mr. Spurgeon never knew who his visitor was: but such cases of donations coming in to supply the needs of his institutions, he assures us, occur whenever there is need for them.

Now he is endeavouring to collect enough money for an endowment when he is gone, for it is a fact that very much of the money is sent to him personally.

As for the numerous philanthropic agencies in connection with his work, for which the money can be used, their name is legion. There is the well-known Stockwell Orphanage, which we venture to think is Mr. Spurgeon's pet institution, and which, since it was founded in 1867, has sheltered and fed and trained some thousands of orphans, about five hundred being now always in residence. This institution has no regular subscribers, because, if so, the managers would be obliged to give them votes; but no fewer than seven thousand orphans have applied for admission to it in a single year, though perhaps only fifty can be taken. Then there is the Pastors' College, which has always some eighty young men in training for the Baptist ministry; there are the Almshouses for sixteen poor women; there is the Colportage Association, which sends out about eighty men to distribute and sell tracts, religious and pure literature; there is the Evangelistic Association, the agents of which conduct missions in various districts, both in London and the Home Counties; and all these, in addition to the work at the Tabernacle itself, with its congregation averaging some six thousand people, its immense Sunday-schools, Band of Hope, Temperance Society, Loan Tract Societies, Mothers' Meetings, Benevolent Societies, Flower Missions, etc., and three large separate missions in the south and south-west of London—viz., Haddon Hall Mission, Bermondsey; the Richmond Street Mission and Ragged School, Walworth; and the Ebury Mission. All these agencies and institutions have their own managers, but Mr. Spurgeon presides over, and in a sense rules them all.

Of the history of the Metropolitan Tabernacle it is hardly necessary to speak. It was opened in 1861, and cost about £31,000. It has been Mr. Spurgeon's only chapel save one—the little square reed-thatched building at Waterbeach, in Cambridgeshire, of which he still keeps a picture. He was but a boy of sixteen or seventeen when he was minister there, and some two years later he was invited to the pastorate of New Park Street Baptist Chapel, Southwark. Speedily he became one of the most famous preachers in the metropolis, and the New Park Street Chapel blossomed out into the large Metropolitan Tabernacle, on a new site—not very far, however, from the old one.

Mr. Spurgeon comes of Puritan ancestry, for one of his kinsmen, Job Spurgeon, was imprisoned in Colchester gaol for conscience' sake in 1611. Both his father and grandfather were Independent ministers in the county of Essex; and it was in Kelvedon, in the same county, that Mr. Spurgeon was born in 1834.

Ten years later, the celebrated Rev. Richard Knill was visiting the house of Mr. Spurgeon's grandfather, to preach on behalf of the London Missionary Society, and the little lad was there. The minister took great interest in the boy, and said he felt a "solemn presentiment" that he would "preach the Gospel to thousands." So sure was he, that he made the lad promise that when he preached in Rowland Hill's Chapel he would give out the hymn "God moves in a mysterious way." The prophecy was fulfilled to the very letter. Mr. Spurgeon preached and gave out that hymn both in Mr. Hill's pulpit at Wotton-under-Edge and in Surrey Chapel.

He was at school at Colchester, and then he filled two situations as tutor in schools. The latter was at Cambridge, and while there he became connected with St. Andrew's Street Baptist Chapel, which had a Lay Preachers' Association. Mr. Spurgeon became one of its members. His first sermon was preached when he was about sixteen, and he was dressed in a round jacket and broad collar! When seventeen he was pastor at Waterbeach; and then,

after preaching at the New Park Street Chapel in Southwark, was invited to the pastorate there. For some time he lived in Nightingale Lane, Clapham, but his health beginning to fail, and feeling the imperative need of fresher air, he moved further out into the suburbs.

His residence is delightfully situated on one of the hills at Upper Norwood, to the south-east of London. It may be described as a spur or continuation of the hill on which the Crystal Palace stands, from which building it is situated about a mile. From the house and grounds can be obtained superb and extensive views over the weald and hills of beautiful Surrey—from Wimbledon, with a peep at Windsor on the right, round to Kent on the left. The strong sou'-wester has free course here, and sweeps straight from the sea over the pleasant country. When it is strong, it brings the salt spray with it; and Mr. Spurgeon assures us that the salt is driven on to his study windows, and he has tasted it from them himself.

It is the fresh air that Mr. Spurgeon needs, and he rejoices in it here to his heart's content. "Fresh air is more than medicine to me," said he. And he can sit in his study, with the glass door open to the grounds, or make his way to a summer-house near, or, if the weather be bad, he can retire to a conservatory.

The house stands in its own grounds, which are both beautiful and extensive. It is approached from the main road leading to Streatham Common by a carriage-drive, which is so flanked and shaded between trees and shrubs as to form almost a continuous avenue right up to the house.

Between the fencing and trees on the right we catch glimpses of the beautiful garden and grounds, and presently of the commencement of a sheet of water, which winds away below the slope of the hill on which the house is built.

The portico, beautified with greenery, is at the foot of a tower which rises above the house-roof. The front door will probably be found open, if the weather be favourable, and a light but strong wire-trellis "door" closed instead. This is, no doubt, to permit free ingress to plenty of fresh air, while affording an effectual barrier to any "stranger" who may have found his way in past the lodge at the entrance-gates. The same trellis-door is to be found in the study, opening on to the lawn.

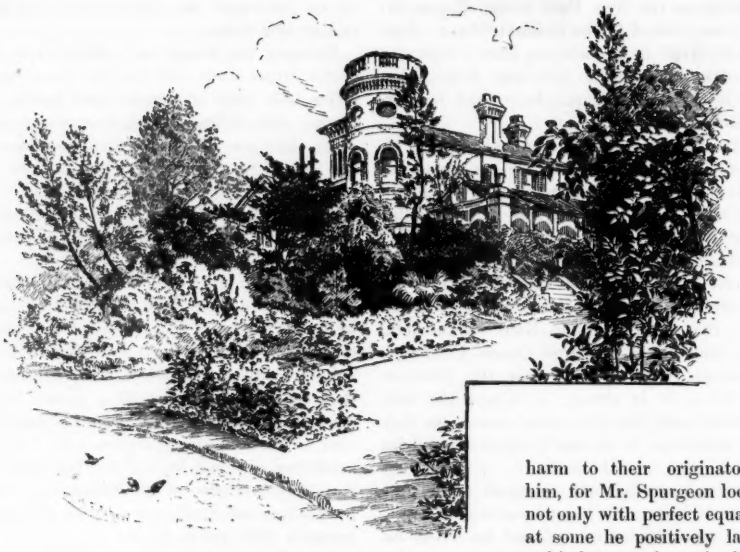
The hill slopes downward on two sides of the house, and is clothed with beautiful trees. Down below are the kitchen-garden and lawns, on one of which the students of the College sometimes disport themselves at bowls. In the kitchen-garden is the well of medicinal water known as the Beulah Spa, from which Mr. Spurgeon permits his neighbours at the hydropathic establishment to draw. It is curious to think of the great preacher of the Metropolitan Tabernacle as the proprietor of a Spa; but such is the fact. We are inclined to think, however, that he holds a far higher opinion of the exquisite fresh air on the top of the hill than of the unpleasant-tasting Spa-water.

Entering the house, and ushered into Mr. Spurgeon's larger study—for he has two—we find ourselves in a noble apartment, and having the whole of one side, facing the south-west, of glass. The other sides are filled with shelves of books, except the spaces for the doors. One of these sides, the largest, is covered with commentaries. We question if anyone has a larger collection, for Mr. Spurgeon believes he has a copy of almost every commentary published.

He has compiled a book upon commentaries; and this he regards as the most useful work for ministers he has produced. The names of the commentaries criticised are printed in three different kinds of type—bold, medium, and comparatively insignificant—so that the reader can see at a glance the principal opinion expressed. The remarks made are witty also, so that, as Mr. Spurgeon says, "It is the only catalogue with wit in it;" for the book is, in fact, a critical catalogue of commentaries. Some of the booksellers use it also as a work of reference, and regulate their prices by it.

This fine apartment was the billiard-room of the former owner, and the gas is kept in the same position as then, for it illuminates the long, large table beneath, at the head of which Mr. Spurgeon sits, with two gentlemen, who act as his secretaries, on either side. Close to his hand is a movable electric bell, by which, when alone, or when suffering from his old enemy, rheumatic gout, he can summon his servant without rising from his chair.

The windows give access to the beautiful lawn and rosary bounded with trees; while over their wavy, tremulous tops lovely glimpses are seen of the fair land of Surrey, with its hills in the blue distance. Not far from the window the ground slopes down to the lake and the fields, which are also included in Mr. Spurgeon's grounds. Quite near is a summer-house, to which he is fond of betaking himself. There are three conservatories also in direct communication with his study, and to these he often retires; he is able to come hither when, by reason of unfavourable weather or feebleness of health—for, as is generally known, he has suffered much of late years from rheumatic gout—he could not go into the garden. The pleasant-looking chairs in the first one suggest a cosy chat with a friend; and another is festooned with grapes. Between the conservatories and his study is an inner study, or *sanctum sanctorum*, also with its walls covered with books; and while the larger and outer one is used more for what may be called the transaction of business connected with the Tabernacle and its various institutions, the other is reserved for Mr. Spurgeon's private use alone. On one of the shelves here is a series of volumes containing extracts from newspapers, etc., referring to him, all carefully indexed. In one of these is that precious copy of one of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons which was found in



MR. SPURGEON'S HOUSE.

Dr. Livingstone's box, in Africa, after the great missionary explorer's death. It was brought to his daughter, who, thinking Mr. Spurgeon the most suitable possessor, sent it to him. The paper is brown with age and travel and climate, but on the top of the front page can still be seen the words, "Very good.—D.L.," in faint pencil.

There are many more books in the large room—half drawing-room, half library—on the other side of the hall. The whole of one large wall is covered with them. They are of a more general character than those in the two studies, which are mostly of the nature of "tools" for the preacher's work; but these are historical and biographical, and also comprise several works on natural history. Of this latter class of reading Mr. Spurgeon is very fond. He has a set of old Herbals, and has read them all, finding many quaint and curious illustrations in them. The windows of the large drawing-room-library look into a very fine fernery, some of the plants being very large, and the whole graceful in arrangement and appearance. In this room, too, are kept two huge volumes, containing copies of numerous caricatures, photographs, and pictures of Mr. Spurgeon—commencing with a large-sized portrait, representing him as a young and ardent preacher, which was published many years ago, together with a picture of Lord Palmerston, under the title of "The Two Prime Ministers." Another portrait is an outline—and a very good one—sketched before the audience by Zoë, Mr. Maskelyne's clever automaton at the Egyptian Hall. Others are not so flattering—some positively unkind; but we fancy they will do more harm to their originators than to him, for Mr. Spurgeon looks at them not only with perfect equanimity, but at some he positively laughs. The unkindness or the satire hurts him as little as water does a duck's back. In one he was represented as sliding down the baluster of the pulpit stairs, because, it was said, he did that to show how people became backsliders. "At the time that this story was first circulated," he said, "my pulpit was built upon the wall, and had no stairs!"

In another large volume Mr. Spurgeon keeps the illuminated addresses, etc., which he received on the occasion of his jubilee. One of these—very beautifully designed and coloured—was from former students of the College who were then in Australia. In his dining-room are other jubilee gifts—some fine bronzes, and also very fine impressions of engravings of several of Doré's pictures. Mr. Spurgeon knew the great French artist, and thinks highly of him and his work. Near by is Mrs. Spurgeon's own room, where she conducts much of the work of her Book Fund, which has now sent books to about 13,000 ministers. Mrs. Spurgeon is an invalid, and is kept much indoors. Her room looks on the lawn, but faces the north-west, and from its windows, through an opening cut in the trees, she can obtain a beautiful view right across the country to Windsor.

Though the Tabernacle has its deacons, and the Orphanage and other institutions have their officers and managers, yet much of the work is done by Mr. Spurgeon, and at his house. Numerous sums of money, for instance, are constantly sent him for use in the various institutions. These remittances have to be acknowledged, and then either sent on to the banking account of the particular institution for which it was sent, or if—as often happens—money is given to be used at his discretion, he divides it and forwards it to the weakest. Many people also write

about getting children into the Orphanage. This is not the slightest use, as each case is considered on its merits by the committee. Then there is the preparation involved in the sermons at the Tabernacle, the week-night services, and the usually weekly address to the students at the College, in addition to the editing and writing of his well-known magazine *The Sword and the Trowel*, his numerous books, and the presidentship of all the various agencies and societies and institutions connected with the Tabernacle. Still, he admits his business is rendered as light as possible by his numerous helpers. "They say," he added, "'You sit in the centre, like Wellington on his horse, and direct the battle,' and they do save me all they can."

Nevertheless, there is a large amount of business of various kinds that goes through Mr. Spurgeon's hands, and he accomplishes it, he said, by keeping on "always at it, using up every scrap of time, and using other people as much as possible." How, then, about the preparation of his numerous sermons and addresses? Concerning this matter, he said—



THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.
(From a Photograph published by Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster.)

"I am always preparing my sermons—reading and thinking; but the specific preparation I always begin at six o'clock on Saturday evening."

The great difficulty is to find a text! This may seem strange until it is remembered that for years Mr. Spurgeon's Sunday morning's sermon has been published. There are now thirty-three volumes of these sermons, and they are ranged on a shelf in the cases not far from Mr. Spurgeon's chair. His study-Bible is a fairly large octavo volume, and in it every text from which he has ever preached is marked, and sometimes a note or two beside it. Unless, then, he strikes out a new vein of thought, it will not do to take a text previously preached from—at all events, for Sunday morning. But having fixed upon a text, the next step is to see what the commentaries say about it; and then a few notes or an outline are made, for which a half-sheet of paper is quite sufficient.

Several interesting incidents have occurred in connection with his preaching. A man came up to London on his way to Australia. He thought he would please his mother by spending his last Sunday evening in the Old Country by "going to hear Spurgeon." The sermon had such an effect upon him that he wrote home, "I believe I am changed." The next Wednesday he, with some others, was knocked off the deck of the ship by an accident, and drowned; and that last letter he had written was the comfort and relief of the family in their dire distress.

Another time Mr. Spurgeon returned a considerable amount to a firm from whom it had been unjustly taken in the course of business. The defaulter had been touched by one of the pastor's sermons, and he sent the money to Mr. Spurgeon, asking him to convey it to the person named, but the sender gave no name.

On another occasion a mother wrote to him, saying that her son was going to China, and that she would bring him to the Tabernacle—could Mr. Spurgeon preach a sermon to touch him? Not long after the Sunday when Mr. Spurgeon responded to that appeal, no fewer than three young men communicated with him, each feeling that the sermon was addressed to them; and each, curiously enough, going to the "Flowery Land."

But such instances as these are frequently happening in Mr. Spurgeon's experience. They illustrate the power and effect of his pulpit appeals, and they serve to show the extent and variety of the large audience which, Sunday after Sunday, gathers within the walls of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. For all through his career, no matter in what other work he has been engaged, he has been a preacher first and foremost.

"'T IS A GREAT MISTAKE TO GROW OLD."

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.



I WAS travelling a little time ago by train, and there being a thorough draught, I asked my fellow-passenger who sat next me, and was nearest the window, if he had any objection to its being closed. He very politely shut it up at once, and at the same time remarked that it was "a great mistake to grow old."

Now, having been some time out of knickerbockers, in fact, so far as my memory concerning 'knickers' serves me, having been born before they were known, I might have taken this observation to myself; and if I had been crusty on the subject of Anno Domini, I might have thought he had spoiled his action of courtesy by his uncourteous words; but there was something in his voice which made me look at him, there was a melancholy in it which there could not have been if his observation had applied only to me. It wanted that raspishness, that tartness, which generally flavours any little acid-drop which we give our neighbours to suck, hoping that they will like it; and 'that it may agree with them!' though we don't go in for any from the same canister ourselves.

My fellow-traveller had so slight a figure, and indeed looked so juvenile all over, that I might have been well pardoned if I had thought him a young man taking the shine out of an old one.

But when he turned towards me, I saw that he was an old man, far, far on in life; and now I understood his tone of voice. What he said in reference to himself—the tone of sadness in it—was not for me; though, from his kindly way, and alas! from his explanation of what he said, I daresay he meant to include me—aye, everyone advancing in life with himself.

"Oh, no!" said I, "for there is something better beyond," and though I cannot recall exactly now the words I used, I spoke of better youth, and the future beyond all present age.

"It is a good thing," said he, "for those who can believe it—but I do not; I am an Agnostic," and that, our readers know, means a man who says he knows nothing and believes nothing about anything which cannot be proved, or which is not apparent to the senses themselves. He could not say that there is a God, or that there is not; that there is a future, or that there is not; that there is a resurrection, or that there is not. All is blank before him.

There was something very touching in the tone in which he spoke; there was congratulation thorough and real for me, in that I could believe such things—sorrow, commiseration for himself, that he had no faith—that once he had, but now he had not. And having nothing in the future, all that remained for him was to live amid the perishings of the present; youth with all youth's pleasures gone, the bounding step, the beating heart, the firm muscle, the well-strung nerve, the pleasures of the eye and ear, the witchery of love, the fantasies of imagination, the flashings of enthusiasm, the vistas of hope—all gone, gone with time. They were the perquisites of youth, and youth had passed, and old age had come, and it had nothing in it; and oh, it was a cheerless thing to become old; it was a great mistake to grow old. My fellow-passenger got out with many others, and as I saw him depart amid the crowd, my own heart was sad. Who was he? where was he going? Perhaps to a cheerless home, a desolated hearth. It may be that wife and child were gone; it may be that infirmity, and disease, and decay, were all that life had left; anyhow, age had brought nothing to him, but the ashes of burnt-out life.

I had plenty to think of during the remainder of my short journey. I thought of what he said. I wonder if he thought of what I said!

"It is a mistake to grow old." Even if we had the power of living on, continually growing, would that be best for us?

With age, looked at simply as such, no doubt come fadings and perishings and regrets, and little to replace the past; with it comes the sense of the unsatisfying, which is either a tongue to prophesy to us of the future, or a tooth to gnaw us as regards the past.

The Christian would not remain for ever young, even if he could. When he grows old he sees what was inseparable from youth. He must not claim a model youth—a perfect youth; he must take it as it is, with all its conditions, and disqualifications, and mistakes. He must not say, "I would wish to live always young, but with my present wisdom." Youth must be taken with *all* that goes with it, and that surely is not what he would wish to be his for ever.

He sees that it is a good ordering that he should not be always young; that age is a preliminary, an unveiling of the false, that there may be an entering eternally on the true.

Had sin never come into the world, old age as we know it now would have doubtless never been; but an everlasting youth for such as we, and in a condition such as ours, would be a terrible lot indeed.

There is no mistake on God's part in allowing us to grow old, if we make old age what He will have it to be—a mellowing time; a ripening time; a time of the stilling of all earthly passions; a time of retrospect of the way by which we have been led, when we see in Heaven's forecasting light—aye, and in Heaven's hinder-casting light too—what we had not seen when "no small tempest lay upon us;" that "goodness and mercy had followed us all the days of our life"—this may be old age's voice for the past; and its word for the future is as bright: "I shall dwell in the House of the Lord for ever."

The hopelessness, the helplessness, the vacuity of

an Agnostic old age are terrible to think of; its starless, sunless heaven a leaden, illimitable grey; life a past with nothing in it, and a present realising that emptiness. Rowland Hill, himself a very old man, says that he heard of one who was asked what age he was. He answered, "The right side of eighty." "I thought you were more than eighty," said the inquirer. "Yes, I am beyond it," he replied; "and that is the right side, for I am nearer to my eternal rest."

A man once said to Dr. Rees, "You are whitening fast." The Doctor answered him in a sermon which he preached immediately after: "There is a wee white flower which comes up through the earth at this season of the year. Sometimes it comes up through the snow and frost; but we are all glad to see the snowdrop, because it proclaims that the winter is over, and that the summer is at hand. A friend reminded me last night that I was whitening fast. But heed not that, brother; it is to me a proof that my winter will soon be over—that I shall have done presently with the cold east winds and the frosts of earth, and that my summer—my eternal summer—is at hand."

To a humble Christian it was remarked, "I fear you are near another world."—"Fear it, sir!" he replied, "I know I am; but, blessed be the Lord, I do not fear it—I hope it."

The Apostle Paul was an old man, but, happily for him, he was no Agnostic, and so he could say, "I *know* in Whom I have believed, and that He will keep that which I have committed to Him until that day; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

But for old age to be happy it must be a time of acceptance. Old age fought against is miserable; old age accepted is calm and peaceful. Enamelled wrinkles dare not smile; the honest wrinkles may even laugh. To be living in a mistake is to be living in a false position, and in all false positions there is weakness, and discomfort, and misery.

The way to be happy in your old age is to consider that you are not in a false position, but in a right one—in the one which God has ordained for you, and therefore in the one which contains blessings for you—ITS blessings, its own peculiar blessings. Where you meet with disappointment, is in expecting from it what does not belong to it, and what would not be blessing even if it did.

There are flowers on the bank on which you must sit, while the sunlit stream comes merrily along, or the turbid and flooded waters rush tumultuously by. Many a one has seen them as God-given, and blessed the One with whom "a thousand years is as one day," believing that he was in His hands, and that in them it was not

A MISTAKE TO GROW OLD.

"TO THE LIONS!"

A TALE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS. BY THE REV. PROFESSOR CHURCH, M.A.

CHAPTER I.—AN ACCUSATION.

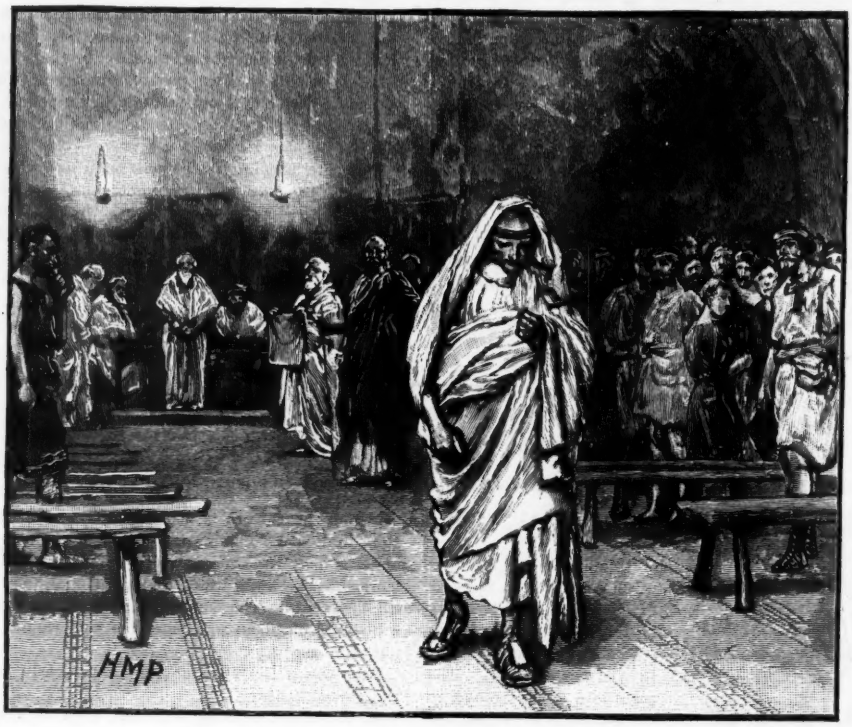
THE time is the early morning of an April day in the year of Our Lord 112. So early is it that the dawn has scarcely yet begun to show in the eastern sky. The place is a burial-ground in the outskirts of Nicæa, one of the chief towns of the Roman province of Bithynia. We must imagine an oblong building, about sixty feet in length and forty in breadth. The roof is arched, and, at the highest point, perhaps twenty feet from the ground. The further end from the door is semicircular, like what is called an apse in church architecture. There are four windows in each of the side walls; these, however, are not glazed, but furnished with wooden blinds, which can be opened or shut as the weather serves. The building is commonly lighted with lamps, six of which hang from the roof. It has little ornament about it; the floor is tessellated, but the work is rough; the little cubes of which the pattern is made are of baked clay, not stone or marble, which are more expensive materials; and the patterns themselves are rude and carelessly worked. The walls are of rough stone, plastered and colour-washed. The semicircular end only is hung, to a distance of about six feet from the ground, with purple curtains.

Such was a Christian church in the early part of the second century.

It must not be supposed that even this simple building had been erected for its own use by the Christian community. Even if it could have found the means to do so, it would not have ventured so to attract public attention. For the Christian faith was not one of the religions which were sanctioned by the State; and it existed only by sufferance, or rather, we might even say, by stealth.

This meeting-house of the Christians of Nicæa was really the club-house of the wool-combers of that city. The wool-combers' guild or company had for some time been declining. The trade had, for some reason, passed to other places. Old members had died, and few or no new members had been admitted. Much of its property had been lost by the dishonesty of a treasurer. Finally, the few surviving members had been glad to let the building to persons who were acting for the Christian community. No questions were asked as to the purpose

for which it was to be used; but, as two or three out of the half-dozen of surviving wool-combers were Christians, it was well understood what this purpose was. It would have been, by the way, more exact to say "a burial club." This was the object for which it had been founded. Its social meetings had been funeral feasts; hence its situation in the near neighbourhood of a cemetery. This made it particularly suitable for meetings of the Christians. Assemblies held before dawn—for this was the custom, and close garments so coarse as almost to look like mats. Among the few worshippers of superior station was an aged man, who wore a dress then rarely seen, the Roman toga. The narrow purple stripe with which it was edged, and the gold ring which he wore on the forefinger of his left hand, showed that he was a knight. His order included, as is well known, the chief capitalists of Rome, and, among other speculations, was accustomed to farm the taxes. Titus Antistius—this was the old man's name—had been the



"He hurried, with his head bent downwards, to the door."—*p.* 25.

to a burial-ground—would be little likely to be observed.

The congregation may have numbered one hundred persons, of whom at least two-thirds were men. There was a division between the sexes—that is to say, the men occupied all the seats (benches of the plainest kind) on one side of the building, and the front half of these on the other. It was easy to see that, with a very few exceptions, they were of humble rank. Many, indeed, were slaves. These wore frocks reaching down to the knees, cut square at the neck, and, for the convenience of leaving the working arm free, having one sleeve only. These frocks were made of coarse black or brown serge, trimmed at the bottom with sheepskin. Two or three were sailors, clad in

agent for this purpose in Bithynia, but he had for some time retired from the occupation. His age, his blameless character, and the wealth which he dispensed with a liberal hand, helped, together with his rank, to make him the principal character in the Christian community of Nicæa. He sat on a cushioned chair, but the privilege had been conceded to him quite as much on account of his age and infirmity as of his social position.

The only other member of the congregation whom it is necessary to mention was an elderly man who sat immediately behind Antistius. His dress, of plain but good material, showed that he belonged to the middle class. His name was Caius Verus.

The semicircular end of the building was reserved

for the clergy, of whom three were present. They wore the usual dress of the free citizen of the time, a sleeved tunic, with a cape over the shoulders that reached to the waist. The only thing that distinguished them from the congregation was that their dress was wholly white. One of the three was an old man; his two colleagues were middle-aged. The three sat facing the people, with a plain table used for the Holy Supper in front of them. On either side of the apse, as we may call it, on the line which divided it from the main body of the building, were two reading desks. On each a volume was laid. One of these volumes contained the Old Testament, in the Greek version of the Septuagint, the other the New.

The minister left his seat behind the Table and advanced to address the people. It was evident that his agitation was great; indeed, it was some time before he could command his voice sufficiently to speak.

"Brothers and sisters," he said, "I have a grave and lamentable matter to lay before you. Serious charges have been brought against our brother Verus—for brother I will yet call him. It has been alleged against him that he has gambled, and that he has sacrificed to idols. Caius Verus," he went on, "answer as one who stands in the presence of God and His angels. Do you know the house of the merchant Sosicles?"

Verus stood up in his place. Whatever he may have felt about the truth of the charges and the likelihood of their being proved, he did not lose his confident air. He had stood not once or twice only in his life in positions of greater peril than this, and he would not allow himself to be terrified now.

"I know it," said the accused, "as far as a man may know a house which he enters only for purposes of business. I have had dealings with Sosicles on account of the Church, as the brethren know. He is a heathen, but a man of substance and credit; and the moneys of the Church have increased in his hand."

"It is true," said the minister; "and I have often wished that it could be otherwise. But the holy Apostle Paul tells us that if we would have no dealings with such men, we must needs go out of the world. But you affirm that you have not companied with him as with a friend?"

"I affirm it."

"Cleon, come forth!" said the minister to a young man who was sitting on one of the back benches.

Cleon was a slave from the highlands of Phrygia—not a Greek, but with the tinge of Greek manners, which had reached by this time to all but the most inaccessible parts of Lesser Asia. He was a new-comer. Verus scanned his face narrowly, but apparently without any result.

"Tell your story," said the minister; "and speak without any fear of man."

Cleon went on in somewhat broken Greek. "It is a month since I came into the possession of the merchant Sosicles. He bought me of the heir of the widow Areté of Smyrna. She had provided in her will that I should be free; but her heir disputed it, and the Proconsul gave judgment against me." The poor lad choked down a sob as he said this, and a thrill of sympathy ran through his audience. "Sosicles knew that I was a Christian, and took two hundred drachmæ* from the price for that reason. I heard him say that Christians had scruples and were obstinate. I worked chiefly in the garden; but about a week since I had to take the place of Lycus, the cup-bearer. The master had flogged him so severely for stealing a flagon of Chian wine that he could not stand. When I came into the dining-chamber the dishes had been removed. I mixed the first bowl, and set it on the table before Sosicles. I filled the cups out of it. Sosicles poured out a libation.† 'To Apollo and Aphrodite,' he said. I filled the other cups. There were eight guests in all. They all said the same words, excepting Verus, who lay on the host's right hand. I observed that he drank without speaking. When I saw this, I thought to myself that he must be a Christian; and then I remembered that I had seen him here. The drinking went on. I filled the cups many times. Towards the end of the first watch,‡ Sosicles, who by this time was, as I should judge, half-tipsy, poured out a libation to Hermes. He said to Verus: 'This toast you shall not refuse. For Apollo and his harp you care not; no, nor for Aphrodite with her girdle of love; but Hermes, with his money-bags, is your true god.' Verus laughed, and said nothing. Then Sosicles grew angry. I had heard that he was apt to be quarrelsome in his cups. 'By Hercules,' he said, 'you shall drink it! I will have no dealings with atheists. Drink it, or we close our accounts.' Verus tried to put him off; but it was of no use—Sosicles only grew the more furious. At last I heard Verus mutter the words. About the middle of the second watch I came in again. Some of the guests had gone away; others were asleep. My master and Verus were playing at dice. Each had a pile of money before him. I watched them for a time, and it seemed to me that my master scarcely knew what he was doing. About half an hour afterwards Verus went home. I noticed that he had a bag of money with him. It seemed heavy. He was quite sober."

Self-possessed as he was, the accused could not quite hide the dismay with which he listened to this narrative. He had not noticed the new cup-bearer at Sosicles' entertainment. He had often heard his host say that he would have no Christian slaves: they were troublesome, and made difficulties about doing what they were told. Accordingly, he had made sure that he was safe. He would gladly have escaped saying the idolatrous words. His Christian belief, without being sincere, was yet strong enough to make him shrink from committing so manifest an offence against it. Of love for Christ he had nothing; but he certainly feared Him a great deal more than he feared Hermes. Still, when he came to balance his scruples against the present loss of breaking with his host,

* Two hundred drachmæ would be a little more than £8. Cleon—as a slave without any special accomplishments, but of good character, and young—might fetch about £100.

† A few drops were poured out of the cup, before the drinker tasted it, in honour of some god.

‡ This would be some time between eight and nine. The second watch began at nine.

they were found the lighter of the two. So he had come to speak the words; but he had followed them up with a sentence muttered under his breath: "Who, for all that, is a false demon." With this he had salved his conscience, which by this time had come to heal of its wounds with a dangerous ease.

He now rapidly reviewed his position, and thought that he saw a way of escape. He spoke with an appearance of moderation and candour that did credit to his power of acting.

"I have a fault to confess, but it is not the grievous sin of which Cleon accuses me. It is true that I was at Sosicles' banquet. I repent me of having concealed this from the brethren. But it is not true that I spoke the blasphemous words. What I said was a colourable imitation of them, intended to appease the unreasonable rage of a tipsy man. Who knows what trouble might have arisen—not to me only, but to the whole community—if I had angered him? As for the dice-playing, I played, indeed, but I played to humour him. I so contrived it that he won back the greater part of what he had lost. If I gained anything, I gave the whole of it to the poor. As for the bag of money which Cleon saw me carry away, it was given to me in payment of an account. These things I confess, because I would not hide anything from my brethren, and desire to make any amends that they may judge to be fitting. Yet there is something that I would urge. Does not the holy Apostle command that an accusation be not believed against an elder except from two or three witnesses? If I am not an elder, yet the Church has put me in a place of trust. Were I standing on my trial before the unbeliever, would he condemn me on the testimony of a single slave?"

"Take heed what you say," interrupted the minister. "In this house there is neither bond nor free."

"It is so," said Verus. "I spoke after the fashion of the world. But who is this young man? Is he not a stranger, known to you only by a letter which he brought from the elders of Smyrna? Can you condemn me for aught beyond that which I have myself willingly owned on his single testimony?"

He looked round on the congregation as he spoke, and saw that his appeal had not been without its effect. It was true that, as the minister had said, all in that house were equal; but the difference between slave and free man was too deeply ingrained into human nature in those days to be easily forgotten. And no one felt it more than the slaves themselves. It was they who would have been most shocked to see a respectable merchant found guilty on the single evidence of one of their own class. A murmur of approval ran round the congregation; and when the minister put the question, though some did not vote either way, the general voice was for acquittal.

Before the minister could speak, the old knight rose in his place.

CHAPTER II.—AN OLD STORY.

VERUS bent on the old man the same closely scrutinising look with which he had regarded the slave. Again he failed, it seemed, to connect the face with any recollections in his mind. There was, as we shall see, a dark past in his life which he was most unwilling to have dragged into the light. But he had no reason to associate Antistius with it, and nothing more than a vague sense of distrust haunted him, but he felt that if the old man had anything to say against him, he could be a far more formidable witness than the young Phrygian slave.

"You have been in Rome?" said the knight to Verus.

"Yes," he answered; "but not for some years past."

"Nor I," went on the old man; "nor do I want ever to see it again. She is the mother of harlots, drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus! But when I left it last, seventeen years ago, I carried away with me a memorial of a deed that I shall never forget, nor you either, if there is anything human in you."

The speaker produced from the folds of his toga a small packet wrapped in a cover of silk. Unwrapping it with reverent care, he brought out a handkerchief stained nearly all over of a dull brownish red.

"Know you this?" he said to Verus.

"Why do you ask me? What have I to do with it?" answered the man, with a certain insolence in his tone. The majority in his favour made him confident.

"Yet you should know it, for it is blood that was shed by your hands, though the blow was dealt by the axes of Cæsar. If seventeen years are enough to make you forget the martyr Flavius, yet there are those who remember him."

It is impossible to describe the effect which these words produced. In those days of peril, next to his love for his God and Saviour, the strongest emotion in a Christian's heart was his reverence for the martyrs. They were the champions who had fought and fallen for his faith, for all that he held dearest and most precious. He could not, he thought, reverence too much their patience and their courage. Were these not the virtues which he might at any hour be himself called upon to exercise?

This reverence had, of course, its meaner counterpart in a base and cowardly nature such as was Verus'. The man had not belief enough to make him honest and pure; but he had enough to give him many moments of agonising fear. It was such a fear that overpowered him now. Any wrongdoer might tremble when thus confronted with the visible, palpable relic of a crime which he believed to be unknown or forgotten. But this was no ordinary wickedness. The betrayer of a martyr was looked upon with a horror equal to the reverence which attached itself to his victim.

Nor was it only the scorn and hatred of his fellowmen that he had to dread. There were awful stories on men's lips of informers and traitors who had been overtaken by a vengeance more terrible than any that human hands could inflict; and these crowded upon the wretched creature's recollection. His face could not have shown a more overpowering fear had the pit itself opened before him. The staring eyes, the forehead and cheeks turned to a ghastly paleness and dabbled with the cold drops of sweat, proved a terror that in itself was almost punishment enough.

But the criminal was almost forgotten in the thrill of admiring awe that went through the whole assembly. With one impulse men and women surged up to the place where the old knight was standing with the venerable relic in his hand. To see it close, if it might be to press their lips to it, was the one desire. The old man was nearly swept off his feet by the rush. The minister stepped forward, and took him within the sanctuary at the end of the meeting-house. The habit of reverence kept the people from pressing beyond the line which separated it from the body of the building, and they were partially satisfied when the handkerchief was held up for their gaze.

When silence and quiet had been restored, Antistius told his story.

"I went to Rome in the last year of Domitian's reign. It was at the season of the holiday of Saturn, which, as some of you may know, the heathen in Italy keep in the month of December. But it was no holiday time in Rome. The Emperor was mad with suspicious rage, and no man's life was safe for an hour; and the higher the place, the greater the danger. Yet there was one whom, though he was near to the throne, everyone thought to be safe. This was Flavius Clemens. He was the Emperor's cousin: his sons were the next heirs to the throne. He was the gentlest, the least ambitious of men. It is true that he was a Christian, and the Emperor's rage at that time burned more fiercely against the Christians than against anyone else; but the Emperor knew it, had known it for years, and had made him Consul in spite of it.

"When I reached Rome, he was near the end of his year of office. I dined with him on the Ides of December, for he was an old friend, and he told me—for we were alone—how he looked forward to being rid of his honours. 'Only eighteen days more,' he said, 'and I shall be free!' Ah! he spoke the truth, but he little thought how the freedom was to come. He told me, I remember, what an anxious time his Consulship had been. The Consul, you see, has to see many things, and even do many things, which a Christian would gladly avoid. To sit at the theatre, to look on at the horrid butchery of the games, to be present at the public sacrifices, these are things which a man can hardly do without sin.

"'But,' he said, 'my good cousin the Emperor has considered me. Happily he has been my colleague, and he has taken a hundred duties off my hands, which would have been a grievous burden on me.' And then he went on to tell me of some troubles which had arisen in the Church. A certain Verus had had the charge of the pensions paid to the widows, and of other funds devoted to the service of the poor, and he had embezzled a large part of them. 'You see,' he went on, 'we are helpless. We cannot appeal to the courts, as we have no standing before them; in fact, our witnesses would not dare to come forward. For a man to own himself a Christian would be certain death; and though one is ready for death if it comes, we must not go to meet it. So, whether we will or no, we must deal gently with this Verus.' And he did deal gently with him. Of course he had to be dismissed; but he was not even asked to repay what he had taken—Flavius positively paid the whole of the deficiency out of his own pocket. And he spoke in the kindest way, I know, to the wretch, hoped that it would be a lesson to him, begged him to be an honest man in future, and even offered to lend him money to start in business with.

"And yet the fellow laid an information against him with the Emperor! It would not have been enough to charge him with being a Christian; he was accused of witchcraft, and of laying plots against the Emperor's life. He used to mention Domitian's name in his prayers, for he was his kinsman as well as his emperor, and they got some wretched slave to swear that he heard him mutter incantations and curses. And Domitian, who was mad with fear—as he well might be, considering all the innocent blood that he had shed—believed it.

"I shall never forget what I saw in the senate-house that day. It was the last day of the year,* and Flavius was to resign his office. There sat Domitian with that dreadful face, a face of the colour of blood, with such a savage scowl as I never saw before or since. Flavius took the oath that he had done the duties of his office with good faith, and then came down from his chair of office.

"In the common course of things the senate would have been adjourned at once. But that day the Emperor stood up. What a shudder ran through the assembly! Everyone saw that the tale of victims for that year was not yet told. The question was, whose name was to be added. Domitian called on Regulus, a wretch who had grown grey in the trade of the informer. He rose in his place. 'I accuse Flavius Clemens, ex-Consul, of treason,' he said. Why should I weary you, my brethren, with the wretched tale? To name a man in those days was to condemn him. I have heard it said by men who have crossed the deserts of the South that if a beast drops sick or weary on the road, in a moment the vultures are seen flocking to it from every quarter of the sky. Before, not one could be seen; but scarce is the dying beast stretched on the sand, but the air is black with their wings. So it was then. One day a man might seem not to have an enemy; let him be accused, and on the morrow they might be numbered by scores.

"Flavius, as I have said, was the gentlest, kindest, most blameless of men. But had he been the worst criminal in Rome, witnesses could not have been found more easily to testify against him. They brought in that wretched slave with his story of muttered incantations.

"You will say, perhaps, 'But he could not bear witness against his master!' Ah! my friends, they had a device to meet that difficulty. They sold him first, and, mark you, without his master's consent, to the State. Then he could give evidence, and the law not be broken. Then this villain Verus came forward. He told the same story, and with this addition, that he had been bribed to keep the secret, and he brought out the letter in which Flavius had offered him the money, as I have told you. Kind as ever, the Consul had written thus: 'We will bury this matter in

* Suetonius says, "Domitian put him to death all but in his consulship."

silence. Meanwhile, you shall not want means for your future support. Flaccus the banker shall pay you 100,000 sesterces [about £1,000].'

"Then senator after senator rose and repeated something that they had heard him say, or had heard said of him—for no evidence was refused in that court. At last one Opimius stood up. 'Lord Cæsar,' he said, 'and Conscript Fathers, of the chief of the crimes of Flavius no mention has been made. I accuse him of the detestable superstition of the Christians.'

"'Answer for yourself,' said the Emperor, turning to the accused.

"He stood up. Commonly, I was told, he was a faltering speaker, but that day his words came clear and without hindrance. We know, my brethren, Who was speaking by his lips. He spoke briefly and disdainfully of the other charges, utterly breaking down the evidence, as any other court on earth but that would have held. Then he went on, 'But as to what Opimius has called "the detestable superstition of the Christians," I confess it, affirming at the same time that this same superstition has made me more loyal to all duties, public or private, of a citizen of Rome. I appeal to Cæsar, who hath known me from my boyhood, as one kinsman knows another, and who, being aware of my belief, conferred upon me this dignity of the Consulship, which is next only to his own majesty. I appeal to Cæsar whether this be not so.'

"He turned to Domitian as he spoke. That unchanging flush upon the tyrant's face fortified him, as I have heard it said, against shame. But he kept his eyes fixed upon the ground, and for a while he was silent. Then he said, 'I leave the case of Flavius Clemens to the judgment of the fathers.'

"You will ask, 'Did no one rise to speak for him?' I did see one half-rise from his seat. They told me afterwards that it was one Cornelius Tacitus, a famous writer, but his friends that were sitting by caught his gown and dragged him back, and he was silent. And indeed, speech would have served no purpose but to involve him in the ruin of the accused.

"Then the Emperor spoke again, 'We postpone this matter till to-morrow.' Then turning to the lictors—

"'Lictors,' he said, 'conduct Flavius Clemens to his home. See that you have him ready to produce when he shall be required of you.'

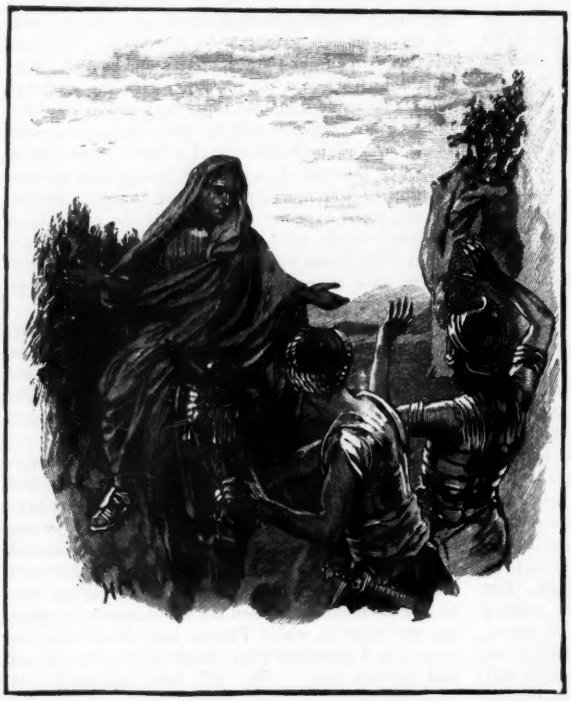
"This, you will understand, was what was counted mercy in those days. A man not condemned was allowed the opportunity of putting an end to his own life. That saved his property for his family. In the evening I went to Flavius's house. He was surrounded by kinsfolk and friends. With one voice they were urging him to kill himself. Even his wife—she was not a Christian, you should know—joined her entreaties to theirs. Perhaps she thought of the money, and it was hard to choose beggary instead of wealth; certainly she thought of the disgrace. Were she and her children to be the widow and orphans of a criminal, or an ex-consul?

"He never wavered for an instant. 'When my Lord offers me the crown of martyrdom,' he said, 'shall I put it from me? That was his one answer; and though before he had been always yielding, and weak of will, he did not flinch a hair's-breadth from this purpose.

"That night, I was told, he slept as calmly as a child. The next day he was taken again to the Senate, and condemned. But I heard that at least half of the senators had the grace to absent themselves. One favour the Emperor granted to him, as a kinsman: he might choose the manner and place of his death. He chose death by beheading, and the third milestone on the road to Ostia. It was then and there that the holy Apostle Paul had suffered; and Paul, whom he had heard in his youth, was his father in the faith. I saw him die; and, besides his memory, that handkerchief, stained with his blood, is all that remains to me of him."

"What answer you to these charges?" said the minister to Verus.

He said nothing; and his silence itself was a confession.



"He turned to fly."—*p. 26.*

Still, it would have ill become the Church to act in haste. Antistius was asked to give proofs of the identity of the Verus who was present that day with the Verus who had brought about the death of Clemens. The old man told how his suspicions had been first aroused; how a number of circumstances, trifling in themselves, had turned this suspicion into certainty. And he then indicated, though only in outline, his discoveries—that Verus had been following again the same dishonest practices that had brought him into disgrace at Rome. He promised that he would bring the evidence in detail before the Church at some future time.

The accused was still silent.

Then the minister addressed him:—"Verus, you have heard what has been witnessed against you. We do not repent that you were acquitted of the first charges. Be they true or no—and what we have since heard inclines us to believe them—they were not rightly proved. God forbid that the Church should be less scrupulous of justice than the tribunals of the unbeliever; but to the accusations of Antistius you yourself oppose no denial. Therefore hear the sentence of the Church.

"I have thought whether, after the example of the holy Apostle Paul, I should deliver you over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. I do not doubt either of my power or of your guilt; yet I shrink from such severity. Therefore I simply sever you from the Communion of the Church. Repent of your sin, for God gives you, in His mercy, a place for repentance. Make restitution for aught in which you have wronged your brethren, or them that are without. And now depart!"

The congregation left a wide space, as if to avoid even the chance of touching the garment of the guilty man, as he hurried with his head bent downwards to the door.

When he had gone, the minister addressed the congregation.

"Brothers and sisters," he said, "I cannot doubt but that we shall be soon called to resist unto blood. There are signs that grow plainer every day, that the rulers of this world are gathering themselves together against Christ and His Church. It was but yesterday that I received certain news of that of which we had before heard rumours, to wit, that the holy Ignatius of Antioch suffered at Rome, being thrown to the wild beasts by command of the Emperor. But the fury that begins at Rome spreads ever into the provinces, and it cannot be hoped that we shall escape. We have this day made an enemy, for assuredly Caius Verus will not forget the disgrace that he has suffered, but will betray us, even as Judas betrayed his Lord. Therefore it becomes us to be ready. Provoke not the danger, lest your pride go before a fall. Many a time have they that were over-bold and presumptuous failed in the time of peril, and so have sinned against their own souls and done dishonour to the name of Christ. So far, therefore, as lieth in you, study to be quiet; and assuredly, when the time of need shall come, you will not be the less bold to confess Him who died for you. More I will say, if the Lord permit, when the occasion comes. Should it seem dangerous to meet in this place, I will summon those with whom I would speak to my own home."

Some words of advice about smaller matters



"The lovers were married on the day after his baptism."—*p.* 27.

connected with the management of the Church affairs followed this address. He then pronounced the blessing, and the congregation dispersed.

CHAPTER III.—A CHRISTIAN HOUSEHOLD.

WE will follow one party of worshippers to their own home, a farmhouse lying about a mile further from the city than the chapel which has been just described. This party consists of four persons, a husband and wife, and two daughters.

The head of this little family is a man who may perhaps count seventy summers. But though seventy years commonly mean much more in the East than they do in our more temperate climate, he shows few signs of age, beyond the white hair, itself long and abundant, which may be seen under his broad-brimmed hat. His tread is firm, his figure erect, his cheek ruddy with health, his eyes full of fire; yet he had seen much service, of one kind or another, during these threescore years and ten. Bion, for that was the veteran's name, was a Syrian by birth. He had followed Antiochus, son of the tributary king who ruled part of Northern Syria under the Romans, to the siege of Jerusalem. A more hot-headed, hare-brained pair than the young prince and his favourite *aide-de-camp* could not have been found. They laughed to scorn the caution of the Romans in attacking the great city by regular approaches. "We will show you the way in," said the prince to the centurion who showed him the works.

Of course this effort failed. If success had been possible in this way the Romans would have achieved it long before. Scarcely a third of the Syrian contingent came back alive from the forlorn hope to which they had been led. Bion was one of the survivors, but he was desperately wounded, and had not recovered in time to take part in the final assault. He did not lose, indeed, either pay or promotion. Before he was five-and-twenty he was commander-in-chief of the army which the Syrian king was permitted to maintain.

This was a sufficiently dignified post, and his pay, coming as it did from what was notoriously the best furnished treasury in Asia, was ample. He might have been satisfied, if he had been content to be a show soldier. But he was not content; and unfortunately, now that the turbulent Jews had been quieted, it seemed, for good, there appeared no chance of being anything else. His restless spirit led him into intrigues with the Parthians: a compromising letter fell into the hands of the Roman governor, and he had barely time to escape across the Euphrates. The Parthians, with whom he now took service, gave him fighting enough with the wild tribes who were perpetually trespassing over their northern and eastern borders.

Again his reckless valour brought him promotion; and his promotion brought him enemies. An arrow which certainly could not have come from any but his own men, missed him only by a hair's-breadth; two nights afterwards, the cords of his tent were cut, and he narrowly escaped the dagger which was driven several times through the canvas before he could extricate himself from the ruins; and it was nothing but a vague feeling of suspicion, for which he could not account, that kept him from draining a wine-cup which had been poisoned for his benefit. These were hints that it was well to take. He left the camp without saying a word to anyone, and made the best of his way out of Parthia.

The difficulty was where to go. The world in those days consisted of Parthia and Rome, and he was not safe in either. Nothing was left for him, he thought, but becoming a brigand; and a brigand he accordingly became. It was a perilous profession, for the Roman governors of Asia kept a strict look-out, and did not approve of anyone plundering the provincials but themselves. One band after another that he joined was broken up, and at last he bound himself to one in the neighbourhood of Ephesus. His chief here was a young man of singular beauty, and of a fine, generous temper, who had been driven into this lawless life by the oppression of the Roman officials. Bion, who was by some years his senior, formed a great friendship for him, and the two contrived to keep their rough followers in as good order as was possible in a band of brigands.

And now came the strange incident that was to change the course of Bion's future life. The two were watching the road that ran from Ephesus across the heights of Mount Tmolus to Smyrna for a tax-gatherer who was expected to come that way with his money-bags. It was not long before a solitary rider could be seen, slowly making his way along the steep road which wound up the wooded mountain side. The two companions rushed from their hiding-place, and in a few moments were at his side. Bion seized the bridle of his mule, and the chief called upon him to give up all the money that he had with him. The rider, whose figure and face were concealed by a traveller's cloak and cape, answered in a voice of singular sweetness, "Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give thee." At the same time he threw aside his disguise. If the brigand chief had seen a grinning skull instead of the sweet and loving face, with eyes full of compassion and tenderness, bent upon him, he could not have been more startled. He turned to fly.

The rider dismounted with an agility which no one would have expected from so old a man, followed him, and caught him by the cloak. "Listen to me, my son," he said. "Four years since, I left you in the charge of Polydorus of Smyrna. At the end of two years, when I had finished my visiting of the churches of Asia, I went to Smyrna. They told me that you had left the city. Some said that you had fled to the mountains, and were living by robbing. I went to Polydorus. I said to him, 'Where is the treasure that I left in your hands?' He did not know what I meant. 'You left no treasure in my hands,' he said. 'I left a treasure which the Lord Himself had committed to me,' I answered, 'even the soul of the young man Eucrates.'

"Then I went out to seek you. For if I had trusted it to an unfaithful steward I should have myself to answer for it to my Lord. But now, thanks to our

Father and His Christ, I have found it again. And you, my son, will surely not take it from me."

This good shepherd who had thus sought and found his wandering sheep upon the hills was the Apostle St. John. The persuasiveness of this constraining love was such as no one could resist. Before he had finished his appeal the young man was sobbing at his feet. The three returned to Ephesus together, for Bion would not leave his friend, and he too had been touched by some power that he did not understand, which seemed to dwell in the old man's words.

The Apostle was a man of no small influence in Ephesus. His character was of that rare sweetness and beauty which even the world is constrained to love. And with this love a certain awe was mingled. It was rumoured that a Divine protection guarded him from danger. Had he not been thrown into a caldron of burning oil and come out unhurt? Hence he was able with little difficulty to obtain from the Roman governor of the province an amnesty for his two companions, and even to get for Eucrates restitution of the property which had been taken from him. The young man did not forget Bion, but made him the tenant and afterwards the purchaser of a farm which he owned in the neighbourhood of Nicæa.

Meanwhile, Bion had been listening with a heart disposed to conviction to the instructions of St. John. It was the late autumn when he had given up his brigand's life, and he was among the candidates who presented themselves for baptism at the Whitsuntide of the following year.

No more devout and earnest soul was to be found among the converts than Bion. The fiery temper which he shared with the teacher who had brought him to Christ was tamed rather than broken. He had found, too, during his sojourn at Ephesus, earthly happiness as well as heavenly peace.

One of the most trusted lay-helpers of the Church was a devout centurion, who had served under Titus at the siege of Jerusalem. Bion recognised in him, not without a smile at his own foolish boastfulness in times past, the very officer who had been appointed to attend on his master, and who had afterwards helped to nurse him during his tedious recovery. The old comrades were glad to meet again.

But Bion found in Manilius' house a more powerful attraction than friendship. This was the centurion's adopted daughter, Rhoda. Manilius had found her, then a girl of some seven years old, in a burning house on that terrible day when the Holy City was destroyed. Her father, mortally wounded in the last desperate struggle which his countrymen had waged against the Roman storming parties, had crawled back to his home, and the child, made old beyond her years by the dreadful experiences of those months of siege, was sitting by the dying man, and striving in vain to staunch the flow of blood from his wounds.

Anxiety for his child mastered the Jew's hatred of the foreigners. In broken Latin he besought Manilius to be good to his daughter. It was a strange responsibility for a lazy and somewhat reckless soldier, but it seemed to sober him in an instant. He found his Tribune, and obtained permission to take his young charge to the camp. From thence she was transferred as soon as possible to the house of a merchant of his acquaintance at Cæsarea.

No spoil that he could have carried off from the sack of Jerusalem could have proved such a treasure to him as the little Rhoda. She had learnt from her Christian mother, who, happily for herself, had passed to her rest just before Jerusalem was finally invested, some Gospel truths, and Manilius listened with attention which he might not have given to an older teacher when she told him in her childish prattle the story of the life and death of Jesus.

When the rewards for services in the great siege were distributed, he received a permanent appointment at Ephesus. Here he came under the influence of St. John, and here he, his wife, and the little Rhoda were received into the Christian community.

Rhoda was now a beautiful young woman of two-and-twenty; but no suitor had hitherto touched her heart. Bion, in the full strength of his matured manhood, for he was now close upon the borders of forty, with the double romance of his strange conversion and his old life of adventure, took it by storm. The lovers were married on the day after his baptism, and took possession of the Bithynian farm before the end of the year.

Rhoda's story has been given in the story of her husband. She was a woman of a character gentle yet firm, who never seemed to assert herself, whom a casual observer might even suppose to be of a yielding temper, but who was absolutely inflexible when any question of right or wrong, or of the faith which she clung to with a passionate earnestness of conviction, was concerned.

The two girls, Rhoda and Cleoné, were singularly alike in figure and face, and singularly different in character. They were twins, and they had all the mutual affection, one might almost say, the identity of feeling, which is sometimes seen, a sight as beautiful as it is strange, in those who are so related. Rhoda was the elder, and the ruling spirit of the two. This superior strength of will might be traced by a shrewd observer in the girl's face. To a casual glance the sisters seemed so exactly alike as to defy distinction. But those who knew them well never confounded them together. The dark chestnut hair and violet eyes, rare beauties under that Southern sky, the delicately rounded cheeks, with their wild-rose tinge of colour, the line of forehead and exquisitely chiselled nose, modified by the faintest curve from the severely straight classical outline, were to be seen in both. But Rhoda's lips were firmly compressed; Cleoné's were parted in a faint smile; and the gaze of Rhoda's eyes had a directness which her sister's never showed. Rhoda's nature was of the stuff of which saints are made; Cleoné's was rather that which gives peace and sunshine to happy homes. Hitherto the quiet in which the two lives had been passed had given little to occasion anything like a divergence of will. In the small questions that occurred in daily affairs Cleoné had followed without hesitation the lead of her sister. A time was now at hand which was to apply to their affection and to Rhoda's influence a severer test.

(To be continued.)

WHITTIER'S RELIGIOUS POEMS.

BY A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.



WHITTIER'S BIRTHPLACE.

IN America, John Greenleaf Whittier holds a place of special honour amongst men of letters and amongst poets. He is not a "town poet" in the land where genius congregates in cities. Country born, trained, and domiciled anew, the Quaker poet has derived much of his vigour from his rural surroundings. Round his home the beech, the oak, the chestnut, and maple cluster; and, secluded from a busy Massachusetts village, he enjoys his walks, his books, the converse of his friends. In one of the poems little known yet on this side of the Atlantic he pictures his home scene—

> 'Earth, sky, home's pictures, days of shade and shine,
> And kindly faces to my own uplifting
> The love that answers mine."

He has fought the fight that was for him; he has done the work given him to do; and secure in that conviction, honoured by his contemporaries, and the younger generations who have followed, he enjoys the earthly rest—even with age's pains—that precedes the heavenly.

It is difficult to divide Whittier's poems into "religious" and "secular," for the religious sentiment runs through most. But the American poet—the greatest of the living poets of the New World—has written much verse with a distinctly devotional aim, and it is to this that we have most reference now. He has given us more than one hymn of trust and resignation; he has produced one or two attempts in verse to solve doubts rather than to raise them; he has written two poems of enduring merit on the highest themes; and he has well illustrated phases of the life and history of the religious society with which he has all his life been associated. But there are many poems, also, in which the theme is less directly associated with religious consideration, but from which the poet naturally glides to the consideration of the great issues of life and the grave thoughts of hereafter, so that it is well worth glancing at some of the religious poems, and especially of those the aim of which is apparent.

One of the poems which is less read now than it used to be, but which is typical of Whittier's genius, is the dramatic episode in early Quakerism, in which Barclay of Ury (father of the Apologist Barclay) was insulted and mobbed in his own city of Aberdeen.

After picturing the scene, how the Laird rode up the "streets of Aberdeen" with a furious mob beside him, jeered at, flouted, and cursed by those who had been dependents or servants; how the troop of soldiers came riding by "with broadswords swinging," and how they proposed to—

> "Ride him down,
> Push him, prick him, through the town
> Drive the Quaker coward,

when one of them, an old comrade of Ury's lord, came with "ready weapon bare" to help him, but that aid is refused by Barclay, who avows that he can suffer.

> "'Give me joy that in His name
> I can bear, with patient frame,
> All these vain ones offer;
> While for them He suffered long,
> Shall I answer wrong with wrong,
> Scoffing with the scoffer?'"

And so as "towards the Tolbooth prison" the old soldier goes to hear through iron gates poor disciples "preach of Christ arisen," the fine moral is drawn that he is happy whose inward ear is consoled by angel comfortings, and, when the faggots of hatred burn, can discern glimpses through the smoke "of the good hereafter." There are others of this class of picturesque and denominational poems, possibly the best being that entitled "The Quaker Alumni," a poem read at a Friends' school anniversary, a verse of which may be quoted, in which Berkeley, Hopkins, and Channing are described as three shades walking Rhode Island—

> "One holy name bearing, no longer they need
> Credentials of piety, and passwords of creed;
> The new song they sing has a threefold accord,
> And they own one baptism, one faith, and one Lord;"

And in one of the hymns that he has written for the use of others—the "Hymn for the Opening of Thomas Starr King's House of Worship," as the Quaker poet phrases it—he echoes a little the words, for that fine hymn ends with the hope that, in time to be, a sweeter song shall be heard, when "one faith, one hope, one love," together restore "the seamless robe that Jesus wore." And before passing away from this class of Whittier's poems, reference should be made to that noble tribute to Joseph Sturge—

> "Thanks for the good man's beautiful example,
> Who in the vilest saw
> Some sacred crypt or altar of a temple,
> Still vocal with God's law."

In some of his religious verses the poet does not rise to the height that his theme demands; his poem on "The Crucifixion" is polished and fervent, but it contrasts unfavourably with others of higher merit; and the lines on "Palestine," and on the "Cities of the Plain" also fail in such a comparison. But in some of his lyrics Whittier has rare merit. In "Trinitas" he tells how he prayed that he might see "How Three are One and One is Three," and he finds his answer: the sun and air are bestowed on good and evil; the presence of innocence pauses to greet one who has fallen into sin, and a still small voice whispers within him, and he learns that the gifts of sun and air show "the all-compassionate Father;" the white soul stooping to raise the lost one typifies the Christ, and the still small voice "was the Holy Spirit's mystery." So he finds—

> "The equal Father in rain and sun,
> His Christ in the good to evil done
> His voice in thy soul; and the Three are One!"

Another poem of Whittier's, valuable for its lesson as well as for its melody, is that of the "Two Rabbis." In this we have the story of Rabbi Nathan, who, "just as the almond blossomed in his hair," sinned miserably, left his seat, and went out from the congregation "girt about with sackcloth," and went to seek counsel of Rabbi Ben Isaac. When the two Rabbis met, and Nathan confessed he had sinned, Ben Isaac was awe-struck, and laid bare the "mournful secret of his shirt of hair," and added that having himself sinned "in thought if not in act," he was coming to Nathan to claim his prayers. So the two knelt together, and each besought peace for the other, and thus forgetting self, they rose up to see "God's pardon in his brother's face!" Then, in "The Meeting," Whittier justifies not so much the Quaker method of worship he loves but the act of meeting, because—

> "Heart answers heart; in one desire
> The blending lines of prayer aspire:
> 'Where, in My name, meet two or three,'
> Our Lord hath said, 'I there will be.'
> So sometimes comes to soul and sense
> The feeling which is evidence.
> * * * *
> That all our sorrow, pain, and doubt
> A great compassion clasps about,
> And law and goodness, love and force
> Are wedded fast beyond divorce."

Again, in "The Prayer Seeker," the poet tells the story of one who glides along the aisles, and leaves on the desk a scroll which bore the words, "Pray for me," and goes out to "the night from whence she came," and who furnishes the moral, differing from Coleridge's—

> "He prayeth best who leaves unguessed
> The mystery of another's breast.
> Why cheeks grow pale, why eyes o'erflow,
> Or heads are white, thou needst not know.
> Enough to note by many a sign
> That every heart hath needs like thine—
> Pray for me."

There are two poems, longer and more sustained—"The Eternal Goodness," and "Our Master," which are amongst the best of Whittier's religious poems—the melody and versification being very sweet; whilst a few lines from one may exemplify the teaching of both—

> "No fable old, nor mythic lore,
> No dream of bards and seers,
> No dead fact stranded on the shore
> Of the oblivious years;
> But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
> A present Help is He;
> And faith has still its Olivet;
> And love its Galilee!"

This is, perhaps more than any other, the typical teaching of the poems of Whittier—that religion is a present, active belief; that it should be exemplified in the life, and that, whatever the future may bring,

XUM

the call of duty must be obeyed, but in obedience will be found solace, consolation, hope, and trust. The full humanity of man belongs to the Lord in all its joys and sorrows, and if these are brought to Him, He will reject none. In the silent questioning of the soul, even the wrestlings for the right are found to be from mixed motives; but even when so standing apart, the lesson is that "God's hand controls whate'er thou fearest," and so

> "In life, in death, in dark and light
> All are in God's care;
> Sound the black abyss, pierce the deep of night,
> And He is there."

It is rather the testimony of the Quakers of old than of those of to-day which Whittier presents; but it is none the less melodiously given, and it is none the less Catholic in spirit and broad in its sympathies.

MY MASTER'S MAN.



A TALENT universally possessed is that of appreciating other people's duties. The science of social criticism to this extent requires no expounder. Belief in a gift is not quite the same thing as having it, but the assurance of being able to determine what ought to be the conduct and demeanour of men and women whom we drag to judgment at our private bar is widespread and inveterate. It will be found in all ranks and relations of life. Writers of Court memoirs make it clear that they know how princes and statesmen should have governed the people over whom they were set. The tenant understands the obligations of the landlord. The curate could compile a code of excellent rules for the vicar, and the vicar for the bishop. All journalists see distinctly the reasonable methods of editing which would insure the success of a newspaper. The clerk and the shopman could be at no loss to arrange the details of a model management. And the youngest domestic in the humblest "Englishman's castle" is prepared to explain in what manner and to what extent authority should be exercised.

There is, however, an offset to this clearness of vision. The eye that takes the widest range, and is surest at defining shortcomings in the character and deportment of those who have the privilege—and thereby the onerous responsibility—of governorship, is apt to fail in distinguishing similar objects that are near. The mists of self-satisfaction hang about the home precincts. My master's man escapes with a lenient and makeshift scrutiny.

For several reasons it may be doubted if this is well. In the interests of Charity, the sweet and gentle maid whose lieges all should be, it is advisable to measure, with some pretensions to accuracy, one's own failures before harbouring ill thoughts of another. Even protest against injustice will be made in more kindly fashion if it is realised that the extirpation of selfishness is everybody's problem. And then it pays in patience and in the grace of humility to seek first for faults to mend at close quarters. To feel how hard a thing it is to adjust fairly conflicting claims of duty and inclination, and how full of flaws is the most conscientious toil in any domain, is a long step towards a serenity of soul that, by simple dignity, can win its own in spite of the opposing frowardness and arrogance of others. Yet, again, my master's man must infallibly gain in the only real capacity which marks progress on Humanity's dial—that of doing true work in a true spirit—by the steady pursuit of self-knowledge.

Alas! slipshod service in every department of human industry abounds. It is a wrong to the community as a whole, to the immediate section—whether a body or a unit—to whom it is rendered, to the man or woman who yields it, and to all who find therein a mischievous example or superficial excuse.

If the ethics of work were better understood, a cure might be found for the malady that has vexed honest, earnest souls in every age. It is possible that my master's man has been trained in one of two schools, either of which has a fundamentally false idea of the meaning and business of work; and that thus he has become the victim of perplexity and disappointment, if not also of chagrin and an Ishmael-like hate of his fellows.

Philosophers recognise the abstract worth of work, and encourage whole-hearted devotion thereto. But for all that, their theory and their counsel are marred by a radical defect. Theirs is the gospel of the main chance. Labour is a means to an end, they affirm, and that end the attainment of wealth and ease, or of fame. No energy can be too great to lavish on the compassing of these results. And if no crown of riches or worldly honour rewards the toiler as his life's sun sinks in the west, he has lived in vain and spent his strength for naught.

It is cruel, disheartening teaching. All men cannot be millionaires, or even wrest a competence from Giant Difficulty. Not to every stout aspirant can the bays be granted. And is the life of my master's man a failure if at the end he is still poor and a nobody?

Has he missed the mark if his treasure, on the last balance, is a peaceful conscience, and the recollection of unflinching performance of every daily duty, and not houses and land, and the praise of the multitude? A deep-rooted instinct in the human heart answers in the negative. Character is the best wealth, and loyal work springing from true motives and solaced by heavenly hopes inevitably moulds this on noble lines.

Not that fame and riches within reasonable limits may not be followed. They may, and often with advantage to mankind at large. Yet, while becoming an objective towards which the most strenuous efforts are bent, the desire to obtain them cannot lawfully take the place of the principle that informs and underlies all true work, whether mean and common as men estimate, or precious and rare.

It will help my master's man wonderfully in his struggles, support him in hours of despondency—and who of us is never shut into the dungeons of Doubting Castle?—and give him an outlook beyond the petty vexations of the moment, to reflect on the purport of labour and the place of even the most obscure toiler in God's economy of creation.

Acceptable work must be thorough and conscientious work, and, in so far as the element of choice may determine, useful and morally gainful work. Fulfilling these conditions in his degree, every craftsman in the world's great hive of industry is in a vital and significant unity with the entire working forces of the universe. It is only the drones, the indifferent, the reckless workers who strike jarring notes in the majestic harmony. Believing in an omnipotent Eye overlooking the vast labour field, and in an omnipotent Hand which through humanity's varied travail shapes a beneficent design, my master's man may know that "the trivial round, the common task," which seem sometimes like dullest drudgery, when honestly accomplished, in a religious spirit, ally him by the bond of a similar and sympathetic obedience with the very highest of created intelligences, and, inasmuch as he serves willingly, and not by the dead fidelity of mechanism, are works wrought upon a loftier level than the law-compelled operations of the mightiest forces of nature. Mean work—that is, true work—this universe, strictly speaking, knows nothing of. It does not exist.

And at the very heart and centre of every kind of service Christianity seeks to put this guiding principle —"as unto the Lord." By its adoption the lowliest occupation is ennobled, and the most commonplace task is rendered beautiful. That is not all. To the Christian toiler in any sphere the gates of promise open. Work well done, continuously done, as in the Master's sight, must have a formative influence upon the character; and who shall say what higher tasks in the land that is very far off to purblind mortal sense await the worker who has been faithful here over a few things? FELIX FERRY.

WORDS OF ONE SYLLABLE.

BY THE REV. TRYON EDWARDS, D.D.

A GENTLEMAN addressing a large gathering of scholars from several schools, was noticed to use words of only a single syllable. A friend who heard of the address, wrote to the speaker, and asked if it was the fact that he had spoken or could write an address of even thirty or forty words, all of one syllable, as it was reported he had done. The following was the reply to the inquiry:—

"I have no time now to tell you where to find the brief speech as to which you ask, nor do I know that I could at once write what you want if I should try, as I do not claim to have much skill in such work; though to write short words, and make fair sense with them, does not need much skill or deep thought; and this truth is shown in what I now send, in a copy of my short speech made to the schools some time since." Here is a sentence of ninety-one words, each of but one syllable.

A lady, saying she thought monosyllables even more expressive than longer words, wrote, to illustrate her idea, the following lines—

"WHAT THOU WILT.

"Not what to me seems good,
Not what my choice would be;
I dare not ask for these,
Lord, when I plead with Thee:
But give what to Thy mind seems best,
And let Thy love not grant the rest.

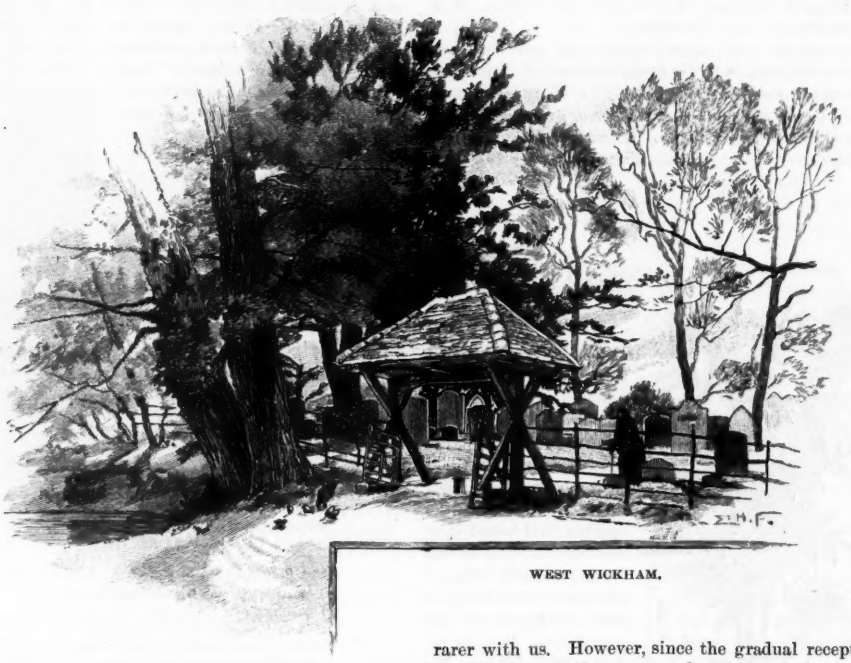
"Not heaps of gold in store,
Not health, nor friends, nor fame—
I dare not ask for these,
Though sought for in Thy name,
Save as Thou seest such gifts would be
Laid at Thy feet in love to Thee.

"My heart is full of needs;
My wants reach out to Thee;
I only plead Thy call,
Thy words of grace to me.
Take from my heart its load of guilt,
Then give me, Lord, what else Thou wilt!"

And the Rev. Dr. Addison Alexander, long a professor in the Theological Seminary of Princeton, New Jersey, being asked if one could write as forcibly in monosyllables as in words of greater length, sat down and wrote, almost without stopping, the following lines—

"Think not that strength lies in the big round word,
Or that the brief and plain must needs be weak;
To whom can this be true who once has heard
The cry for help—the words that all men speak
When want, or woe, or fear is in the throat,
So that each word is gasped out like a shriek
Pressed from the heart, or as a strange, wild note,
Sung by some fay or fiend! There is a strength
Which dies if stretched too far, or spun too fine,
Which has more height than breadth, more depth than length.
Let but this force of thought and speech be mine,
And he that will may take the sleek, fat phrase
Which glows and burns not, though it gleam and shine;
Light but not heat, a flash without a blaze.
Nor is it nought but strength the short word boasts;
It serves for more than wind or storm can tell,
Or roar of waves that dash on rock bound coasts;
The crash of tall trees when the wild winds swell;
The roar of guns; the groans of men that die
On blood stained fields. It has a voice as well
For them that far off on their sick beds lie;
For them that weep, for them that mourn the dead,
For them that dance, and laugh, and clap the hand
To Joy's quick step, as well as Grief's sad tread;
The sweet, plain words we learn at first keep time,
And though the theme be sad, or gay, or grand,
With each, with all, these may be made to chime,
In thought, or speech, or song, or prose, or rhyme.

LYCH-GATES.



WEST WICKHAM.

A LYCH-GATE, or lich-gate, is a gateway, covered with a roof, giving access to a churchyard. In Wales, many, if not most, of the churchyards in which the little old grey churches stand so serenely at the foot of the immutable mountains, or on the borders of the lakes, or on the shores of the great grey sea, are entered through lych-gates. Some of these are ancient; some of them are modern; but the idea of their use and appropriateness, if not necessity, is general. Curiously, although occasionally to be met with in the English counties, they are much rarer with us. However, since the gradual reception of the idea of the power of structural fitness to quicken religious feelings, among other means to the same end, attention has been turned to this proper and picturesque addition to the ordinary features of a churchyard, and several have been erected in various parts of the kingdom. In one instance, in a village in Northumberland, the promoters of the formation of a new cemetery, not desiring the usual chapels on their ground, have built a large lych-gate at the entrance to it, where the mourners can rest and re-arrange their procession conveniently and under shelter. This is at Embleton, the birthplace of Duns Scotus, the great theological disputant in the

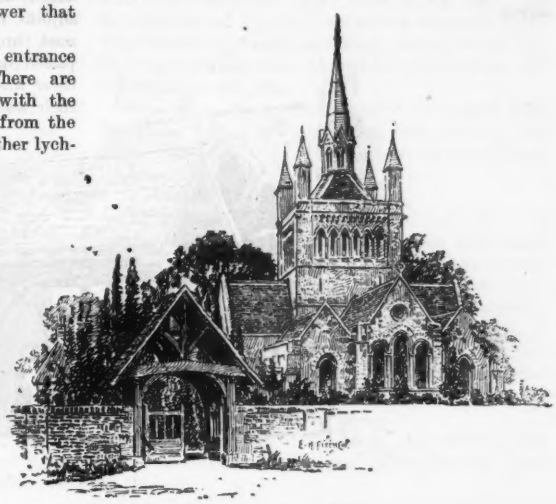


BECKENHAM.

thirteenth century, the place where stands Dunstanborough Castle, so gallantly defended in the wars of the Red and White roses. There is a fine old church there, very solemn, though gracious-looking, well calculated to excite piety in the minds of those who regard it, as though the old builders had done their best to leave a lasting heritage of incentive; but the churchyard required extension, and the cemetery in question was made to answer that purpose.

There is a new lych-gate at the yew-lined entrance of Morpeth churchyard, dated 1861. There are seats in it, and a memorial inscription, with the text, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Another lych-gate has been erected not very long ago, at Clifton Hampden. Another, among others, near Preston, quite recently. There is another to the churchyard of the new church of St. Chad, Hopwas, in Staffordshire. And the good Prince Consort caused an open timber lych-gate to be placed at the entrance of Whippingham churchyard, in the Isle of Wight. This is constructed of East Indian teak, and is built on a stone foundation. The gable end of it faces the road. In the more recent Hopwas example the slanting face of the roof is placed cross-ways, to stretch across the road, and the gables, therefore, are at the sides of it.

But the lych-gates we are about to mention specially are the ancient examples left us by those who gave their best and did their best in the days of old. They have stood through all the seasons, in deep snow, with biting blasts, and fierce, hot sunshine alike, just as their builders left them; just as when these were carried through them to their resting-place, and their children and grand-children were



WHIPPINGHAM.

carried thither likewise; and just as the grandchildren of these last found them and associated them all their lives long with every thought of their village churches, and left them at last for those who were to



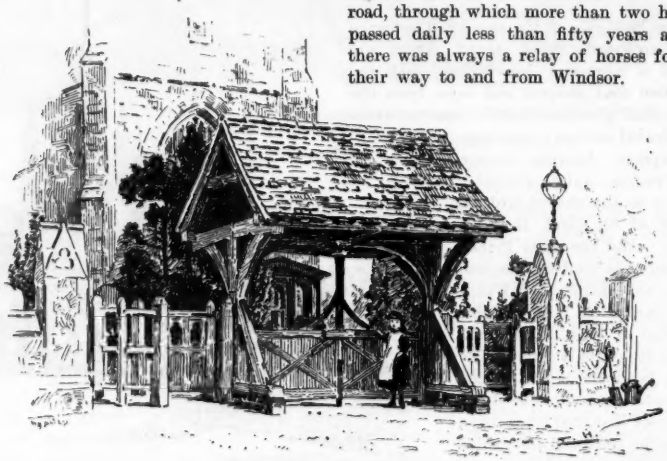
HARROW.

come after them. More than three hundred times these ancient gates have seen successive groups of village folk pass through, wishing each other a right merry Christmas, and commenting upon the events of the day. They have seen stately dames wearing farthingales, stomachers, and ruffs; wives with broad beavers and falling bands; women in sacques, hoops, and high-heeled, red-heeled shoes, as reign after reign has passed; men in doublets and trunk hose, in bombards, in knee-breeches, with buckles in their shoes, as the Tudors and Stuarts passed away, and the Hanoverian succession was established. Wind-swept and sun-baked all these years, they have gradually acquired a very venerable and wistful aspect.

There is an interesting example at Beckenham, in Kent, the pleasant village in which Anthony Rawlis built an almshouse for three poor widows in 1693. The church steeple attracts our steps to the sacred edifice, and at the entrance to the churchyard, which has an air of freshness and forestry, stands an ancient lych-gate. It is made of roughly-wrought oak. A sturdy tie-beam stretches across the opening, upheld by a strong post at either end of it. From these oaken posts, or pillars, branch out arched struts, which carry the necessary supports for the rafters of the roof and the eaves. The actual opening to pass through is made into a shoulder-headed outline by a corbel on either side springing from the pillars mentioned. Additional sturdiness is obtained by two sets of struts that rise from the stone footing to the main horizontal beam. The slant-faced roof is hipped on four sides, and finished with a raised saddle-backed ridge. A five-barred gate, opening in the centre, is hung from the strong upright timbers that carry the main beam. We may be sure we see it just as Anthony Rawlis saw it, when, with his compassionate heart full of thoughts for the three poor widows, he built the almshouse for their shelter mentioned above.

There is another lych-gate, or corpse-gate, about four miles from Croydon, at West Wickham. The church and churchyard are about a mile from the village, on the opposite hill. The roof over this gate is also four-sided, but it is plain, or without the saddle-backed ridge that makes the Beckenham example so picturesque; and down the four angles are lines of tiled ridgings. It is also constructed of roughly-hewn oak beams resting on oaken wall-plates, and has the same oaken corbels, and is hung with a six-barred gate opening in the centre.

At Heston, in Middlesex, is an example of a different form. It has a two-sided roof, and is furnished with a central post for the gate, that moves as on a pivot. But it is also made of roughly-hewn timber placed on strong stone footings on which are laid oaken wall-plates. Heston, it will be remembered, adjoins Hounslow, so famous in the annals of the road, through which more than two hundred coaches passed daily less than fifty years ago, and where there was always a relay of horses for the kings on their way to and from Windsor.



HESTON, MIDDLESEX.

There is a small lych-gate, too, at Harrow, not, however, hoary and mellow like these, though it may have replaced one as ancient. The spire of Harrow Church is seen from so many points of view for so many miles in the north and north-west boundaries of the metropolis, that we need scarcely mention this world-known edifice stands on the summit of a hill. Those who visit it (and who does not who can?) climb and climb, past the famous school, the old houses of the "Sir Charles Grandison" period, and the older houses of the "Battle of the Books" period, and the shops and the new villas of to-day, and at last arrive at this gate, whence they pass into the churchyard, and among the tombstones Byron has invested with so much interest; from which height they look down upon a prospect they are not likely to forget.

As mention has been made of Welsh examples, one should be given. There is one, deserted and forlorn, between the edge of some low-lying marshes and the verge of the sea, near Pensarn, in Merionethshire. This is built of stone, and has the appearance of a detached porch at the entrance to the churchyard. The church is floorless, and otherwise in ruins, and the windows are glassless, for service is no longer held in the fabric, and "the wind's clarion and the water's chime" are the only notes that now greet the ear there. Less melancholy, however, is another stone-built example at Llanbedr, about a couple of miles nearer to the bordering mountains, where, used and cared for, it covers the entrance to the churchyard from the village, and forms a fit shelter for Christian mourners.

S. W.

"THAT IMPUDENT RUTH."

A STORY IN ONE CHAPTER.

MISS GOLIGHTLY and Miss Heloïse Golightly invariably had boiled eggs with their breakfast.

If it were not for this important fact my story could never have been written.

Charlotte had always boiled the eggs exactly as they should be done. But then Charlotte had lived with the Misses Golightly fifteen years. Of course she had had experience. She knew, to the second, how her mistresses liked the eggs done. But Charlotte had had the stupidity—I might say the audacity—to get married. "At her time of life too!" as Miss Golightly said; "one would have supposed a woman of her sense might have known better; but servants never do know when they are well off." Notwithstanding wise counsel she had persisted in her own foolish way, and now Ruth reigned in her stead.

Ruth was young; indeed, Miss Golightly found her too young, and also somewhat flighty. Her flightiness showed itself chiefly in her caps, which had an aspect of jauntiness and smartness quite in contrast with the oval-shaped crocheted mats which had adorned the head of Charlotte.

Poor Miss Golightly! She was housekeeper, being older by three years than Miss Heloïse. Miss Heloïse did not know of the trials of housekeeping or of servants. No doubt this accounted for the fact that she was inclined to be lenient towards Ruth's delinquencies—far too lenient, so Miss Golightly said.

But the eggs; *they* were *the* point!

It was at breakfast most especially that Charlotte's ingratitude became apparent, for it was then that Ruth's short-comings were most felt. Ruth could not, or perhaps would not, boil the eggs right. On Tuesday morning they were just a little too soft.

"It's a very sad thing, Heloïse, my dear," sighed Miss Golightly, "that at our time of life we cannot get even an egg boiled aright; and after all these years, too, when Charlotte has done them properly."

Miss Heloïse replied with diffidence. She said, "Don't you think, sister, that as we've had them done right for so long, we ought to—to—well, be a little patient with Ruth? She's younger than Charlotte, you know; she hasn't had such experience."

"Experience, Heloïse?" exclaimed Miss Golightly; "experience?—fiddle-de-dee! It doesn't require experience to boil eggs; it requires obedience to her mistress. I've told her, over and over again, *just three minutes and a half—no more, no less.*"

Then Miss Golightly got up from the table to give the cat her milk. Wednesday morning came, and with it the invariable eggs. Miss Heloïse dared not take the top off her egg; but with a dexterous hand Miss Golightly decapitated hers. As she did so half of it ran trickling down the side of the egg-cup and floated about the plate.

"The same thing over again!" exclaimed Miss Golightly. "You must ring the bell, Heloïse, my dear." Then the old lady proceeded to put salt on the egg, and to replace the top.

The maid appeared at the door.

"Ruth," said her mistress sternly, "if I have to complain of the eggs much oftener, you must leave our service. It's impertinence to bring them in like this—nothing less than impertinence. If you don't choose to go by the kitchen-clock, what is to be done? Eggs at eight a shilling, as they are now! Think of the waste! It is disgraceful of you to behave in this way. Here, take them out, and boil them one minute more; and mind that you hold mine upright in the water with a spoon!"

Ruth hurried out of the room, and the two old ladies sat sipping their tea and waiting for the return of the eggs.

"I am quite sure the girl must do it to annoy us!"

exclaimed Miss Golightly presently. "She doesn't choose to go by the clock."

"But you know, sister," ventured Miss Heloïse, "that the kitchen-clock hasn't a second-hand, and it's rather difficult to calculate half-minutes by the long hand."

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"I was noticing only yesterday," continued Miss Heloïse in her measured tones, "that the hands of the kitchen-clock are so far from the face that if you stand by the door the long hand points exactly at the minute, and if you stand at the fireplace it looks in front of the minute. Perhaps this is the reason of Ruth's mistakes."

But as the eggs reappeared at this juncture the argument of Miss Heloïse's defence was interrupted, for the old ladies were ready to apply their energies to their breakfast. Before many days had passed Ruth was in disgrace again. It was the eggs once more, and this time they were too hard.

"We really cannot stand this any longer!" exclaimed Miss Golightly in disgust. "Heloïse, my dear, I shall give that girl warning to-morrow. Now don't make excuses for her," she added with a wave of her hand. "I cannot allow our comfort to be thus destroyed. An uncomfortable breakfast puts me out for the rest of the morning. My dear, it is not good for our health to be so worried!"

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"Perhaps she feels sorry, and wishes us to think so," said Miss Heloïse.

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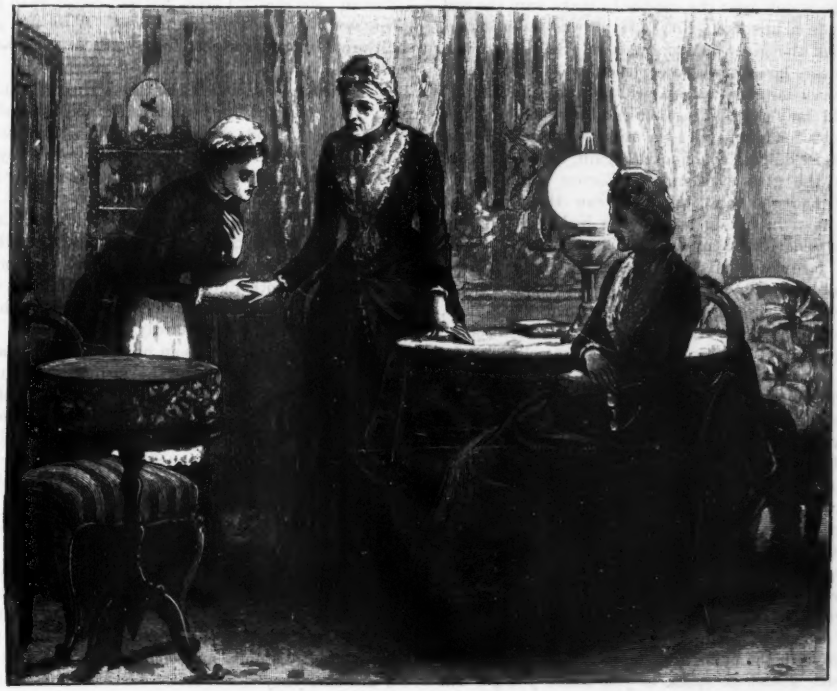
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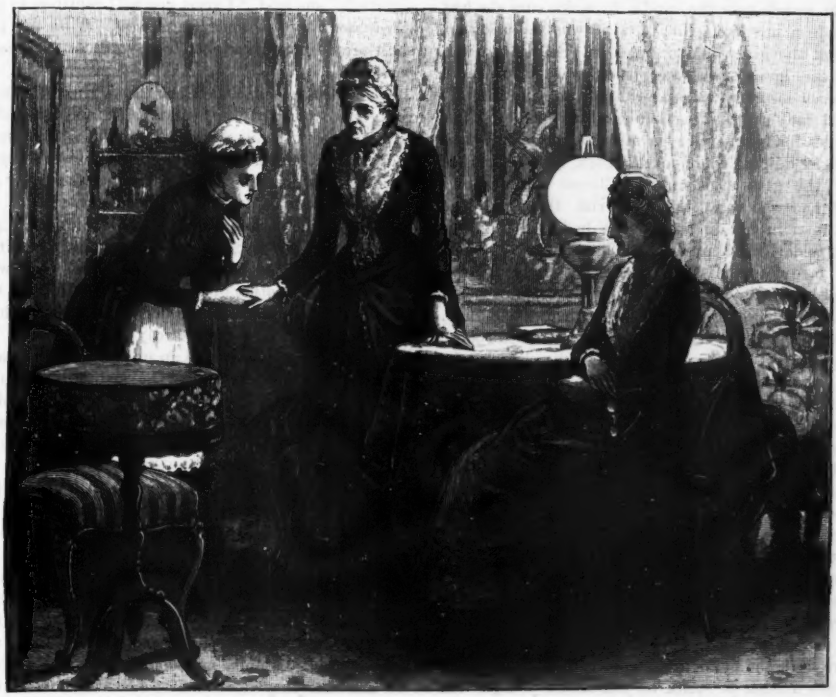
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were soon on again, and half mechanically she continued reading where she had left off. She read as far as the ninth verse:—"And ye masters do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him."

Again the spectacles required rubbing. But suddenly, during the process, Miss Golightly caught sight of the sand-glass. It was still running. She looked at her watch. Surely she must have mistaken the time! It was *five* minutes since she had last looked at it, and still the sand was running! She held the watch near the candle to make sure she had not made a mistake. No; now it was *six* minutes. She took the glass up and shook it. Still it ran on. Dear, dear, how very strange it all was! Now more than *seven* minutes had passed, yet the sand ran on! The old lady sat shaking her head and rubbing her spectacles for nearly six long minutes more, and then at last, in despair, she looked again, and found the top of the glass was empty. Eleven minutes and a half had the sand taken to run through. The young man in Mason and Jebb's had sold them an article under false pretences. That was bad; but worse, far worse, Miss Golightly had judged Ruth without a hearing, and had accused her of falsehood. She rose, replaced the egg-boiler on the dresser, then, candle in hand, she went upstairs to her bed-room.

When Miss Heloïse returned from church she found the parlour unoccupied, except by the cat, who was warming her paws on the fender.

According to invariable custom, Miss Golightly read family prayers that evening. Miss Heloïse sat on her own chair by the fire; Ruth, very upright, on the edge of another by the door. Miss Golightly always read in clear, decisive tones, as became her character; but, strange to say, there was a slight hesitation in her voice to-night. Her mind appeared preoccupied.

The Lord's Prayer and the Grace were ended, the last *Amen* said, and Ruth—murmuring, "Will you require anything more, ma'am?"—was just about to leave the room, when Miss Golightly made a slight gesture with the hand, and stepped towards the door.

"Ruth, I wish to speak to you before you go," she said.

The girl trembled; she felt something awful was about to follow.

"I wish to tell you, Ruth," continued Miss Golightly, "that I am sorry I did not take steps to find out whether the sand-glass acted properly *before* I accused you of falsehood. I am an old woman, and perhaps a proud one, but, by God's grace, I am not too old or too proud to learn a lesson. I trust in future my judgments will be more just."

What a strange girl was Ruth! at this point she stifled a suppressed sob. It was Miss Heloïse's spectacles this time which became dewy and required to be immediately rubbed.

"Heloïse, my dear," said Miss Golightly, turning towards her sister, "while you were at church I tried the egg-boiler. It took very nearly thirteen minutes for the sand to run through. So, you see, I was wrong to accuse Ruth of untruthfulness so hastily."

Then the old lady turned and held out her hand to the girl. Her demeanour showed a strange mixture of its wonted stateliness, added to which was a touching softness in the expression of her face.

"Ruth," she said, "I trust you will continue to pray *Lord, make me a Christian servant.* I, on my part, shall pray, from this night, *Lord, make me a Christian mistress.*"

The old lady had placed her thin wrinkled hand in the girl's stout red one; and Ruth, with a sudden impulse, bent and kissed it. Then she bolted suddenly out of the room; her feelings were beyond restraint, and, once in her own kitchen, she threw herself on to a chair to enjoy a good cry.

A few moments later the two old ladies, each with her silver candlestick, mounted the stairs to their respective bedrooms. On the landing, as was their wont, they bade one another good-night. Miss Heloïse, with her hand on her sister's shoulder, pressed her withered cheek against her own, hardly less withered, and kissed her twice. This was an unusual demonstration of affection, for as a rule the sisters only interchanged one kiss. Though neither spoke to the other, they understood its meaning. Miss Golightly meant: "I have had a sharp fight, but I gained the victory." And Miss Heloïse meant: "Sister, to my love and respect for you has this night been added veneration."

How well the old ladies slept that night, and how peculiarly good the eggs were the next morning!—just cooked to a turn. But directly after breakfast Miss Heloïse, whose mission in life seemed to be making excuses for other persons' delinquencies, disappeared into the kitchen. "Ruth," she said, "I'm going to put that egg-boiler down into the fender for a good long while. We must not scold Mason and Jebb till we are sure they deserve it. You see, now watches are so cheap, no doubt this glass has been in their shop a long while, and has got damp—so damp that the sand *sticks*, and doesn't run through evenly."

Miss Heloïse's theory was correct, and thus Mason and Jebb were saved a scolding.

Of course Ruth did not leave at the end of a month. In fact, she stayed several years in the service of the Misses Golightly. Then she proved to all the world how well Miss Golightly had judged her—for she did a very flighty thing—*she got married!*

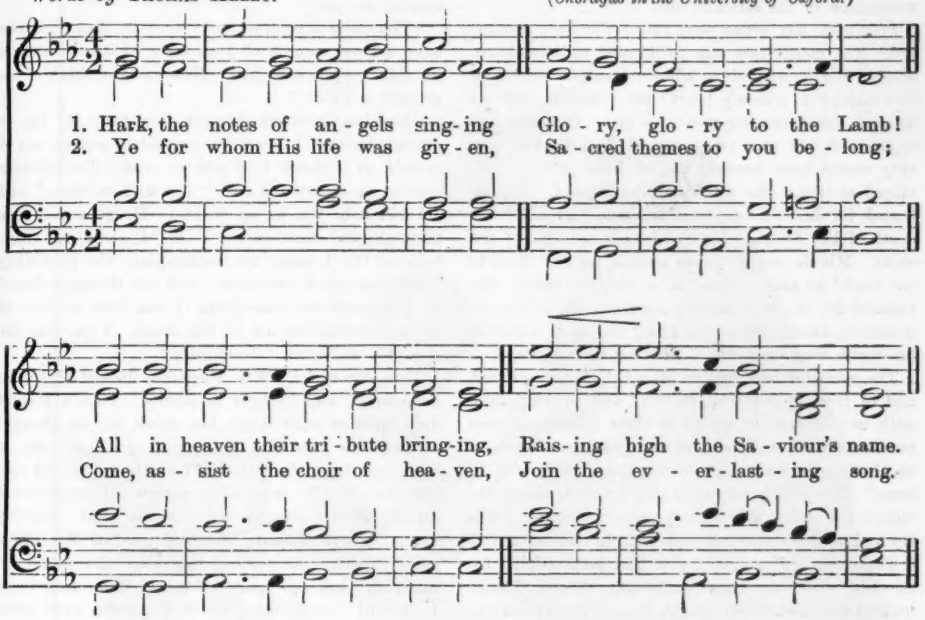
Let us hope her successor boils the dear old ladies' eggs exactly three minutes and a half.



Hark, the Notes of Angels Singing.

Words by THOMAS KELLY.

Music by C. HUBERT H. PARRY, Mus.D.
(Choragus in the University of Oxford.)



3.

Saints and angels thus united
Songs imperfect still must raise:
Though despised on earth and slighted,
Jesus is above all praise.

4.

Filled with holy emulation,
Let us vie with those above;
Sweet the theme—a free salvation!
Fruit of everlasting love.

5.

Endless life in Him possessing,
Let us praise His precious name;
Glory, honour, power, and blessing,
Be for ever to the Lamb.

A SORROWFUL COMFORTER.

BY THE REV. FREDERICK HASTINGS.

"I CANNOT see the doctor. I don't want to see him. I know what he will say. He will tell me Archie has no chance for life. I won't believe it. He cannot, must not, die. I cannot do without him, He is so true, so manly, so dear to me. I have waited so long for him. He must recover, and we shall yet be married. I don't want to see the doctor unless he can tell me there is great hope;" so spake a beautiful maiden of twenty-three summers. Her affianced was just hanging between life and death, prostrate from brain fever, the result of over-effort in a department for which he was responsible in a great house. He was highly valued by the principals, and, indeed, by everyone with whom he came in contact. He was most useful in church work too, and "made time" to help when he could not spare it. It was a great blow to a large circle when he was stricken down.

But the blow was most severe to the one he had loved so faithfully, and to whom in a month or two he was to have been married. Hence her strong words

and refusal to see the medical man. When he came she went out of the room, and directly he left would go back and minister gently to the one whom she loved more than life. She did not weep or fret, but only did everything she could to try and help to the restoration of the stricken one.

Poor girl; her hopes were vain. The dark shadow fell. The manly face was pallid and still in death. Minnie Martin was left to a bitter blank of loneliness. She carried a widow's heart, but wore no widow's weeds. For a time her eyes were dry. The blow had so stunned her that tears seemed denied. The ease they would have brought to her heart was not obtained at first. She was dazed with grief. Friends feared for her reason. Sunday came just after the death of her Archie. He had been a member of the choir. Minnie would go to church, as she thought she would be able to hear, as of old, his voice. She listened for it. She fancied she heard it. "Ah! he is singing among the angels now," she said, "and will not again sing on earth." Still no tears came.

The minister had spoken of what Christ suffered, and of how, by suffering, He was able to sympathise with us; of how, by trying to cheer others, our own burdens are often lifted; of how, while we strive to do God's will, we are enabled to say, "Thy will be done." The stricken-hearted girl listened, and at the close went and thanked the preacher, saying, "I will try and do God's will and bear trial in His strength."

That morning special prayer had been offered for another who was dangerously ill. Minnie Martin noticed this; found out who it was. The invalid was a most estimable man, who was gradually yielding to the power of a fell disease, one who, it was said, could not live many days. He would have to leave a large and loving family. His wife kept from him the fact that the doctor said his case too was hopeless. She carried alone the heavy burden, and kept back all signs of sorrow in his presence. Minnie Martin heard of this, and resolved she would go and try and comfort one who had so much to bear. So, with weakened frame and bleeding heart, this noble girl went to the house of the invalid. When she met in the parlour Mrs. Shepstone, whose husband was so ill, she said, "I came, dear Mrs. Shepstone, to see if I could render any help to you, or at least say a word that would help you to bear the great trial that seems coming on you."

"You came to comfort me! why, my dear girl, you have sorrow enough of your own. I know what a terrible loss you have had. How can you think of me at such a time?"

"God has given me strength thus far. My loss is overwhelming. I must do something, and go out of myself, or I think I should go mad. The Saviour enables me to try and say, "Thy will be done," and He will help you to say it also. He goes with one through the dark valley. Oh! I could not have believed it. I dared not contemplate the possibility of my loss, but it has come; and yet, though I feared as I entered into the cloud, I can hear a voice of divine consolation out of the cloud. I see, like the disciples on Tabor, "Jesus only."

Thus she spoke. Mrs. Shepstone looked at her in amazement, and listened in silence. Then a tear of deep emotion stole down her cheek, as she thought of how this poor stricken-hearted girl had come to her, even from the bedside of death, to try and console her in the impending sorrow of widowhood. Minnie Martin caught sight of the tear. Further utterance was choked. She took hold of Mrs. Shepstone's hand, and, putting the other arm round her neck, she bent her head down and burst into tears. Both shed copious tears, and both hearts were somewhat relieved by their mutual sorrow and sympathy. They both prayed, "Lord, still give us strength; still uphold us by Thy free spirit."

Two days after, when there came the trying moment of parting with the remains of poor dead Archie, Minnie, to the surprise of all, was able to maintain a composure which would have been unnatural had it not been that it was the outcome of faith in Christ as the resurrection—a faith that "overcometh the world," a faith that "giveth the victory."

NOT FORGOTTEN.*

ALONG the margin of the winding stream
I wander as the light grows dim;
Around me floats, as in a dream,
The happy birds' soft vesper hymn.
Grey shadows fall along the dewy fields,
By many a bank and grassy plot,
Where shining sprays of palest tender blue
Whisper, Good-night—*Forget-me-not.*

Forget me not, sweet heart, in years to come,
As life grows hard with toil and care,
Or, when thy loved ones swiftly pass away
Into the unseen Silent Land.
Still call to mind the old bright summer days
Of long ago, when all was fair.
Walk in the love and fear of God, true heart,
So shalt thou find some loving hand,
Some loving heart, how lone soe'er thy lot,
To whisper, as Night comes, Forget me not!

B. G. JOHNS.

* *See* Frontispiece.



(*Drawn by* M. L. Gow, R.I.)

"'You come to comfort me!"

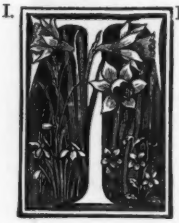
P. 40.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

NEW SERIES.

No. 19. Defeat at Ai.

To read—Joshua vii. 1—12. *Golden Text—Psalm cxix.* 36.

I.  HE DEFEAT. (1—5.) So far all had prospered with Joshua and the Israelites. Had crossed the Jordan safely, entered the land, taken great city of Jericho. Now prepare for new victories. Ai the next city. Joshua sends men to view it and come back and report. What do they say?

The city is small—easy to take.

The people are few—whole army not needed to secure possession of it.

Thus two faults committed—

(*a*) They despised the enemy.

(*b*) They sought not counsel of God.

Result—(*a*) *Disaster*—Israelites put to flight.

(*b*) *Alarm*—all the people dismayed and afraid.

II. The Humiliation. (6—9.) Joshua and the elders at once do the right thing.

(*a*) They repair to the ark—the presence of God.

(*b*) They fall to the earth—*i.e.*, humble themselves.

(*c*) They acknowledge God's hand in this judgment.

(*d*) They put dust on their heads in token of shame.

(*e*) They seek God's counsel.

What does all this show on their part?

(*a*) *Piety*—to seek God in all things.

(*b*) *Sincerity*—they spend the whole day in prayer.

(*c*) *Zeal* for the honour of God's name.

III. The Sin. (10—12.) God never sought in vain. Answers at once. Joshua must rise—there is work for him to do. God tells him all about it.

(*a*) *The cause.* Israel has sinned—transgressed God's covenant. He had promised to help them *if* they obeyed Him.

The sin was taking some of the spoil of Jericho, called the "accursed thing," because devoted to the Lord—had done this secretly—taken it into the camp.

(*b*) *The effect.* The people defeated by their enemies.

God's presence removed till the sin be destroyed.

Who was it that had done this? (*See* ver. 1.)

Notice the steps in Achan's sin? (*See* ver. 21.)

(*a*) He *saw* the gold and beautiful dress.

(*b*) He *coveted* them.

(*c*) He *took* them home to his tent.

(*d*) He *involved* his family in the sin.

(Notice how his sin followed the same steps as Eve's. She saw, longed for, took, gave to Adam—the forbidden fruit.)

What a solemn warning to all.

Lessons. 1. Thou shalt not covet.

2. Be content with such things as ye have.

3. Thou God seest me.

4. Be sure your sin will find you out.

No. 20. Caleb's Inheritance.

To read—Joshua xiv. 5—15. *Golden Text—Psalm xxxvii.* 3.

I. Caleb's Claim. (5—12.) About five years passed since events in last lesson. Israelites under Joshua gone on conquering the land—been divided among the different tribes—Levi alone having no share—Levites dwelling in selected cities among the people so as to teach them the fear of God. Each man now settled on his own farm, sitting under his own vine and fig-tree. Country rich in cattle and flowers—milk and honey—sheep also abundant on mountain slopes. Now Caleb comes forward with special claim to his old comrade Joshua. Remind how these two had been the faithful spies, and how Caleb had specially urged the people to be brave, and trust in God's help to take the land at once (Num. xiii. 30), but all in vain. This was when they came to Kadesh-barnea, borders of Canaan, one year after leaving Egypt. Caleb then forty years old. Forty-five years passed since then—forty years in wilderness (during which all except him and Joshua had died who came out of Egypt) and five in Canaan. What does he say to Joshua?

1. He reminds him of God's Word to Moses in Kadesh (Num. xiv. 24.)

2. Of his own faithfulness in following God.

3. Of Moses' promise to give him an inheritance.

4. He tells of his own strength for war.

5. He asks for this particular land of Hebron.

6. He promises to drive out the fierce Anakims.

What has all this to do with us?

1. *Temporal blessings.* These often promised in Bible to those who fear God. Examples.

Abraham promised land of Canaan. (Gen. xvii. 8.)

Solomon—riches and honour, because asked for wisdom. (1 Kings iii. 11.)

Obedient children to dwell long in the land. (5th Commandment.)

So to Christians in the New Testament. (1 Tim. iv. 8, etc.)

2. *Faithfulness.* God's promise must be kept though forty-five years had passed. How often would Caleb have looked forward to this time of quiet and peaceful rest! So shall God reward all his servants with rest when life's warfare is over.

II. Caleb's Reward. (13—15.) Joshua granted Caleb's request and Hebron was given to him. Why would he so much value this place?

1. Here Abraham had built an altar. (Gen. xiii. 18)

2. God appeared to Abraham and promised him a son. (Gen. xviii. 1.)

3. Here Abraham was buried. (Gen. xxv. 9.)

4. Land was fertile, as shown by grapes of Eshcol. (Num. xiii. 23.)

Therefore the land was full of holy associations—was suitable from its fertility—some enemies still remained to be conquered.

So this good and brave old man settled in the land

and began at once to drive out the sons of the giants (xiv. 13—17), and thus won and kept his inheritance.

LESSONS. 1. This earth is not our rest.

2. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

No. 21. HELPING ONE ANOTHER.

To read—Joshua xxi. 43—45; *xxii. Golden Text—Gal. vi.* 2.

I. ISRAEL SETTLED. (xxi. 43—45.) At last the Israelites settled in Canaan, 450 years since God's first promise to Abraham, 260 years since Jacob went down to Egypt, 47 years after the Exodus from Egypt. Notice—

1. They had all that God had promised. (Gen. xiii. 15.)

2. Their enemies were all conquered.

3. God's faithfulness and truth stood firm.

And he is the same God "yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

II. THE TRIBES SENT HOME. (xxii. 1—9.) Remind of the two and a half tribes whose land was to be on the east of Jordan. What had they promised to do?

(*a*) To fight for their brethren.

(*b*) Not to leave them till they were settled.

Then to return and take possession of their own land.

The time now come for them to leave. Joshua speaks parting words.

(*a*) He *commends* them—they had been faithful.

(*b*) He *speeds* them on their way.

(*c*) He *exhorts* them to continue to serve God.

(*d*) He *rewards* them with the spoil taken.

What lessons may we learn from them?

1. *Fidelity*—to keep our promises.

2. *Help*—to assist our friends in need.

3. *Patience*—to wait for our reward.

These three equally important for spiritual life.

We have vowed ourselves to God—keep faithful.

We must help others on way to heaven.

We must patiently wait for promised rest.

III. THE ALTAR SET UP. (10—34.) The tribes depart and get as far as the Jordan. They come to the same place where Israelites had crossed. (Ver. 11.) There they build a great altar exactly like the one in the Tabernacle. (Ver. 29.) Why did they build it?

Not for burnt offerings—only allowed at the Tabernacle. (Ver. 26.) But for a memorial of the past, and to be a witness for the future. But at first this altar gave great offence to the Israelites. What did they do?

Prepared for war to avenge the wrong doing—showing *zeal*.

Send a priest and ten princes to reason with them—showing *discretion*.

How the deputation addresses them.

(*a*) Why have they built this altar—turning away from God?

(*b*) Have they forgotten the idolatry at Peor, and the plague sent (Num. xxiii. 3.), and Achan's sin and punishment?

(*c*) Let them return and live amongst the others rather than do this?

Listen to their reply. They appeal to God who knows all things. The altar is built in all innocence for two objects. (*a*) *Memorial*—to keep in remembrance God's past dealings. (*b*) *Instruction* — to teach their children to fear God.

The explanation received with gladness and contentment, and the deputation departed in peace.

LESSONS. 1. *Appearances sometimes deceptive.* Always make full inquiry before blaming others.

2. *Benefit of a soft answer.* It turns away wrath.

No. 22. THE COVENANT RENEWED.

To read—Joshua xxiv. 14—28. *Golden Text—Joshua xxiv.* 24.

I. EXHORTATION TO SERVE GOD. (14, 15.) Joshua quite an old man, 110 years. (Ver. 29.) Knows he must soon die—anxious for the people—makes a farewell address. Bids them be decided.

(*a*) God must be served with a whole heart. He must have our best love—must be first or nowhere.

(*b*) Sin must be put away. Their ancestors beyond the flood (*i.e.*, River Euphrates crossed by Abraham) gave up false gods. So must they—

(*c*) Choose once and for all whom they would serve.

II. REASONS FOR SERVING GOD. (16—18.) 1. *For what He has done.* What?

He brought them out of Egypt. He worked great miracles for them—Red Sea, manna, water, etc. He preserved them from their enemies. He drove out the Canaanites and brought them in.

2. *For what He is.* He is their God. So they will serve Him.

May not we say the same? What has He not done for us?

Given food and all temporal mercies. (Rom. viii. 32.)

Redeemed our life from destruction. (Ps. ciii. 4.)

Put down Satan under our feet. (Rom. xvi. 20.)

III. DIFFICULTIES OF SERVING GOD. (19—24.) People must not think it an easy thing to serve God.

(*a*) *He is a holy God*—cannot look on the least sin. Are they prepared to give up all sin?

(*b*) *He is a jealous God.* Will they give Him undivided service.

(*c*) *He punishes sin.* He will consume those who forsake Him. So the choice is again put before the people. What is their decision? Notice that this choice for them and all must be—

(*a*) *Voluntary*, and not of compulsion.

(*b*) *Individual*—must decide for ourselves.

Ask God for grace to make it now.

Examples of those who made the choice and left it—Saul, King of Israel, began well, but disobeyed God. Judas became disciple; fell through love of money. Demas forsook Christianity, loving the world too well. (2 Tim. iv. 10.)

Examples of those who made the choice and kept it—Joseph—good son, brother, slave, prince. Moses—faithful in ungodly palace. (Heb. xi. 25.) Samuel—served God from childhood to old age.

LESSON.

"Make you His service your delight,
He'll make your wants His care."

A WALK DOWN A CHINESE STREET.

BY THE REV. W. T. A. BARBER, M.A., MISSIONARY AT WUCHANG, CENTRAL CHINA.



A CHINESE STREET.



A CONFUCIANIST SCHOLAR.

COME with me down the main street of the city in which I live. It is in the heart of China, uncontaminated by the hybrid influences of foreign trade. Not here will you see the many English signboards of wondrous spelling and miraculous grace the streets of the coast ports. Not here, as in Hongkong or Shanghai, will you buy your wares of Cheap Jack & Co., Ship Chandlers, or Happy Tom & Co., Limited, Tailors & Outfitters, nor will you get your bread from Sing Song, European Loafer. It is true that one unhappy wight, aiming at the mysterious reputation attaching to foreign goods, has raised an English signboard even here in Wuchang. Often did it puzzle me as I read—

RINESEYEUG
ESENIHC
EPEEKEROTS—

until one day an older resident suggested that I should read it backwards, and then I realised that somebody with an unpronounceable name, *Senior, Chinese Storekeeper*, dwelt within. Still this is but the fly in the pot of ointment. Let us be as exclusive as the Chinaman himself, and banish all signs of the "foreign devil," while we see China pure and unalloyed.

Streets from six to twelve feet wide, filled from morning to night with a ceaseless throng. Every man is black-haired, the fore-part of his head is shaven, while behind him hangs the long queue imposed by the Manchu conquerors. Here come the coolies, in blue jackets and blue knickerbockers, barefooted or straw-sandalled, with a bamboo across the shoulders, carrying heavy weights, and singing, "Eh ho, ah ho, ay ho-li!" like all the brethren of their craft east of the Mediterranean. This man with long flowing robe, wide sleeves, huge horn-rimmed spectacles, slow swaggering gait, languid-fluttering fan, evidently a very important person indeed, is in fact a Confucianist scholar. Here totters along a woman on her tiny three-inch feet, clad in gay embroidered jacket and delicate silk skirt, perhaps a small silver-mounted tobacco-pipe in her hand, her head adorned with strange hirsute structures like a carving-knife, a trencher, a flying swallow, or what not, a touch of rouge to cheeks and lips, while white powder gives mistiness to full-fleshed facial charms. Here a small boy, if it be winter, gaily dressed in brilliant colours, a perfect ball of many wrappings—if it be summer, equally gaily dressed in the not unbecoming garb of his yellow skin alone.

For vehicles look at yon sedan chair, borne by two or three men. In it sits a gentleman, elegantly clad in white or flowered silk or in costly furs, according to the season. If there be four or even eight bearers you will have timely warning, for this is a mandarin; before him runs a motley crowd of retainers beating gongs, carrying tablets inscribed "Be silent," "Make way." Villainous-looking fellows, with steeple-crowned Guy Fawkes' hats, armed with whips, mouthing out uncouth cries, are the lictors of the great man. Others carry the great silk umbrella, the badge of office, meant for the official, should he ever wish to move his heavy well-fed body, with its impassive self-content, from his chair. This is an event which rarely occurs; in fact, it is an awful thought to an Englishman that sitting in a chair and scolding are the most violent forms of exercise in which a mandarin ever indulges. On the breast of his handsome silk robe he bears embroidered some strange bird or beast, which marks his rank; on his hat a button, blue, red, crystal, or gold, according to his dignity, and, if he be distinguished, a one-eyed or even two-eyed peacock's feather. Occasionally some disturber of the peace, spied *flagrante delicto* from the chair, is promptly thrown down in the street, stripped and beaten.

Here comes clattering and jingling along a small pony, which bears a military official; none but one accustomed to the rough life of camps would use so fatiguing a mode of locomotion. This miserable unkempt being, howling a dismal ditty, and rattling together two bamboo slips, is a beggar. It is as well to give him the microscopic dole he claims, for he will stay there, inert but vocal, till he gains his point. Such a one has been known to commit suicide in a determinately parsimonious shop in order to bring its owner into trouble with the authorities.

Avoid this man carrying odorous buckets through the crowd; his burden is liquid manure, which will shortly fertilise the gardens outside the city; so hold your nose and look at the stalls—for, narrow as are the streets, there are numerous stalls, fixed or moving.

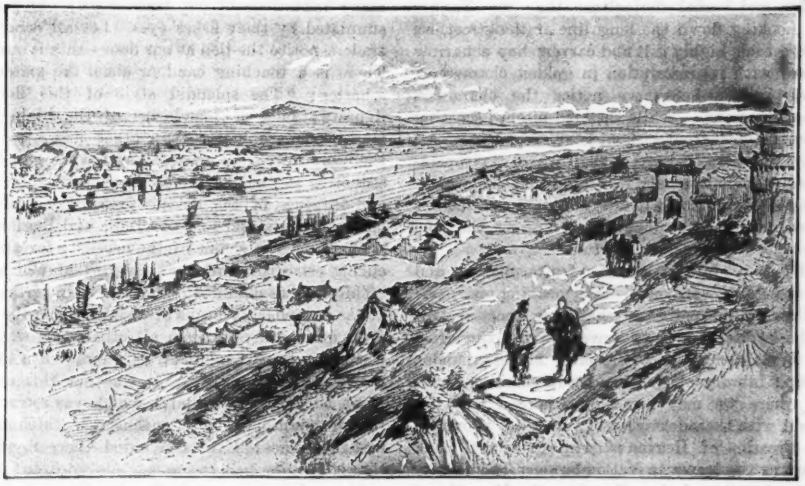
Here is the barber, the best patronised of all the tradesmen of China. There are the little portable hot-water stands, and other implements of his trade, and at every street corner he may be seen shaving the head, combing the tresses, plaiting the queue, and shampooing the back of his clients.

Here is the stall of the quack doctor, who sells phials full of abomination to the unsuspecting crowd. His surgical operations are calmly carried on amidst the bustle of the street. Now he grubs about in some poor patient's inflamed eye, and pretends to extract maggots; now he digs needles an inch or two into all parts of an afflicted frame, with the inquiry, "Now you feel better, don't you?" or again, he prescribes pills to be taken eighty a day until relief ensues.

Here is a dentist with a large tray of ancient extracted molars and incisors, "*pour encourager les autres*;" he, too, professes to cure toothache by extracting grubs from the teeth.

The travelling tinker with his portable forge makes day hideous with his metallic advertisement, and will mend your kettle or solder your broken spectacles on the spot. The peripatetic cobbler sits down at the street corner and mends the well-worn shoes entrusted him by the housewife yonder. Here is the vendor of false hair for pigtails, here the seller of false tresses for women, each with his own peculiar cry.

Yonder stall with its small oven is for confectionery; and rice-cakes, pork-balls greasy with oil, and joyously spiced with garlic, together with sweetmeats of various hue and taste, are always sure of customers. Near by is the large tea-house, where harmless willow-leaves and water, under the generic name of tea, afford pleasing distraction and gossip to leisurely



WUCHANG AND THE YANG-TZE-KIANG.

groups of loiterers, or the contents of bowls of impossible-looking messes are disappearing rapidly, with the help of chop-sticks, down eager throats.

Yonder hurries along with shouts and mirth a long double line of boys clad in soiled scarlet, with bedraggled feathers erect upon their heads, bearing tablets, and of men bearing tinsel sceptres, paper pagodas, fans, umbrellas, and all manner of gifts. This is the wedding procession escorting a bride in the closed chair, all gorgeous in crimson and gold, while a body of long-robed low-bowing gentlemen bring up the rear. That shrill mournful music of fifes and drums marks a funeral. Many are the tatterdemalions hired for a few cash to carry tablets bearing inscriptions complimentary to the deceased; many the priests burning crackers and scattering paper money to appease the spirits; soon comes a cock bound and borne aloft to delude any wandering goblin of malevolent intent into the belief that all the fuss is about the bird and not about the corpse. Then follow chairs draped in white, containing the women of the household, whose well-trained moaning can be heard through the muffled windows; the chief mourner, draped in sackcloth, walks before the coffin, and is supported in the supposed agony of his grief by assistant mourners on right and left. Then, borne by two-and-thirty men, comes the huge dragon-shaped bier on which rests the coffin on its way to sepulture outside the city gates.

Here the eye is caught by a blank wall-front surmounted by two great masts with square cross-trees high aloft. This is the official residence of a magistrate or other mandarin, and is known for good or evil fame as a *Yamen*. Here justice is administered in fashion more or less paternal with a view to the support of sundry legal retainers. That litigation is not without its expenses may well be believed. "The entrance of the yamen is very wide" says the Chinese proverb, "the exit very narrow."

It takes but a short time to convince the stranger that the Chinese East is even more prodigal of honorifics and verbal floriculture than the Yankee West. Looking down the long line of the street, we see before each highly gilt and carven shop a narrow signboard with its inscription in golden characters.

As we pass a house we notice the characters "Eternal Harmony"—while the loud-pitched scolding of a woman's voice from without lends emphasis. "All Pewasive Honesty" adorns a shop where a vituperative countryman is loudly declaring that the vendor is a cheat. Over the windows of an opium den is inscribed "Inhale the clouds, and breathe the joy; this dynasty's special good fortune."

Yonder is a stall with a few fruits upon it, and the motto "One word all"—its meaning is made more clear by the perpetual chaffering necessary for a purchase. Here is the "Retreat of the three-fold Senior Wrangler," where groceries change hands; here the "Library of the three Supreme Constellations," where we may buy buns; here a store resplendent with the adornment of yesterday "Founded at the Creation of Heaven;" while we have, thick scattered as the leaves in Vallombrosa, "The Galaxy of Virtue," "Superlative Happiness," "Magnificent Universal Peace," "Ten-thousandfold Beauty" "Assembled Gems." A bank is adorned "Abundance through Circulation;" and indeed, considering that the only coin in use is of value so small that three hundred of them strung together would amount to one shi. 'ng; and that should you wish to pay a bill of a couple of pounds you have a full load for a coolie, we may well understand that there is at any rate "abundance *in* circulation."

Yon dingy place filled with monstrous forms of tigers' teeth, crocodiles, malefactors' gall-bladders, newts' and dragons' scales, is a medicine shop, and reposes in dignity under the device, "The Hall of Benevolence and Longevity." Enter its doors and you will be informed, "The elixir confers long life on the world, the herb of good omen confers immortality;" or again "This shop collects medicine from every province and place, and inherits ancient methods of preparing drugs. Though none may be here to see our compounding, yet with a stout heart we can say that 'Heaven knows.'" This undertaker's workshop has its ready-made coffins piled up, a suitable present for the season, all marked euphemistically enough, "Long life." No more delicate attention can be shown than to present an elderly friend with his coffin.

Here is the advertisement of a comb-seller: "This establishment manufactures on the premises beautiful combs for the dragon and the phœnix, some made of boxwood, others marked like the knots of a bamboo; pairs fitting like the hawk and his mate; ten sorts fit for the use of the palace. Combs of strange forms and wondrous workmanship. All kept in stock. No customers will be neglected."

The sellers of scents and rouges must drive a profitable trade, for there is a great family resemblance between the advertisements of our home papers and the following: "We have penetrated throughout the Empire to obtain all manner of famous perfumes; we have spared no labour or expense to produce faces fair as a jewel statue, and perfumes fit for the palace. Our fame has spread far and wide. Now, there are many imitations of our trade-mark; our pearls are simulated by their fishes' eyes. Let all scholars and traders notice the lion at our door—this is our mark." There is a touching candour about the statement of a hatter: "The splendid style of this flourishing dynasty; hats of mandarins of the highest rank. Our goods are better than other men's, we cannot therefore lower our prices." And what can be more seductive to the martyr to corns than this: "Boots and leggings of the Peking pattern; boots of good omen and universal peace." India and England share with China the shame of the necessity for the opium curing establishment, the signboard of which states, "This hall has obtained its method from across the sea. It has a wonderful means of weaning from the foreign drug, quite different from all others; in seven days the craving can be cured; we guarantee a cure, and that you will thank us." It was not this establishment, but a foreign hospital, which was recommended for an opium cure by an enthusiastic Chinaman—"A first-rate place; I've been cured there myself four times!"

Some of us who watch the development and hope

for the welfare of the Chinese national character sometimes reflect rather sadly as to the effect of centuries of all this abuse of words, which have thus lost all the heart of their meaning, and fear that we detect a corresponding loss of heart in the morality of the people, notwithstanding many a lofty moral maxim, hoary with age, dignifying the pages of Confucian sages. And yet there is a contentment and good humour very attractive, a cheeriness and industry very hopeful in this folk; and although in moments of passion and mob-rule they sometimes rise and burn our houses, and though in their ordinary horse-play they indicate plainly our infernal origin and emphasise the belief with gibes and stones, yet we who know them find much to love and esteem; and, now that China is awaking from the sleep of ages, we anticipate with intense interest the mighty part she is to play in the world's arena in the centuries to come.

A NEW YORK PHILANTHROPIST.

"HUMANITY" is literally written above the doorway of the fine and commodious building situated at Fourth Avenue and Twenty-Second Street, New York, which is the home of the "American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals." And the figure of the horse pawing the air above the portico, together with the big stuffed Newfoundland dog on guard within, are significant of the application here given to the august mottoes of Justice and Mercy sculptured on the exterior. The work that finds its centre in these offices, and which has been for long a salutary and an acknowledged power, not only in the Empire City, but far and wide through the United States, was commenced in 1865 by the noble and self-denying man whom we have selected as the subject of this paper.

At the age of sixty-five Henry Bergh has recently passed away, and America has lost one of her best and bravest sons, a friend of the friendless, a protector of the dumb and the despised, an unshrinking foe to every species of oppression and cruelty, and an advocate who never tired in pleading the cause of the weak, whether animals or children. Every breathing thing was dear to Henry Bergh's heart, and his career was informed by the spirit of the often quoted, but never too hackneyed couplet of Coleridge:—

> "He prayeth well who loveth well
> Both man, and bird, and beast."

The stories of such lives are not only full of interest, but are weighty with instruction, and possessed of an influence which is sure to beget in other cases a similar devotion to high and worthy objects. However succinctly told, there is refreshing stimulus in the narrative of a gallant crusade against callous wrong.

While proving in his own person the might of individual conviction and individual effort to force a path through the dismal resistance of apathy and indifference, and ultimately to stamp the desired impress on the rubber-like surface of popular opinion, it was also Henry Bergh's avowed belief that he was an instance of providential adaptation of means to ends. The task was waiting and the man was provided. When the hour struck for the inauguration of the reform, he, the instrument, was equipped with adequate means—employing this last word in its widest sense. He had money at his command. Robust health, great bodily strength, and an imposing presence were his. Extensive travel had given him the alert, cosmopolitan mind; and mixing with all sorts and conditions of men had trained him in dialectical skill, and provided him with the self-confidence—at the antipodes of conceit—which alone could carry him unwavering to his goal.

The New York Berghs were (as the name might suggest) of German extraction. But the migration took place at a date anterior even to the era of Washington. Henry Bergh's father began at the bottom of the ladder, and ended in a good old age in great repute as the chief ship-builder of his time in the Republic. Christian Bergh had amassed a considerable fortune, and of this a third share came to his son Henry. The young man held with Goethe that it is to give room for wandering that the world was made so wide, and though he had entered Columbia College, he left it, as his friends probably thought, prematurely, and sailed for that warm-coloured Europe which continually fires the imagination of Young America.

For upwards of a decade he was a veritable bird of passage, journeying from country to country, or paying flying visits to his native land as the caprice seized him.

One momentous step he took which might never be recalled: he married a lady of his own city. At this time his leanings were apparently less towards philanthropy than towards literature and the drama. He wrote various plays—for the most part unacted—and poems, which duly appeared in the glory of type, but achieved no special success.

All this in later years he came to consider as so much "drill." And certainly there can be no better discipline for possessing the soul in patience under the difficulties and delays of a stiff up-hill struggle than a protracted waiting on the word of publisher and theatre manager.

The family had deserved well of the State, and Henry Bergh was not now wanting in personal qualifications for serving his country in an important post. He was sent to St. Petersburg in 1862 as Secretary to

the American Legation. It was war time, and in this way Henry Bergh was removed from the immediate vortex of the strife His stay in Russia was, however, brief, the climate threatening him with a serious break-down in health.

But already had been struck the key-note of the work to which his mature life, with its rich store of energy and address, was to be yielded as a free-will sacrifice. In the northern capital his spirit had again and again been stirred by the sight of wanton cruelties wreaked on helpless and inoffensive beasts. And elsewhere during his travels he had observed how small was the average compunction in inflicting pain on members of the brute creation. Indignant at barbarities which seemed to exist to a greater or less degree in every land, he formed the resolve to dedicate the residue of his days to a grappling with the genius of cruelty, wherever found, and, above all, to seek to save his own people from the stigma.



HENRY BERGH.
(From a Photograph by Sarony, New York.)

Returning to New York by way of England, heart and brain dominated by his new project, Henry Bergh paused in London to investigate the modes of action of an English "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals," which had been carrying on its operations with varying success for a period of forty years, and of which Lord Harrowby was then president.

It is startling to reflect that up till 1822 there was no law on any statute-book to preserve animals from torture. As the writer of the article on Isaac Walton, in the "Book of Days," remarks: "Strange as it may seem, compassion for animals is a virtue the coming in of which may be remembered by living men." The prime mover in the matter had been Richard Martin, representative of an Irish county in the British House of Commons. He fought hard for what in his day was commonly considered an amiable craze, and ultimately induced the English Legislature to pass an Act which threw the shield of just and reasonable protection over cattle. The coming into force of "Martin's Act" led to the organisation of a society to see that its provisions were duly put in force. And it had soon come to be manifest that only the start had been made. A wide field of labour opened out before the gradually instructed gaze of those who had enlisted under the banner of humanity. From point to point the Society had advanced, until a valuable system of penal checks of proved efficacy everywhere held back the ruthless hand in the United Kingdom.

Henry Bergh could have found no better adviser than the nobleman who, in the year of the former's visit, was not a nominal, but an active working president of the English Society of friends of animals. Lord Harrowby had bestowed patient care in mastering both theory and practice of the onerous problem:

how to inculcate humanity into the hearts and lives of a whole people.

Reaching New York towards the end of 1864, the man with a mission was apparently in no hurry. The final phases of a contest which had become patently to all the world an anti-slavery war were occupying men's minds, and so space was afforded for the consolidation of purpose. At length Henry Bergh went abroad with his plans and solicited countenance and aid in giving them effect. His proposals were welcomed with warm approval, and a declaration affirming the principles of the new society was speedily drawn up, and received the signatures of seventy of his most influential fellow-citizens, amongst the names appended being those of Horace Greeley, editor of *The New York Tribune*, and, later, a candidate for the Presidency, George Bancroft, John Jacob Astor, and Alexander T. Stewart. In the spring of 1866 the Society became a legal entity, with Henry Bergh, as was fitting, at its head. Precipitation had been as absent from the commencement of the enterprise as hesitancy and sluggishness were from its prosecution.

And from that April day, twenty-two years ago, to the end, there was no more earnest and determined worker in any vineyard of philanthropy within American borders than this brilliant son of the old carpenter who had become a builder of war-ships. The yoke had not been taken up in haste to be laid down in swift repentance or in disappointed dudgeon.

Laws, to a considerable extent on English models, were procured from State Legislatures, and Henry Bergh made it his duty to see that they were not empty verbiage merely. He went into the streets, and may be said to have literally walked down the plague of open cruelty—demoralising to both perpetrator and careless spectator. In a very little while he was currently labelled as one of the eccentrics of the Empire city. The scoffer took him in hand, and poisoned barbs of satire were launched at him even from quarters whence better things might have been expected. But there was no flinching. He went on his chosen path through a storm of ridicule with the same calm reticent persistence with which he would have encountered a hailstorm from winter heavens. And the brunt of the onset was soon over, even if a few laggard gibes dropped here and there in his way when most of his neighbours had detected the hero in the seeming meddler.

He was ubiquitous. None knew where to expect him, or—if they were offenders—from round what corner Nemesis might fix them with a glance of indignant reproach. With absolute indifference to personal comfort he made the night as day in his quest for cases of gross inhumanity. His career was a long campaign. Very few forms of cruelty escaped without eliciting at least his sturdy protest. He entered the lists of controversy with those members of the medical profession who practised and defended vivisection, quite careless of offending that *amour propre* of scientists which once found expression in the bitter comparison of Dr. Klein, who remarked that foreign opinion, unlike English, "*assumed* that men of science, like men in general, have *conscience* enough not needlessly to hurt brute animals."

By continued interference he remedied the wrongs inflicted on the over-driven and over-loaded hacks of the city roadways. He struck sharp and telling blows against the brutal pastimes which still lingered in the haunts of the lowest type New Yorker. His untiring vigilance made dog-fighting, cock-fighting, and the like, sports which could only be indulged in where the probability of arrest was regarded with indifference.

And he did not refrain from charging cruelty against the rich in the matter of their pigeon-shooting matches. So well-established by this time was Henry Bergh's influence and authority, that yet again he was victorious, and the evil fashion was largely abandoned.

Knowing that publicity—especially in the early stages of the movement—was half the battle, he seized every opportunity of attracting attention to the existence and aims of his Society. He spoke upon platforms and he pleaded in the courts. A notable instance of both his thoroughness and his lynx eye for effect was the celebrated "turtle case," which occurred almost at the beginning of the agitation. New York buys turtles, and Henry Bergh observed that these creatures were imported alive tied together like huge beads upon a string, by a cord passed through punctured holes in their "flippers." The daring investigator arrested one ship-captain and the whole of his crew, and placed them at the bar on a charge of unnecessary cruelty. It was a much-discussed trial, and although the judge discharged the prisoners Henry Bergh's object was in the main attained. The right of even a turtle to considerate treatment was brought home to the popular mind.

There is this conspicuous feature about works of love: they are cumulative. The wish to "do noble things, not dream them," strengthens with performance, and new chances of usefulness seem ever to be presenting themselves to men and women who are ready to embrace them.

It was so with Henry Bergh. He had founded a great institution, had breathed mercy into a people's life and law, had fairly throttled the old base and brutal superstition that man had no duties towards the beast that served him. But this was not the extent of Henry Bergh's humanitarian endeavour. In 1874 the head of the Society (American) for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals rescued from heartless ill-treatment a little girl, and, touched by child need, he was an instrument in setting on foot another society—for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

The familiar form has vanished, and admiring strangers will no more describe to hotel waiters the outward presentment of a spare muscular figure, tall, erect, of military bearing, conventionally attired, but winning wondering notice from the conscious right of compelling a pause in the traffic-tide to rescue some suffering beast of burden. The answer will no more be heard "You mean Henry Bergh." But it is certain that for many generations America will keep green the memory of her valiant volunteer soldier of peace and good-will.

RICH MAN AND BEGGAR.

BY THE REV. GORDON CALTHROP, M.A.

I WILL take for granted (as I know I may) that you are all of you familiar with the narrative of Dives and Lazarus.

There are few parts of Holy Scripture better known, and perhaps I might say, few parts more keenly discussed, than the parable in which our Lord describes the character and destinies of the Rich Man and the Beggar.

I. Now that parable presents to us—as of course you have observed—a succession of contrasts. There is, first, the contrast between the rich and the poor. It is put before us with a very few strokes of the Saviour's pencil, and with an utter absence of effort or elaboration; but anything more striking, more graphic, more life-like, can hardly be imagined. The wealthy man, in his beautifully furnished house, waited on by a crowd of servants; seated in splendid dress, in purple and fine linen, at the head of a luxurious table; surrounded by well-satisfied and complimentary guests, enjoying the flattering speeches about his well-known hospitality, and his choice dishes, and his wine, and his pictures, and his plate, and his flowers; and living this kind of life continually, day after day, or only exchanging the pleasures of Jerusalem for the pleasures of his country seat on the banks of the lovely lake of Galilee—why, we almost seem to know the man! We almost, at all events, feel that we have met him somewhere.

And, then, that other figure, covered with rags that are scarcely sufficient for purposes of decency, huddled together miserably—not on the door-step of the lordly mansion, but outside the outer gates, at a spot from which he cannot conveniently be ordered off—well, we seem to know him also!

Poor fellow! he has no friends, or only such as think him a nuisance and a burden. They have brought him—they bring him, day by day: it is as much as they will do—and roughly put him down at the rich man's gate. "Let the rich man take care of him!"

And, indeed, if the wretched Lazarus had really been cared for, his condition would have been far from being so desperate as it is. Had he medicine and nursing, or even if he had good food, and plenty of it, those frightful ulcers of his might perhaps disappear altogether. But he does not get enough to eat as he lies there. Crumbs and remnants are occasionally tossed to him by the servants in a kind of contemptuous pity, but he is always hungry, always unsatisfied; he pines away within sight of that lavish profusion, and his feeble body becomes at last so feeble that he has no strength to drive off the street dogs, that come sniffing round him, and put out their tongues to lick his sores.

Why is it that these two persons are thus brought together—these two extremities of the social scale?—this man, in his miserable squalor and penury, and that other man, in the brightness of his splendid and luxurious life. Why? Because God would give us the opportunity of removing—or, at least, of mitigating, the social inequalities which exist amongst us. We hold our good things in trust for the benefit of others, and the others are placed by our side for the purpose of receiving the benefit. Have we wealth? It is to be used for those who are poor. Have we intellectual power or learning? We are to employ it for those who are ignorant or stupid. Have we spiritual insight, holiness, or any gift of grace? The gift is not for ourselves; but we are to strive, God blessing us, to lift others up to our level—to enable others to see what we see, to help others to enter into the power and the joy into which we have been admitted ourselves, and to make them partakers with us in the common bounty of the bountiful Lord.

II. In the second place, there is the contrast between the characters of the two individuals.

The beggar is called Lazarus, which means "God is my help." The name, no doubt, is significant, and we infer, from the fact of its being given, as well as from the sequel of the narrative, that the beggar was a godly man. Now, in such circumstances as his, godliness might well be regarded as a phenomenon of a somewhat remarkable kind. It is comparatively easy to be good when we are comfortable. But constant pain and misery bring with them terrible temptations. Affliction in itself has no power to lead the soul to God, or to create the Christian character; indeed, it not unfrequently tends to an entirely opposite result. It hardens and embitters, by suggesting thoughts of the Divine injustice, or, at least, of the Divine inattention to our particular case.

Add to this peril—and it was one, of course, to which Lazarus was exposed—the other peril arising from the constant contemplation of the abundance enjoyed by his wealthy and prosperous neighbour.

Not a few persons nowadays are inclined to deny the existence—or, if not the existence, the power—of God, because He permits such unbridled luxury at one end of the social scale and such appalling destitution at the other. We should not have been much surprised if the poor sufferer of the parable had been irritated into impiety on this very score. What was he to think of a Supreme Governor of the Universe who had left him in hopeless hunger, whilst He heaped upon that other man—that other

man who lived within his very sight—a perfect load of superfluous indulgence?

But if such thoughts ever crossed the mind of Lazarus they were never harboured there. He bore his burden meekly, patiently, uncomplainingly. It was his business to submit to the will and to believe in the love of the Heavenly Father. And he left the solution of this and other apparently insoluble problems to the revelation of the better and brighter day which he believed to be coming. If he had no help in man, at all events he had help in God.

We turn now to the other figure—to Dives, as we are accustomed to call him. What is to be said about him and his character?

Well, you cannot fail to have observed that no specific offence or sin whatever is laid to his charge. In the heading of the chapter he is, indeed, spoken of as "the rich glutton;" but those headings are of no authority, and, in this particular instance, the interpretation given is manifestly and glaringly incorrect. If the man had been a sensualist the Saviour would have said so. But he is nothing of the kind. He is rich; but, although there may be peril, there is no sin in the possession of riches. He dresses finely; but it is in accordance with his rank and station. He fares sumptuously; but we discover no trace of even an approximation to excess in his magnificent banquets. Nor is there any hint of fraud throughout the entire narration. The man has not become wealthy by the false balance and the light weight, or by any other of the tricks of trade. He has not contrived schemes for sweeping into his coffers the portion of the orphan, the pittance of the widow, the hard earnings and savings of laborious and ill-requited toilers. He has been characterised, so far as appears, by integrity and honour; and the property which he possesses has either descended to him by legitimate inheritance, or is the produce of his own industry and perseverance, of his own capability and success.

And yet, again, Dives is not an unbeliever, in the ordinary sense of the term. He would exclaim, and justly exclaim, against your uncharity, if you stigmatised him as such. He is an orthodox Jew, accepting, so far as intellectual acceptance goes, the orthodox creed: never openly scoffing against the faith, and never ostentatiously absenting himself from the appointed ceremonies and ordinances of the Church to which he belongs. His friends and associates—the guests who assemble at his luxurious board—would never dream, of course, of saying that he was a religious man; but still less would they detect in his life and conduct any valid and tangible reason why he should be shut out from the Kingdom of Heaven.

Where then is the blot upon which we have to put our finger? It lies here: in his utter lack of the feeling of brotherly love. This deficiency I shall try to analyse by-and-by. Meantime, let me say broadly that Dives was selfish, selfish to the core. He valued his fellow-men so far as they could minister to his own indulgence or gratification; but when matters passed beyond that limit he had not a single thought or care to bestow upon them. Then they were to him simply as though they existed not.

III. There is a third contrast—which we may just mention and dismiss—the contrast between the deaths of the two personages who appear in the narrative.

Lazarus is the first to go. He has run his weary race to its end. He has quitted the world which was to him little else than a hopeless scene of misery and suffering, and he enters into rest. His poor, wretched, diseased carcase is shuffled into a pauper's grave! But the angels, we are told, came to carry his emancipated spirit to the calm abode of the blessed dead.

The rich man follows, but after an interval. Is it that a longer space is given to him to repent in? Probably so. But if so, the opportunity is not improved, and the last illness comes to a hardened and impenitent man.

And then when the illness comes there is the muffled knocker at the door, and the calls of friends to inquire, and the frequently issued bulletin registering the fluctuation and the progress of the disease, and the constant attendance of the best medical skill of the city, and the sedulous nursing, and the carefully prepared delicacies to tempt the appetite of the invalid—in fact, all that money can do to avert the clutch of Death from his destined prey. But Death is not to be deceived! He knows his victim, and he strides in, with uplifted dart—through the crowd of friends, up the soft-carpeted staircase, and into the luxurious bedroom, pushing the physicians aside—and, with one blow, the end has come, and the earthly career of the rich man is over!

A few hours more—for Oriental habits permit of no delayed interments—and the splendid funeral makes its appearance in the streets, and with it the muffled conversation of the crowd, alternating between regrets at the loss of the good dinners, which Dives was famous for giving, and speculations as to the amount of money that he will be found, when his will is opened, to have left behind him.

Ay, there are some marked differences between the funeral of Lazarus and the funeral of Dives, and amongst them is this—that, in the one case, we have the angels without the procession; and in the other case we have the procession without the angels!

IV. We have now to consider a fourth contrast, and a more painful one than any which has preceded.

The curtain which hangs between this world and the next is lifted for a moment by the hand of Christ, and, looking in, we behold the two figures again, but in circumstances exactly reversed. The poor beggar is at rest—really at rest. His bodily sufferings—his miserable circumstances—have been replaced by the calm enjoyment of a soul that lies in the light of God's love. The contempt with which

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he was regarded whilst upon earth is now a thing of the past. He is held in honour; seated as it were in the chief place at the heavenly banquet. The rich man is in torment—spiritual torment, if you like—I mean such as a spirit can feel, for the flesh is in the grave, but torment still; torment which the Saviour compares to the effect of the action of fire on the sensitive human frame.

V. We need not push the description further. We will pause here, to ask ourselves why this extraordinary change of condition has taken place. Now there is one thing that we may be sure of: that there is nothing arbitrary or capricious in the respective allotments. The future life is only the continuation, but under different circumstances, of the present life; and in both the cases with which we are now concerned there can be no question that the conduct upon earth has found its necessary and unavoidable development in the unseen world. Both Lazarus and Dives have gone to "their own place."

Lazarus has had "evil things"—pain, hunger, scorn, contempt, weariness, misery generally. "Evil things!" These things, in themselves considered, are evil. But the "evil things" have wrought in him the heavenly temper. By means of them he has come to patience, to submission, to trust, to love—in a word, to that value for God Himself which makes men fit for the presence of God.

We must not suppose for a moment that the whole matter is a mere restoration of balance—the present happiness being regarded as an equitable compensation for the past distress. It is not so. Rather take it thus: that the man's character is suited to the circumstances in which he finds himself placed; and that that character has been gradually formed within him during the painful discipline of his sojourn upon earth.

But what we affirm about Lazarus applies to the rich man also. Dives is suffering terribly; but he is not suffering because he was rich while on earth. His suffering arises from the fact that he is at the present moment placed in uncongenial circumstances. There may be superadded misery. I do not know. But the explanation I give is quite sufficient to account for all that we find in the narrative.

Why is it that you and I live in such comfort in this world? It is on account of the perfect correspondence between our bodily frames and the environment in which they are placed. Change the conditions, and you know what will follow. Let the air which we inhale, let the water which we drink, be composed of new elements, or the old elements in a new combination—let the light by which we see be ruled by different laws; and then, although we ourselves remained the same, we should be plunged in absolute misery; for every sound would be a discord, every sight a distortion, every scent an offence, every breath a distressing and an agonising gasp.

This fact enables us, I think, to understand the unhappiness of the condition of Dives. He has not been when upon earth what we call a "bad" man. No, but he has been a worldly man; and he has not prepared himself—he has not fitted himself—he has not qualified himself for the novel circumstances into which he passed when he entered the unseen world. "Thou hast had *thy* good things," says Abraham to him—that is to say, the things which thou didst consider worth having: the wealth, the splendour, the pleasure, the self-indulgence, the honour and respect of this world. This was all that Dives really cared for. At this, and this alone, he aimed. And now, with the appetite still strong within him, because it has been pampered so long, he finds himself in a condition where these objects of his desire are not to be found, and where he hungers and thirsts—but hungers and thirsts in vain—for his accustomed gratifications. This I call being placed in uncongenial circumstances.

Moreover, consider that Dives—an unspiritual man—was transferred to a region which is essentially spiritual. "He loveth not." That is clear enough. He may care for his family, for his relatives—such affection being, of course, consistent with the most intense worldliness; but of the love for man *as man*—the love which the Spirit of God inspires in the heart of the Christian—of such a love it is obvious that he knows absolutely nothing. We cannot even conceive of him as sacrificing himself—as denying himself—or, indeed, as putting himself to any amount of inconvenience, or disturbance, or loss whatever, for the sake of the grandest enterprise that was ever started for the benefit of the human race. No! "He loveth not!" and, as a consequence, "he knoweth not God." That is to say, he has nothing about his character of the character of God. How then can he be happy when brought in the next world into direct, into immediate contact with God? It is impossible that he should be. It is contrary to the nature of things that he should be. There must be sympathy with God, there must be God-likeness—if we may coin such a word—before we can be "at home" in the presence of God. The sun pours his gracious radiance on the earth, and under his illuminating touch the meadow, and the flower, and the copse, the fresh foliage of the tree and the ripple of the stream, put on new beauty, and all nature rejoices. But there is one thing which participates not in the general exultation, but shrinks, and recoils, and cowers before him, and that is—the inflamed and disordered human eye.

VI. Observe, then, I pray you, the conclusion of the whole matter. If, when our time comes for us to go hence and be no more seen, we would enter into rest, we must have acquired whilst in life the spiritual character—the likeness to Christ which God the Holy Ghost produces in the people of Christ. It is not enough that we should be free from vice, should be hospitable, and upright, and should so live as that men should speak well of us. The

important question is—Have we the mind of Christ? Do we resemble Christ? Do we understand and practise the spiritual life? Do we know what it is to value God for Himself, and to take delight in spiritual intercourse and communion with Him? If so, it is well. If not, the sooner we wake from our dream the better; for it will not be well to open our eyes at last, and find ourselves side by side with the wealthy and self-indulgent worldling in his dungeon of torment.

"And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

MEMORABLE LETTERS AND THEIR WRITERS.—I.

BY THE REV. ROBERT SHINDLER.



ST. PAUL WRITING HIS EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

LETTER-WRITING dates from a very early period. It has been said that the art was first practised by Atasso, a daughter of Cyrus the Great and the mother of Xerxes; but it had a much earlier origin, as, hundreds of years before her birth, we find David, King of Israel, writing a letter to one of his military captains, and the fact is recorded without any note as to the peculiarity or novelty of the circumstance.

Letters have often been made vehicles of instruction, in which the lessons have been imparted in a close and familiar manner, as if steeped in the true spirit of friendship and all aglow with love, being thus so much the more calculated to win their purpose of improvement and edification.

The Divinely inspired letters of St. Paul and other Apostolic writers are at once the earliest, the most perfect, the most powerful, and the most precious of such productions. Each of these writers has his own peculiarities: each one is himself. And yet, while the peculiarities of each writer are constantly apparent, there is also equally manifest a substantial unity in spirit, in sentiment, and aim.

In the case of letters of the didactic and the

consolatory order, the writer and the reader appear in closer connection than is the case in oral instruction. There is a nearer and more familiar intercourse—a face-to-face and a heart-with-heart communion—an entering together into the secret chambers of friendship, which actual distance of place one from the other rather intensifies than lessens.

The personal element appears in all the letters of St. Paul addressed to the different Christian Churches; and the same feature is manifest in the "General" Epistles of St. John, St. Peter, St. James, and St. Jude. But in the letters of St. Paul to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, and in the letters of St. John to the Elect Lady and to Gaius, there is a greater familiarity indulged by the writer, and the friend and the brother are more apparent than the teacher and the Apostle, while sympathy, solicitous care, cordial approval of what is excellent, and the purest affection, flow forth in every line. This is the case, too, though in a less degree, in many letters penned by uninspired writers, such as Samuel Rutherford, Dr. Watts, Dr. Doddridge, the poet Cowper, and the Rev. John Newton.

The exquisite refinement, gracious maturity of thought, and thoroughly Christian gentlemanliness of St. John's letter to the Elect Lady places it in the front rank of such literature, apart from its Divine inspiration.

Of other letters Divinely inspired we may take St. Paul's letter to Philemon—one of the most characteristic of all the Pauline Epistles; and one in which the true dignity of Christian manhood appears to eminent advantage. His humiliating surroundings did in nowise lower the tone of his high and heavenly spirit, or weaken the backbone of his principles as a man of God.

He was a prisoner in Rome. In a sort of shanty adjoining the barracks, and outside the walls of the city, he was seated with the soldier to whom he was chained. With him was a young runaway slave, Onesimus, who possibly had embezzled property belonging to his master, Philemon, or had in some other way wronged him. Philemon was one of St. Paul's early converts, a man of pleasing manners and amiable disposition, and, as his name denotes, of affectionate nature, all which renewing grace had improved and developed. Onesimus had been a trusted because for a long time he had been, perhaps, a faithful servant, and, as his name also imports, a *profitable* slave; but in some way he loses his character, becomes a wanderer and something worse, and would no doubt have continued to descend but for that unseen and unknown Hand which interposed for his deliverance. He was somehow brought into contact with Paul the prisoner and his teaching, and was not only rescued from his downward course, but was made a new man in Christ Jesus, and a member of the Christian brotherhood. It may be that it is Onesimus who is writing, at Paul's dictation, this letter to Philemon, in which the aged Apostle, with "the marks of the Lord Jesus" upon him, entreats Philemon to receive again his sinning servant, not now altogether as a slave, but rather as a brother in Christ. Writing out of the fulness of his heart, he dwells—plays, almost, with his native wit—on the loving name of the master, and the now profitableness of the erring slave of former days. St. Paul urges his plea with the warm kindness of a personal friend, with the ready tact of a clever logician, and with all the weight of his own character and office. He will answer for all the shortcomings of Onesimus, and put everything straight between him and Philemon. And so he entreats Philemon to forgive and receive Onesimus, even as Christ had forgiven and received him.

Philemon would at once recognise the style and spirit of the letter as St. Paul's own, and he would be far from forgetting how much he owed the Apostle for that Gospel and that grace which he had received; but lest there should be the least shadow of suspicion of collusion in the letter, Paul seizes the pen, and scrawls in his own rugged characters the words of his last appeal and pledge:—"Receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee aught, put that to my account; *I, Paul, have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it.*" No doubt everything in this transaction turned out as the Apostle desired.

One of the most elaborate essays upon letter-writing was penned more than half a century ago by the poet James Montgomery. He has left us some very pertinent remarks:—

"In letter-writing," he says, "when the heart is earnestly engaged, the first thoughts in the first words are usually the best; for it is thoughts, not words, that are to be communicated; and meaning, not manner, which is mainly to be aimed at. The ideas that rise, and thicken as they rise—in a mind full and overflowing with its subject—voluntarily embody themselves in language the most easy and appropriate; yet they are so delicate and evanescent that, unless caught in their first forms, they soon lose their character and distinctness, blend with each other, and, from being strikingly simple in succession, become inextricably complex in association, on account of their multiplicity and affinity. The thoughts that occur in letter-writing will not stay to be questioned; they must be taken at their word, or instantly dismissed. They are like odours from a bank of violets—a breath and away."

It will be difficult to follow any chronological order in these papers; or indeed, any order; and among the vast mass of valuable and memorable letters at our disposal it will be quite impossible to give a large selection, or any adequate idea of the wealth of thoroughly Christian instruction and consolation which has been treasured up in this particular form.

Among the most precious in these respects we may mention the letters of Samuel Rutherford. In 1627, having taken his M.A. at Edinburgh, he was appointed minister of Anwoth, Kirkcudbrightshire. He was then twenty-seven years of age. He was an excellent preacher, a faithful pastor, and a man "full of faith and the Holy Ghost." His strong Presbyterian principles made him obnoxious to Charles I. and those who sought to force Episcopacy on the Scottish people. In 1636 he was deprived of his church, and sentenced to imprisonment at Aberdeen, from which place very many of his letters were sent. He was restored in 1638, and the following year was

appointed one of the ministers of St. Andrew's, and professor of divinity in the new college established there. These appointments he held until his death in 1661. The patron of the parish of Anwoth was Lord Kenmure, and many of his letters were addressed to Lady Kenmure, who seems to have had her share of sufferings and trials. She must have been a very intelligent and gracious-minded woman to have relished his deep-thoughted and spiritually minded letters. Here is one written when he had not been long settled in his parish of Anwoth, dated 27th July, 1628:—

"To the Viscountess Kenmure.

"Madam,—All dutiful obedience in the Lord remembered. I have heard of your Ladyship's infirmity and sickness and grief; yet I trust ye have learned to say, 'It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth good in His sight.' It is now many years since the apostate angels made a question, whether their will or the will of their Creator should be done, and since that time mankind have always in that suit of law compeared [mated, matched, appeared] to plead with them against God, in a daily repining against His will. But the Lord being both party and judge, hath obtained a decree, and saith, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.' It is then best for us in the obedience of faith and a holy submission, to give that to God which the law of His almighty and just power will have of us. Therefore, Madam, your Lord willeth you in all states of mind to say, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' And herein shall ye have comfort, that He who seeth perfectly through all your evils, and knoweth the frame and constitution of your nature, and what is most healthful for your soul, holdeth every cup of affliction to your head with His own gracious hand. Never believe that your tender-hearted Saviour, who knoweth the strength of your stomach, will mix that cup with one dram of poison. Drink, then, with the patience of the saints, and the God of patience bless your physic."

A very characteristic letter is one he addressed to his "Reverend and dear Brother," Mr. John Row, from his confinement at Aberdeen, 8th July, 1637:—

. . . "I love my sweet Master still, the longer the better. A sight of His Cross is more awsome than the weight of it. I think the worst things of Christ, even His reproaches and His Cross, when I look on them not with bleared eyes, far rather to be chosen than the laughter and worm-eaten joys of my adversaries. Oh, that they were as I am, except my bonds! My ministry, next to Christ, is dearest to me of anything; but I lay it down at Christ's feet for His glory and His honour as supreme Lawgiver, which is dearer to me.

"*My dear brother*,—If ye will receive the testimony of a poor prisoner of Christ, who dare not dissemble for the world, I believe certainly and expect thanks from the Prince of the kings of the earth for my poor hazards (such as they are) for His honourable cause, whom I can never enough extol for His running-over love to my sad soul since I came hither. O that I could get Him set on high and praised! I seek no more as to top and root of my desires, but that Christ may make glory to Himself and edification to the weakest out of my sufferings. I desire ye would help me both to pray and praise. Grace be with you.—Yours in the sweet Lord Jesus, S. R."

Connected with Samuel Rutherford, in something more than name, is Thomas Erskine. Nearly two centuries divide them, but one spirit unites them, and their names stand together in at least one publication.

Thomas Erskine of Linlathen had an ancestry noble in things which are above name and pedigree. Upon the death of his only brother, James, he succeeded to the Linlathen estate, and bade farewell to the Bar, where he had shone as an advocate. His piety was deep and thorough, and as he had suffered considerably earlier in life by contact and intercourse with men of shining talents, who unhappily made no profession of faith in Christ, he thought that, in retiring into private life, he would leave something as a parting testimony of his earnest faith in Christ for the benefit of his companions at the Bar. The paper was written, but remained unpublished for nine or ten years. Dr. Chalmers was editing a series of "Select Christian Authors," and requested his friend, Mr. Erskine, to write some introductions. The neglected manuscript was then brought to light, and published as an Introductory Essay to Samuel Rutherford's Letters.

Mr. Erskine's own letters, a recent volume of which has now reached a third edition, furnish many specimens of letters such as we fear few people will in any way equal in this age, in which correspondence partakes more largely of brevity, superficiality, and hastiness, than of any more valuable characteristic. A specimen or two must suffice. The first is on the death of his brother, an eminently godly man, who died at Broadstairs, after having served in Canada in the 41st Regiment, and in the Walcheren Expedition as captain of the 87th Regiment:—

"My Dear Cousin,—God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor His ways as our ways. May He, by His Holy Spirit, conform our wills unto His holy will! Katherine* is wonderfully supported, but it is an awful blow. Pray for us that this dispensation may be sanctified to us; that we may look more to Christ; that we may look wholly to Christ! Oh! there is nothing else of any consequence. We live in the midst of shadows, and we think them realities. Lord, open Thou our eyes, that we may see the truth, and that we may be assured that Thy love is better than life! We hardly know yet what has happened to us—all seems a troubled dream—but we know that 'It is the Lord,' and that He doeth all things well. Katherine is quite resigned—quite peaceful. How good is God! I need not write any more. Let us pray.—Yours most affectionately, "T. Erskine."

Mr. Erskine's letters to Dr. Chalmers are very characteristic communications, and the same may be said of Dr. Chalmers' letters to him; but they are too long for quotation. Mr. Erskine's letters to Madame de Stael (daughter-in-law of the more celebrated lady of that name) are choice specimens. He writes:—

"I believe that we should seek to have, and to be

* The widow.

satisfied with, the sympathy of Christ; that is the sympathy which strengthens and girds up the loins of the heart, while it gladdens. We need tonics to fit us for our life's battle—not emollients. Yet I find it an evil thing to live with those who can give me no sympathy—however good and worthy they may be—for they teach me to lock up my heart and all its feelings, which produces spiritual congestion, as bad for the soul as congestion in any bodily organ. I know the value of Mrs. Rich * as a sympathiser. I have sympathised with her, and been sympathised with by her, and I know that her love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth (1 Cor. xiii. 6), which gives sympathy its right tonic quality. I am persuaded that there are many hearts that contain much sympathy, as the rock contains the water, without giving any sign of its presence until smitten by Moses' rod."



CROMWELL WRITING TO HIS DAUGHTER.

One other letter must complete this paper. It is from one not less worthy of honour as a man, a Christian, and a father, than of credit as a judicious ruler, and of fame as a military leader. There was a stern, but also a gentle, side to the character of Oliver Cromwell. After rather lengthy negotiations between the respective fathers, Oliver's son, Richard, had married Dorothy, daughter of Richard Mayor, Esq., of Hursley. Oliver was now on board the *St. John*, lying in Milford Haven, awaiting a fair wind to convey him and his troops to Ireland. The letter is dated August 13th, 1649, and is addressed—

"To my beloved daughter, Dorothy Cromwell, at Hursley, these:—

"MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—Your letter was very welcome to me. I like to see anything from your hand, because, indeed, I stick not to say, I do entirely love you. And, therefore, I hope a word of advice will not be unwelcome nor unacceptable to thee.

I desire you both to make it above all things your business to seek the Lord; to be frequently calling upon Him, that He would manifest Himself to you in His Son; and be listening what returns He makes to you—for He will be speaking in your ear and in your heart, if you attend thereunto. I desire you to provoke your husband likewise thereunto. As for the pleasures of this life and outward business, let that be upon the bye. Be above all these things by faith in Christ; and then you shall have the true comfort and use of them—and not otherwise. I have much satisfaction in hope your spirit is this way set, and I desire you may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and that I may hear thereof. The Lord is very near: which we see by His wonderful works; and therefore He looks that we of this generation draw near to Him. This late great mercy of Ireland is a great manifestation thereof. Your husband will acquaint you with it. We should be much stirred in our spirits to thankfulness. We much need the Spirit of Christ to enable us to praise God for so admirable a mercy. The Lord bless thee, my dear daughter.—I rest, thy loving Father,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

* One of his near relatives.

THE STORY OF A SILVER KEYLESS WATCH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BRAVEST BOY IN THE SCHOOL," AND OTHER STORIES.

EIGHT times absent from call-over, involving a loss of as many conduct marks, that's rather a sad story for a little boy of ten," said Mr. Harding.

"Indeed, papa, it is," Herbert replied dolefully, with a heavy sigh; "but then you see," he went on with animation, "beetles and moths are *so* interesting. You get grubbing away for them and forget all about the time, or you don't listen for the school clock, and then—well, you rush on to find yourself late for call-over, and an imposition to learn next day.

"Well," said Mr. Harding, a remembrance of past days arising in his mind, "I daresay it *is* difficult to be always punctual, still it is a bad example to set, and Mr. Heywood calls special attention to this forgetfulness of duty, so I want to see you much more careful next term."

"Yes, papa, I will *try*."

"And if you don't lose a single mark this term I shall give you at Christmas a watch which will, I trust, keep you right for the future."

"A real watch, papa?" cried Herbert, jumping up as if he had received an electric shock.

"A real silver keyless watch," repeated his papa; "but this is a secret between us."

"Oh, papa, papa," he cried, "how delightful! How good you are to me!" and he flung his arms impulsively round his father's neck, exclaiming, "See if I lose a single mark!"

After dancing up and down the room for several minutes, during which he upset a gipsy table, tumbled over the cat, knocked his head against the chiffonier, and woke the baby upstairs, Herbert dashed off into the garden, exclaiming to himself, "A watch, a real silver keyless watch. What shall I do? I feel as if I wanted to fly. Oh, when will the holidays come to an end, I want so to be back at school!"

"I must tell someone," he went on. "I shall *burst* if I have to keep this secret all to myself."

Just then he trod on the dog's tail. "Oh, Fido," he cried, "I must tell you my secret;" and putting his arms round the dog's neck he whispered softly in his ear—

"My papa is going to give me a real silver keyless watch at Christmas if I don't miss any attendance marks. Isn't that just grand?"



"He placed it in the child's outstretched hand."—*p.* 58.

The stately mastiff opened his eyes and blinked them in a sagacious manner, as if he knew something extraordinary was going to happen, and then relapsed into the doze from which he had been so uncomfortably aroused.

The term was nearly half over, and as yet Herbert had not been within measurable distance of losing a mark. It was now towards the end of October, and on this particular day a hare and hounds chase had been arranged as a half-holiday entertainment.

The boys went scampering in the warm afternoon sunshine up the road to the beautiful hills resplendent in their mantle of purple heather, and there during those happy sunshiny hours of freedom from restraint and absence from care they ran the wild and eccentric career that the hares set them.

"Four o'clock," cried Herbert, listening intently to the sound of the school clock. "Call-over is at half-past four, that just leaves us nice time. Still, we'll trot home all the same, so as to make sure."

And away they dashed down the road on the return journey.

It was a pretty sight to see those happy flushed faces, as the boys tore down through the woods, making the hills merry with their laughter.

"What can that be?" cried Herbert, as a moaning voice reached their ears.

They stopped and listened.

The stifled sobs of a child were clearly heard, and looking over the hedge a little boy of about five years old was seen sitting on the ground holding his foot, and sobbing as if his heart would break.

"What is the matter?" asked Herbert.

"Oh, I've hurt my foot so very very much," cried the child, "and I've been lying here for such a long time—and I'm so hungry—and I don't know how to get home."

"Where do you live?"

"At the little cottage under the hill there," exclaimed the boy, pointing to a house about a mile away.

"What *is* to be done?" said Herbert. "Will anyone help me to carry him home?"

They all shook their heads. There had been so many absences from call-over that the penalty for being absent had been rather severe of late, and they none of them cared to risk transgressing the rules.

"Come, we must be going," said one of the boys. "Someone will be sure to find him soon."

"Let's shout!" said another. They all shouted at the top of their voices, but all in vain.

Herbert knew not what to do. He looked at the sobbing child, whose little face was upturned appealingly to him. He thought of his watch, and his heart beat heavily.

"Come, we shall be late," urged his companions again. "No harm can come to him, and we will tell them at the school." And they turned to go.

But Herbert remained fixed to the spot, irresolute and uncertain what to do, conflicting thoughts surging and rushing through his mind. He looked longingly at his companions, now disappearing down the copse; then he raised his eyes to the blue heavens—a sudden sense of peace came over him and his resolution was taken!

He could not have explained why in so many words, but the thought possessed him that if his father knew how he was situated he would wish him even to break his untarnished record for punctuality to serve this little one.

But then his father would not know why he had lost his marks, for he would never, never tell. And then—oh, the bitterness of the thought—he should lose his watch; the watch longed for by day, and dreamed of by night. It was so hard; but as he glanced at the great white cloud, now lit up by the sun's radiance, he thought of the Saviour's love to little children and that filled his heart with an overpowering sense of gratitude. Anyway He would know.

It was enough. In that moment his heart was thrilled with an emotion such as he had never before felt. He had counted the cost, and given up the watch willingly. So gathering the little one into his arms, he set off at a gentle trot towards the half-hidden cottage, the child's arms meanwhile stealing lovingly round his neck, whilst a look of quiet trust and joy came into the blue eyes, in place of the tears which had erewhile been there. A quarter of an hour later he deposited the child at its mother's side.

"You're a brave little fellow," he exclaimed, "and I hope your foot will soon be well." "See," he added, taking his treasured blue pencil from his pocket, "this may amuse you." He placed it in the child's outstretched hand, and before the mother could sufficiently recover from her surprise and joy to thank him, he was gone.

If any tears fell from the eyes of the boy on his way to the school, I think flowers must have bloomed in the place where they fell.

"And so you have lost your watch after all?" said Mr. Harding to him kindly, when they were looking over the monthly report together a few weeks later.

"Yes, father," said Herbert, looking lovingly into his face, "but I did try."

"I know you must have done so, my boy, and I honour you for it."

That was a great joy to hear, and the bitterness of losing his much coveted treasure did not oppress him as much as he had expected. He strove his best now to please his father, just as hard, indeed, as he had striven before for the reward that was to follow, and his happiness in achieving his aim seemed even greater.

It was a fearfully wet November. The cottage in which Jack Davis lived with his wife and little boy—though it had been so bright in the summer with its lovely surroundings—was bleak enough now, and few ever came near, though poor Mrs. Davis was suffering severely from rheumatism, and felt the loneliness exceedingly oppressive. Among those few who came to visit her, however, was Mrs. Harding, and her presence on this afternoon was sunshine itself to the inmates of that household.

Her basket had been emptied of its abundant and cheering contents, and she sat reading from the Bible to the poor sufferer.

"Yes, ma'am," the woman was saying, "I do indeed believe that the Lord watches over us and protects us

from harm. It isn't many weeks since I was in a dreadful fright about my little boy Charlie. I had missed him for hours, and was getting so worried, for his father wasn't coming home till late at night, and I prayed the good Father to watch over him and bring him safe home to me. And then, would you believe it, ma'am, a little gentleman rushes into the house with him, sets him down at my side, patted him on the head quite kind-like, and gave him this pencil. Then, before I could thank him, he rushed off again. My poor little lad had strained his foot badly, and how he could have got home alone I don't know. Wasn't it a wonderful answer to prayer?"

"Marvellous, indeed!" said Mrs. Harding. "Don't you know who he was?"

"One of the young gentlemen from the school," said the woman, "that's certain, for I recognised the cap."

Mrs. Harding took the pencil absently and glanced at it, when her face lit up with interest.

"H. G. H." They were the initials of her son.

"Do you remember what day it was?" she asked.

"The 18th of October," said the woman, after a pause. "I remember it so well because my husband went to a sale that day and was late home."

A great wave of joy passed over the hearts of the parents that evening, as they examined Herbert's report and saw it was on that very day the boy lost the marks which would, apparently, cost him his promised watch.

* * * * * *

It was Christmas Eve. Notwithstanding the fact that his greatest treasure could not be amongst his presents on the morrow, Herbert was greatly excited. Being an only child, Christmas Day always found his stocking stored with gifts from parents and relatives, and his spirits always rose high as the eventful day approached.

To-night his anticipations of pleasure were more than usually vivid.

"Papa, may I bring down my stocking to your room to-morrow?"

Notwithstanding the full assurance that such a procedure involved a very early awakening in the morning, permission was readily given.

When Mr. and Mrs. Harding retired they found Herbert sleeping soundly, whilst hung on the wall beside him was a large clothes' bag, above which was pinned a notice in large letters—"This way, please, Santa Claus," with a hand pointing to the bag below.

About six o'clock on Christmas morning there was a knock at their door, and a voice cried out—

"Please may I come in? I've got *a sackful* of things."

"Very well;" spoken in a languid, sleepy tone.

In a moment the child had entered the room, lighted the gas, and was taking out the packets it contained with eager hands, trembling with excitement.

"A book from Grannie. Hurrah!"

"A jubilee crown-piece from Uncle Arthur. How good of him!"

"A box of paints from mamma. Oh, how delightful!"

"A knife from Aunt Anna. Well, that is lucky; I lost mine last week!"

Such were the successive exclamations that the little boy poured forth as he dived into the wonderful bag preceded by many guesses before he untied each parcel.

But last of all he came to a packet that puzzled him—"From papa in remembrance of a loving action." "A box, I do believe!" he cried—"a box, what *can* be in it?" "A beautiful leather box!" he exclaimed, as the wrapper fell off. "How does it open?" "What can it contain?" At length he pressed the spring, raised the lid, and to his expectant eyes was revealed A BEAUTIFUL KEYLESS WATCH.

"Oh, papa! papa! papa! do look," he implored, as he danced about the room, heedless of cold, oblivious of all but the fact that he possessed his long desired unhoped for treasure. "Oh, how delightful!" "How glorious!" "How grand!" "It is so very, *very* good of you," he exclaimed, "when I really did not deserve it."

"Well, we think you *did* deserve it, little man, for by an accident we found out *why* you lost your mark, and it gave us sincere pleasure to learn the reason, for we know now that there is something higher, something better that you care for than even a silver keyless watch."

MISTS OF MEMORY.

TRIOLETS.

BALEFUL mists of Memory,
Veiling all the happy past,
Dimming old-time joy and glee!
Baleful mists of Memory,
Shrouding love and sympathy
With a darkness that must last!
Baleful mists of Memory,
Veiling all the happy past!

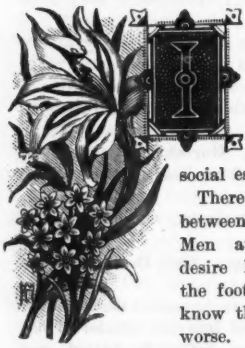
Loving mists of Memory,
Veiling sorrows of the past—
Woes that came so bitterly!
Loving mists of Memory,
Hiding aye, on Life's fair sea,
All the wreckage shoreward cast!
Loving mists of Memory,
Veiling sorrows of the past!

G. WEATHERLY.

COMPANIONSHIP—GOOD AND BAD.

BY THE REV. HENRY ALLON, D.D.

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."—PROV. xiii. 20.
"Walk with wise men and thou shalt be wise; but the companion of fools shall smart for it."—REVISED.



I TAKE it for granted that, with more or less of earnestness, we all wish to realise the great moral ends of life — virtue, purity, moral dignity, social esteem.

There may be great discrepancy between the wish and the effort. Men are full of anomalies; desire looks in one direction, the foot turns in another. We know the better and pursue the worse.

It is, however, much to have right wishes—so to retain intelligence and moral power of conscience as that these prompt a right desire. No man perhaps ever yet deliberately and intelligently determined to be evil.

It is a great thing therefore to have the Bible throwing strong lights upon this preference, and sharpening this desire; aiding and abetting our good wishes and resolutions with its utmost moral force.

It does this in many ways. It gives us great principles and wise precepts of life, to be embodied and practised. It tells us what to cherish in feeling, and what to do in practice, that the good desire may be realised. It sets before us instances of men who have actually attained to virtue and godliness, and it incites us by their examples.

David tells us that one of his methods was godly companionship—"I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts." And here, in his shrewd sententious way, Solomon, if this proverb is his, sets before us one of the great principles or laws of this moral issue—"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise."

It is an obvious maxim of common sense, a maxim even of pagan wisdom—"A man is known by his friends."

It is the operation of an imperative law.

No doubt every man is an individual person—complete in himself—and the law of individuality is strong and inviolable. You cannot reduce a man to the mere product of circumstances, without infinitely degrading him, and without contradicting his deepest consciousness—the consciousness of a personal will and responsibility. But he is not therefore absolutely independent. The man has his environment by which his personality is affected. Another great law of his nature makes him a social being, related to other beings, affecting them and affected by them; this limits the law of his individuality, and harmonises with it. He is not so individual as to be independent of his surroundings; he is not so dependent as to be without individuality. There are things within me—thoughts, feelings, purposes—that no stranger may intermeddle with. But my own conduct of these is influenced by information which I derive, and by impressions which I receive from those about me. I may shut up my thoughts, I cannot shut up myself. God did not intend that we should. We are constituted part of a social order, we sustain relationships, we are endowed with speech, we are mutually dependent, our social affections are strong. "It is not good for man to be alone"—that he should be a hermit, a monk, a recluse; the individual is perfected in society. "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil?"

But then we cannot have equal intercourse with all, or regard all with equal affection. Nature, necessity, prompt to special companionships, intimacies, affections, confidences.

The question is, what principle or consideration shall determine our choice. This is important to the young especially, because the most ingenuous and influential companionships of life are formed in youth. The craving for fellowship is then most strong; facilities for it are greatest; the heart is most susceptible and disengaged; impressions are deepest. It is not often in after life that we so open our heart of hearts.

I.—May I speak of the principles upon which companionships should be formed?

I strongly hold to the sentiment of "falling in love." The strongest affections—perhaps the truest—whether between lovers or friends, are those of unconscious elective affinities. We cannot always give a rational account of our affections. But this, of course, has its limits and correctives in common sense, in religious principle and feeling. If the affinities which have inspired my affection are only partial or superficial, I may not, for the sake of lesser agreements and sympathies, sacrifice those that are greater.

Community of taste and feeling there must be. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" "All flesh," says the author of Ecclesiasticus, "consorteth according to his kind; and man will cleave unto his like. What fellowship hath the wolf with the lamb, the sinner with the godly?" "What fellowship," says Paul, "hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness, and what concord hath Christ with Belial, or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing."

Considering the place and momentousness of

religion, it would seem a kind of moral necessity that a man's companions should be those whose moral principles and character harmonise with his own. A pious man can have fellowship with a profane man only on one of two assumptions—either that their intercourse shall be marred by violent collisions, the holy principles, yearnings, and tendencies of the one coming into antagonism with the other, and producing painful contentions or a painful suppression; or that the piety shall be so limited, feeble, and stolid as that it cannot be wounded. Can we conceive an active, fervent piety consorting amicably and contentedly with its opposite?

The principle holds good in every relationship that we form. We are speaking now more especially of those affections of friendship which, irrespective of sex, find expression in frequent intercourse and mutual confidences. But the principle applies to the relations of servants and masters, of employers and employed, of families with which we board and lodge, and, above all, to the union of the sexes in marriage.

Least of all can man and wife dispense with essential agreement in the principles and sympathies of life. Can we conceive of conjugal felicity where, on the one side, there is an active, fervid piety, delighting in religious pursuits and exercises—in prayer, public worship, communion with God; and on the other, the lack, perhaps dislike of all these? The marriage relationship is too close for neutrality. Thorough confidence, deep heart-sympathy, intercommunion of thought, feeling, and sentiment, so entire as almost to be unconscious, and so essential to conjugal happiness, are obviously impossible. There will be a painful consciousness on either side—on the side of the pious husband or wife it will be well-nigh intolerable.

Young men and women, in the formation of such engagements—in the taking of what next to your personal conversion to God is the most solemn step of your life—you are apt to be thoughtless enough, to commit yourselves unconsciously, to talk lightly of it as if it belonged to the comedy of life. And others are ready enough to joke with you. But the inevitable issues are grave enough. Even on the lowest social grounds happiness is impossible where there is incongruity. No cleavage in social life is so great as that which religion makes. The spiritual results are incalculable. In a sense, and to a degree that are not possible in anything else, nay, more than in all other things together, you are shaping spiritual character and determining its destiny. You are choosing the conditions, the atmosphere, the soil, the nurture of your spiritual life; and that under the influence of the strongest and tenderest affections. If there be any step in life over which you ought to ponder and pray, if there be any spiritual influences which you should anxiously calculate, they are these. Imperfect sympathies in other things are comparatively innocuous. This is vital — "Only in the Lord."

In one way or another, there will inevitably be an assimilation. Either the unspiritual will become spiritual, or the reverse.

This leads to the formal doctrine of this proverb, *The moral or spiritual power of association.* "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

His associates influence him, give form to his opinions, and conform his character to their likeness; and this because of the great law of social being to which I have referred. According to his character—in every community, great or small—every individual influences and is influenced by society. In every relationship this reciprocal influence is going on. How often we see a strong, determined character, good or evil, imprinting itself upon those around it; or a feeble character so imprinted as to have no individuality left!

Set it in your minds as of the most momentous import, that we are perpetually receiving or imparting influence, moulding or being moulded. Effects of which we are unconscious—for good or for evil—are being produced, which can never be wholly counteracted.

Both classes of influence are here affirmed. Wisdom comes from association with the wise, destruction is the necessary issue of associating with fools. He who chooses for his associates religious God-fearing men will himself become such. He who chooses for his companions, scorners, or sinners, or the ungodly, will share their doom, because he will be conformed to their character. That is, this is the natural law, the ordinary tendency of association. Exceptions there may be, in which the natural tendency may be counteracted; but the exception only proves the rule.

The very essence of social feeling is a craving for the goodwill and liking of those about us, the desire of being approved and esteemed. A noble principle in itself, but capable of urging us both ways—to good or to evil—of being consecrated or prostituted. Now suppose a young man thrown into association with the godless or the dissolute; this desire of approbation will be a constant temptation to do what will please. He thus commits himself to a strenuous conflict between desire and principle. Without affinity with his friend, he will be disagreeable just in proportion as he is pious. He will be always under the temptation to compromise his piety. If strong in resolution, he may break loose from such association; scarcely can he maintain it and preserve his integrity. Is it not almost a certainty that his principles will be undermined, his virtuous habits broken, and that he will gradually lay aside what is antagonistic in character and conduct, until his piety has melted down into an inoffensive conformity?

The temptation is chiefly on the side of evil. It is the mournful peculiarity of evil to corrupt what is good, rather than of good to correct evil. True, spiritual life is "as leaven," but will it work under such conditions?

A vicious man associated with a virtuous man may

feel a desire for his approbation, and may be somewhat modified and restrained; but the influence of example is generally stronger on the side of evil than of good.

Hence companionships are so vital and momentous. The intimacy you form may be a casual thing, but its moral influence will be abiding. The fellowship of the godly is a vast help in saving the soul; the fellowship of the wicked is an insuperable hindrance.

Every parent and guardian of youth feels this to be of paramount importance. If son or ward is seen associating with the irreligious or the dissolute, it excites the utmost alarm, his ruin is regarded as well-nigh accomplished; if with the virtuous and devout, it is a satisfaction and a thankfulness.

The testimony of experience is so uniform that the exception is regarded as almost a miracle. Young men are known by the companions they keep. What can be thought of the youth whose ever-growing love is for the gay and godless, who has not a pious friend in the whole circle of his acquaintance?

It were easy to sketch a normal history, to trace a career that in its general features would be the counterpart of thousands. What circle of acquaintance would not furnish instances?

It is not long since that in the freshness and ingenuousness of youth he left his father's house; its fields are yet green in his memory, the features of each particular spot are yet distinct, the memory of solicitous counsel is yet fresh, the echo of earnest prayers yet vibrates. He brought with him much of carefully trained and protected virtue, much of the peach-bloom of youthful modesty; "simple concerning evil," he blushed at the very suggestion of sin; he virtuously recoiled from it; he was conscientious in worship, in Sabbath-keeping, in reading his Bible, in prayer; impelled by those blessed feelings and habits of educated virtue and piety which once lost are commonly lost for ever. With a troubled heart he enters the shop or the warehouse, piously resolving that he will sooner die than disregard his father's advice or grieve his mother's heart. But he finds himself in another moral atmosphere; his associates have long broken through such restraints, perhaps ridicule them; they are more or less vicious. In his first shock of feeling he makes resolves and offers prayers; but he unconsciously deteriorates, familiarity grows, repugnance lessens, the power of intercourse tells upon him; he rapidly passes from one stage to another, until he is a confirmed profligate, perhaps a hardened sceptic. Passions obtain the mastery, he grows reckless, and after more or less of struggling, he becomes to others what these have been to him—a seducer into sin.

The shores of this great sea of London life are strewn with thousands of such shipwrecks—shipwrecks of hopes once inspiring, of character once virtuous—many a ribald sceptic that once worshipped, many a profane wretch that once prayed; and the rock upon which he split was godless companionship. "The companion of fools shall be destroyed."

Choose the companionship of the wise. Their very association, instead of inciting to evil, will restrain the evil to which you are inclined. You will have to overcome two consciences, two feelings of self-respect. Their example will encourage, their counsel will teach and guard you.

Hence the importance of making an instant and decisive choice of virtuous and holy companions. There are young men amongst us who win our instant approbation, cheer our hearts, and strengthen our hands. Their friendships and preferences at once show that "in the excellent of the earth is all their delight." We are sure that by-and-by we shall find them "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

Is it not important that you should early associate yourselves with the Church of Christ? It will give a kind of security to your piety thus to be avowedly in fellowship with Christ's disciples. It will secure you from many evil solicitations and associations. It will bind you to a kind of consistency in your companionships. Ungodly men will not seek you. You entrench yourselves within the defences of the Church; and find among its members your friends and counsellors.

Much might be said about the conduct of friendships when formed. There are sins of even virtuous intercourse: sins of the tongue—evil-speaking one of another, uncharitable judgments, narrow intolerance, insincere words of flattery, unseemly levity, which is not so much joyousness as "foolish talking which is not convenient." "If any man seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain." "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips."

How little, again, we do to instruct and edify one another, to exemplify Christian virtues and graces, to charge our speech and doings with holy influence.

But I forbear. It is enough to urge the fundamental thing. Let me entreat you to make character the test of your companionship. Do not permit superiority of social station, or brilliancy of wit, or amiability, or fascination of manner, to beguile your judgment. These may only enhance the peril. If perverted or unsanctified, each quality may be a snare. Let moral considerations determine that none shall be admitted to your friendship who are not true and pure.

"Walk with wise men." Books are companions as well as persons. Shun a licentious book as you would shun the devil. Neither wit, nor genius, nor eloquence can compensate for that which pollutes the heart or befools the understanding. Walk with the wise men of the dead, the poets of virtue, the philosophers of truth.

In all relations let it be your boast, "I am a companion of them that fear God."

"The redemption of the soul is precious;" whatever helps it is momentous. The fellowship to which you are urged is high and honourable. It will dignify your life, enshrine your death, and enrich you for ever.

MISS HILARY'S SUITORS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WILFUL YOUNG WOMAN," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A SOFT, still September day was wearing fast through its afternoon hours. The sun, which from its uprising had been veiled behind fleecy masses of high cloud, called by eastern-county folk a "flock sky," and had only lightened the earth in a tender, hazy, autumnal sort of way, now suddenly mastered its vapoury curtains, and blazed forth in an hour's glorious descent. From the brilliant west the cloudlets, all changed now into little gilded hillocks, floated in scattered companies before the red imperious rays that seemed aglow, to make up to the world for having hidden themselves so long from sight.

Over Brainford, whose smoke and mists were just discernible as it lay in a hollow of the horizon, stole the warm mellow light, then flooded acres of bared fields and browning hedgerows, tinted afresh the smooth pasture slopes that swept up towards Abbotswick, casting on them giant shadows of stalwart oaks and elms, and falling lovingly on the smooth lawns by the house itself, lit up the beds of blazing geraniums, kindled into smiles two sombre cedars that flanked the flowery expanse, and finally penetrated a large, low drawing-room, from whose deep bow window two people looked straight along this visible part of the golden ray's journey.

The room evidenced in its furnishings a series of tastes going back a century at the least. There were spindle-legged chairs in white-and-gold with little landscapes painted on their backs, couches covered with old brocade, and antique oval mirrors in beaded frames side by side with remnants of the rosewood period in a perfectly uniform suite, the cushions thereof curiously wrought in tent and cross-stitch; a carved oak cupboard up one corner smiled superior at a walnut davenport up another; lonely old bits of soft-coloured china, ranged from chimney-piece to ceiling, looked down upon a flaunting French clock; a large round table with shiny brass claws on its spreading feet bore many magazines of to-day among Worcester pots full of late Maréchal Niels; lounges in velvet, wicker, or rush; portraits of gentlemen in pigtails and ladies in powder, antique curios in ivory and silver, modern ones in photographs and bevelled edged glass; traces of many a generations' fancies were there jumbled together, and the conjunction was a room eminently comfortable but as full of incongruities as—well there were people who said—as the mistress thereof!

She, Miss Philippa Humphreys, certainly matched the room excellently. Seated now by the window in a basket-beehive chair, calculated to keep off all draughts, one could see she was a woman a little past the allotted three-score-and-ten, of strongly-marked but irregular features, having an abundance of white hair, and a mouth expressive of more resolution than is mostly seen at advanced age, this characteristic being somewhat assisted by a superb set of the very best false teeth obtainable for money.

Shrewd, active, not unkindly eyes the old lady had; remarkably well-shaped hands, of which she was inordinately vain; a figure still upright as a dart and inflexible as her will, and a voice of extreme clearness and decision. What Miss Humphreys said, it was well known by all about Abbotswick, Miss Humphreys would abide by, be that course wise or foolish to other people's thinking. Only one person ever ventured to question her opinion without getting worsted in the combat; and that hardy individual was not her present companion, who now sat knitting his brows at the unsatisfactory progress of his interview, while the lady of the house opposite was frowning in the most forbidding manner.

The sunshine bursting in athwart this gentleman's form played upon a face so evidently anxious and perplexed that Miss Humphreys' animus was mollified for the moment, and, tapping the floor impatiently with a black-satin-shod foot, she exclaimed, as though clenching some difficult question—

"Come now, after all, Mr. Stafford, you and I are too old acquaintances to let the sun go down upon our wrath! Just be reasonable, and we shall get on as comfortably as ever. You really must," emphatically, "agree to my plans, for I assure you I shall never alter them."

"If I did," was the answer, uncompromising though uttered in a singularly pleasant voice. "I should be grossly to blame, for indeed, Miss Humphreys, we should have the church falling about our ears before the winter was over. Dormer says so."

"Dormer's a donkey," said the old lady sharply, "or, at any rate, only an architect looking out for a a job. The place will stand safe enough for another fifty years, or till you've put me under the ground, which won't tax its strength quite so long, I dare say; tell Hooper to shore it up as strongly as he can, and I'll pay the bill. You can't expect more of me."

"I fear the shoring up will not keep the rain out," said the curate in charge, sticking to his point as doggedly as Miss Humphreys to hers; "the people in the nave sat in a shower bath last Sunday."

"Then, why didn't the idiots put up umbrellas?" was the retort of the impracticable old lady. "I don't believe they were wet, I never noticed it."

"Wet they were though, and in a state of anguish about spoiling their Sunday clothes," said Mr. Stafford, laughing. "So it is clear something must be done to the roof."

"Well, tell Hooper to put more tiles on and I'll

pay for them too. Will that suit you, Mr. Stafford?"

He made an unwilling gesture of dissent. "The roof simply won't bear touching. Any attempt at repair would be simply flinging away the money which the rector has sent, and which the people have entrusted to me. Then there's the floor, I verily believe some one will soon drop through into an ancient grave. No two pews are on the same level. The fact may be unpalatable, but it's no good blinking it. St. Michael's is a disgrace to us as it stands——"

"Fudge, fudge, fudge," said the old lady irascibly.

"I don't want to act contrary to your wishes, and certainly have no wish to run into fashionable restoration, as you seem to expect. But well and soundly restored the place must be. I did hope you would see the matter in the same light, Miss Humphreys."

"And I repeat, Mr. Stafford, I never shall, for I never intend to! When I'm dead and gone do as you like with St. Michael's, it won't affect me then. Now any change would offend me, and I think it only fair to hint to you that offending me would be greatly to your own disadvantage."

It was not often Miss Humphreys so clearly overstepped the bounds of good taste. As in some sort the servant of his parish and people, the curate in charge had borne much of her eccentric imperiousness and might have borne more. Now attacked, threatened, whatever the words might mean by one whose age and sex forbade his retaliating, he felt annoyance closely verging on humiliation, and almost wished himself any craftsman rather than a curate.

"I'm sorry indeed," he said, somewhat bitterly, "that I have had to discuss all this with you, Miss Humphreys."

"Ah!" exclaimed the old lady, totally mistaking his tone and jumping at the meaning she desired. "Never mind having discussed it if you will look at it now as I wish. Just open that—or no," emerging from her chair and going to a leather-topped table she called her office—"I'll get it myself. See here," returning and settling her satin skirts carefully before unfolding the paper she had fetched, "this was my little scheme for next Christmas. I was going to name it to Mr. Milroy the next time he came. Extra sums to be annually expended during my lifetime: Ten pounds for week-day fires to dry the church; half-a-crown a week each additional to the ten occupants of the Humphreys almshouses (which they'll value far more than pulling their floors up and draining the whole row as you were worrying me to do last year, my good sir!); and—and—" emphatically, "one hundred a year additional stipend to the Rev. Norris Stafford in recognition of his services as curate in charge of Netley. There! now I do trust that will help to cool your ardour over this church business, and reconcile you to letting an old woman have her way for the year or two she may cumber the earth."

Miss Humphreys, thus concluding, leant back in her chair with the complacent air of a person who has just made a very handsome offer. Unluckily the curate was not able to view it in that light. In his eyes the extra stipend, which well he could have done with if offered elsehow, was nothing but a glaring bribe—a temptation to sacrifice his church and his poorer flock to the whim of the one rich woman of his congregation. A hot angry answer rose ready to his lips, curbed by no easy effort.

"I am sorry, Miss Humphreys," he said, "but if I accepted the scheme you intended for kindness, I should feel—I should feel selling my soul for a pair of shoes. I have promised Mr. Legh to do the best I can. So," very courteously though very firmly, "I must do it without your help."

The old lady looked at him for a minute in silence. Then said she—

"You're an obstinate—I very nearly said 'fool,' of course I meant 'man,' Norris Stafford. But as you will! Give me due notice if you please when you begin pulling the place about, for Pullen must have his horses ready to take me into Brainford for service then. Now we'll consider the subject closed. May I trouble you to ring the bell for tea?"

The curate did as requested. His equanimity on personal scores soon regained its balance. For the rest he must pocket his vexation as best he could, and trust time to set all straight.

"If you will allow me, I must be going now," he said, "I want to be over at Mosswick by six to tell them that I cannot dine there to-night as I had engaged to do."

"Oh, dined with the Dasents should you? Why are you calling off?"

"Merely because old Brand is worse and will want to see me this evening."

"So you throw the Dasents' dinner party over for a rheumaticky old poacher's fancies. I expect he'll only want half-a-crown of you."

"The Dasents haven't a dinner party, and poor Brand has much worse than rheumatism. He has not poached for many a long day, and it's no half-crown he wants of me to-night," said the curate pleasantly; "now may I say good-bye?"

"No, you may not," answered the old lady peremptorily. "You seem to think it your duty to attend to everyone before me, but it's my turn to be considered. We've been snarling and feeling evil at each other for the last half hour—at least, I've been feeling evil with you—and I look upon a cup of tea as a feminine pipe of peace. You're to stop and take it with me."

Nothing loth to make present friends on these easy terms Norris Stafford humoured his hostess willingly. It would only cost him a double quick run to Mosswick. So, at Miss Humphreys' bidding, when Wilkins had set the tea equipage on the table between them, he proceeded to serve her with her symbol of reconciliation. Not being, however, a too apt carpet knight, and unaccustomed to the entanglements of tea-trays, Mr. Stafford managed to tumble the sugar-tongs down and jangle the old Derby cups.

"Clumsy man," said Miss Humphreys, quite affable, though, in this chiding. "You bachelors wait on yourselves till you are not fit to wait on anyone else! Why don't you get married, Mr. Stafford?"

He laughed right out and cheerily.

"Having barely enough to keep one you think I'd

best undertake to keep two! No, thank you, Miss Humphreys. I've never dreamed of such a thing."

"Well, then, begin to dream of it now," insisted the old lady. "A man of thirty—you're thirty, are you not?" He nodded, smiling. "A man of that age ought to be looking out for a wife. There are the Vincents at Holme; nice girls—not too young. What do you think of them?"

"Very nice, no doubt, but—I don't wish to marry."

"But, *I* advise it, Mr. Stafford! The Harleys have a daughter disengaged; why don't you look there?"

"My dear Miss Humphreys, don't talk of such a thing! An all but impecunious parson has no right to look anywhere. What's more, I've never seen the woman yet whom, if I were ever so rich, I should care to ask as my wife."

"Well, don't look so fierce about it, man," said Miss Humphreys, her keen old eyes gleaming with amusement at his earnestness; "I was only recommending what was for your own good; some day you may think so, if you live to be old like me, with no one of your own about you."

"No one of your own! why——"

"Oh, yes, I know what you are going to say—I have Hilary. So I have; but a second cousin's child is very different from chick or grandchick of one's



"A 'cup that cheers.'"—*p.* 67.

very own. Not that I complain of Hilary. It's only natural she should like scampering about the country on that pony of hers, and only natural at my age that I should be left at home alone. Perhaps if I had had a granddaughter she would have served me just the same."

Mr. Stafford began now to perceive why he had found Miss Humphreys in one of her most awkward moods, and clumsily attempted to soothe the lady's ruffled temper.

"How came it Miss Hilary did not consult your wishes before her own? I think I shall take an old friend's privilege and tell her she ought to have done so," said he; and hereupon found what it was to put his finger between the bark and the tree.

"No, no," cried Miss Humphreys; "I insisted on the child going out. She would have stayed with me if I'd wished. As for saying anything to her, pray do nothing of the sort. I can scold her or spoil her without anyone else's help."

"Then far be it from me to intrude mine," said the curate quietly; but something in his manner or voice dissatisfied his exacting companion.

"Not that I spoil her in the least," she went on positively; "now, you're not going to insinuate, Mr. Stafford, that I do that?"

"I meant to insinuate nothing," he answered. "Let me give you another cup of tea."

"Don't try to distract me from my point. I'm confident from your tone you were thinking something of that sort. Now, tell me candidly, do you consider Hilary spoilt?"

"My dear lady, I don't want to discuss the point."

"But I do. As my spiritual pastor I consult you on what I choose. *Is* Hilary spoilt?"

The curate hesitated, annoyance and amusement playing on his features; something else—the expression with which kindly strength sets itself against a weaker foe—softening his firm mouth and deepening the light in his eyes.

"Is Miss Hilary spoilt?" said he. "Well," slowly, "I won't say she is."

"But you mean she's in a fair way to be so."

"You put the words in my mouth, Miss Humphreys."

"And you don't disclaim them, Mr. Stafford."

Truth was truth, and not to be shirked. "No, I do not."

"Then you're the most disgustingly honest man that ever added to a poor old woman's worries! When you had a chance of getting in my good graces, why on earth didn't you use it? Not that I care for what you think one bit. You're perfectly wrong about the child. Please put my cup down—the tea is bitter. Now kindly explain how Hilary is spoiled."

Norris Stafford knew there was no evading the reply, so he chose a light count.

"Miss Hilary is an absolute baby over money, and has a trick of demoralising her few favourites in the parish by giving them half-sovereigns."

Miss Humphreys chuckled at this. "And then, never makes her month's pocket-money last a week, the young spendthrift! Let her give what she likes, she'll soon find out she's being cheated. Money is nothing to her when she knows she can always have plenty."

"True enough," answered the curate, who was by no means in the same predicament. "Nevertheless, Miss Hilary might be the better for learning some of its responsibilities."

Miss Humphreys drew down the corners of her lips in renewed affront. "I will make it my business to see she does, Mr. Stafford. Perhaps I shall ask your help to teach her. Ah!"—stopping his protest with a gesture, "I won't trouble you to find any more fault with her to-day. Here she comes at last—the way I've forbidden. But I'm glad to have her back!" And following her signal, Mr. Stafford saw the well-known slender figure in dark habit, mounted on her pretty grey "Daphne," come tearing over the corner of a field, scattering late-standing shocks of barley, clear a hedge that divided off the Abbotswick grounds, leap a rhododendron that stood in the way, canter right over the level lawn, and draw rein exultingly with the pony's soft, quivering nostrils a bare foot off the very window of the room where this council of two was being held.

CHAPTER II.

AND a vastly pretty picture Miss Hilary St John made, as, backed by the yellow sunlight, framed in the swaying jasmine sprays that clustered about the wide casement, and breathless with her helter-skelter gallop, she leaned forward, looked gaily in upon Aunt Phil, as she always called Miss Humphreys, dropped the reins to clasp her gloved hands, and, bending her young figure into petitioning lines, drew her lips, oftenest parted by careless smiles, into solemn curves as of a culprit expecting a scolding.

"Please open the window!" she cried, and, as Mr. Stafford obeyed, with just a nod at him, "Oh, Aunt Phil, you're not to be cross with me! Expostulate with Daphne, please. The wicked creature sighed heavily for the stable when we got to the corner of the lane; so I turned her head just a little tiny bit, only just for fun, and I said, 'Would you very much like the short cut, dear?' and off she went like a bird, and kicked poor Baker's barley about under his very eyes, and came home straight as a bee-line, in two minutes, while poor old Pullen is still jogging on the high road at the rate of six miles an hour. Now what will you do to punish this bad Daphne?"

"What shall I do to punish your bad self, you mean," cried the old lady, with scowls that were more than half sham, "riding in that reckless fashion, breaking down my fences——"

"Slander, auntie, slander; we never touched a leaf of them."

"And cutting up my lawn!"

"Only very, very little. Daphne all but flies, you know."

"Giving Bell no end of work to make it good again!"

"Bell is a kind man, Aunt Phil; he likes extra work. Last time we two had this frolic he was growling over the grass next morning long before I

was up, so I rang and ordered him early breakfast out of doors, coffee and cold meat, which his soul delights in. And he was as sweet as honey to me when I apologised to him for poor Daphne's hoof-marks later on."

"Umph!" grunted Aunt Phil, "if you 'order' entertainments of that sort for my servants, Miss St. John, they'll condone most of your offences. Pray, are you going to order coffee and cold beef up to John Baker's to atone for scampering over his field for the fifth time?"

"Third, auntie—don't exaggerate. Oh," laughing, "he did look irate! But I shot by him as if I had a perfect right; for, after all, auntie, it is your own land."

"But he hires it, child. I shall have him complaining again."

"Then send him half a crown to make it up."

"Men like him, my dear, are not conciliated with half-crowns. They stand on their rights."

"Oh, then," cried Hilary lightly, "make them pay for the privilege: put something extra on their rents. I will—I mean I would if I were you, Aunt Phil."

"Talk of what you understand," retorted Miss Humphreys sharply; "and keep off my tenants' land in future. Are you going to sit there all the afternoon, or do you want any tea?"

"Come and help me," said Hilary to the curate, with a glance that said, "I want you;" then, as he was making his way by the hall, she soliloquised aloud, for Miss Humphreys' benefit: "Oh, naughty, thoughtless Daphne! now, you are not to nibble Aunt Phil's jasmine and vex her! You forget yourself strangely to-day. Here comes Giles for you.—Giles, tell Bell to roll the gravel smooth early to-morrow. Daphne never intends to transgress again—never. Mr. Stafford," whispering confidentially up at that gentleman as he helped her down, "is Aunt Phil really angry with me?"

The frank, dark-fringed hazel eyes looked right full into his own; a small hand upon his shoulder for an instant seemed to cling there. A very odd sensation thrilled through Norris Stafford—perfectly new to him—gone almost as soon as come. He set the child—she was a child to him, of course—down as carefully as he used seven years ago when he first taught her riding on her Shetland, and let himself answer the young lady more impulsively than he usually did now-a-days.

"Really cross? No, I don't think she can be, Miss Hilary."

"Good man for once," she cried, brightly wafting him thanks with her whip, and ran fearlessly in while he more slowly followed.

The culprit was very comfortably sharing a footstool with Miss Humphreys' feet when he re-entered the room, one arm confidingly on the old lady's knee, the other holding up a peace-offering in a bunch of scarlet spindle-berries and feathery clematis seeds.

"I thought how charming this would look in a little nest of your black lace, Aunt Phil, so I crooked the 'Traveller's Joy' down with my whip and nearly swung myself out of my saddle after the spindle. Say 'Thank you,' and look quite pleased again! That's right! now I'll forgive your having frowned at me. Mr. Stafford, you might give a tired horsewoman a 'cup that cheers.' Thanks; and now," leaning lazily against Miss Humphreys, "what have you two been talking about?"

"Disagreeable things without number, yourself included," said Aunt Phil, beaming good-humouredly once more on the pretty brown head upon which she now rested her hand, pleasantly conscious that that background showed off the shapely member to advantage. "We nearly came to words over the church, but I wouldn't give way over that, so in revenge our pastor took to vilifying you. He says you're spoilt, my dear."

Hilary's lips drew down in affront. That charmingly mobile mouth of hers was always telling tales before her voice spoke. A flush rose on her rounded cheek as she said—

"No new accusation that, Aunt Phil. Mr. Stafford politely informed me I was frivolous only the day before yesterday."

"Miss St. John, I——"

"As good as said so, indeed—when you were coming from those ill people down by the marsh" (Netley parish ran far out seaward), "and I took the trouble to stop and invite you to my birthday lunch next week. And you were as absent-minded and grave as a judge, all because of your tiresome sick people; which caused me just to remark that cottagers in good health were a nuisance, but in illness a perfect plague.—And then, Aunt Phil," much aggrieved, "Mr. Stafford amiably said that as I grew older perhaps I might feel that poor folks' troubles had a claim on me, or something of that sort. I know somehow he implied I was frivolous, so I had to buy my favour back by promising his tiresome invalids no end of kitchen physic."

"Which had not reached them to-day, Miss Hilary, however," said the curate quietly.

"Not? Good gracious! I believe I forgot to tell Mrs. Wilkins to send it, so it's my fault. Never mind; they shall have double allowance to-morrow."

"The particular one for whom it was needed does not require it any longer—he died at noon to-day."

Hilary changed colour, angry with herself, but she had no mind to play the penitent to Mr. Stafford.

"Oh, then," she said, "I must tell my maid to send a big bundle of black clothes to the survivors. Good mourning is a great balm under these circumstances. And will you take them half a sovereign from me, Mr. Stafford, as the fine on my forgetfulness?"

"I'd fifty times rather you took it to them yourself, Miss Hilary," said the curate, abruptly getting up to leave. "Then you would see——"

"Ah! you're going to sermonise me! Don't, don't, dont!" cried Hilary, putting a hand firmly over each pink ear; and, as she resolutely maintained this deafened attitude, Mr. Stafford walked off without addressing her any more.

For half a minute Hilary furtively watched the door as though expecting him to return. When he proved actually and finally gone, she let her arms drop down with a droll little shrug.

"That man and I are doomed to fall out with one

another nowadays, Aunt Phil. When he was young I recollect he used to be quite nice."

"A good many people have that opinion of him still, Hilary! Why haven't you?"

"I don't know; when he taught me to play tennis, and trample on his individual toes most unmercifully."

"And, really, I can't say you go the way to work to make him like you, Hilary."

"And, really, I don't want to, Aunt Phil. But what do you mean?"

"Why, that you make jokes of all his interests,



"She slid her gems over her long white fingers."—*p.* 70.

years ago, he was quite charming, and did not mind anything I said. Now he wraps himself up in clubs and labouring people, and does not drop in here half so often as he did in my lesson days, when I always struck work and rushed down-stairs as soon as ever I saw him in the avenue. And he's grown stiff and extremely old; and, really, I can't say I like him at all."

"Never! Aunt Phil. How?"

"Well, you remember the last time he was here how you launched out on the frightful poverty of someone—I forget whom—but someone with certainly treble his means. You enlarged on misery such as *you* have never known of—making sixpence do the

work of a shilling, and so forth. It was rough on Mr. Stafford, Hilary. I could see it downright hurt him."

And Aunt Phil, who, with one of her capricious changes of mood, was now in fault-finding vein once more, looked grimly shocked. Hilary jumped up with the least possible toss of her shapely head.

"Ah! if you lecture me too, I shall go and dress for dinner, auntie, and take an hour about it. It's a pity I did not stay out longer with pleasant company when I had the chance."

"What pleasant company?" questioned Miss Humphreys, holding the girl tight by her habit. "Whom have you seen?"

"Oh, only just such another frivolous person as myself," returned Hilary, her eyes dancing with fun. She knew Aunt Phil's curiosity would bring her down to amiable level again. "No one more important than Captain Cavenham. He happened to be riding through the parish—I think he said something about coming to call; but he turned back with me instead—and he told me about the entertainment. How I should like to go to one! He was saying he wished I could. Oh, and, Aunt Phil dear, Captain Cavenham mentioned that his father is engaged, and will not be able to come to our lunch next week. He wondered if he might come instead. I said of course he might. Was that proper of me?"

"If it was not, you've said it, and it's done with," was the answer, and the old lady fell thinking, as the girl ran off with a nod: "Now, I'll be bound that young man has been talking nonsense to the child this afternoon, and filled her head with his valuable sentiments;" and with that she sank into a profound reverie.

It happened for once she had made a miscalculation. Hilary, traversing the gallery that ran round three sides of the hall, supported on fluted wooden columns, stopped short by the large window over the front door, looked across the gravel sweep, and down the avenue of limes and chestnuts that ran from Abbotswick straight up to the boundary palings, and the very porch of the half-ruinous church.

Slowly pacing into the deepening shadows, Norris Stafford was still in sight. Hilary leant on the balustrades that crossed the casement and watched him a minute; her lips petulant at first, then softened into a lingering half-smile. He was hardly going with his usual quick step. He carried himself as if tired. He looked exceedingly alone. She forgot she had called him old and disagreeable; kindlier light stole over her honest eyes. "I hope Aunt Phil was not right," she murmured to herself, with a last glance down the darkening trees. "Of course I never meant to hurt you," and then she betook herself to her own room, there to distract the staid woman who waited upon Miss Humphreys and her, by lavish orders concerning disused clothes, "which," as Joyce grumbled down-stairs, "was wholly unbecomin' to such as them Scotts, asides being her rightful perquisite, accordin' to mistress's own words; but, there! Miss Hilary fared to think she might do just as she liked nowadays."

Some similar sentiment to this last lay, perhaps, though barely recognised, at the root of the departing curate's inquietude. Once in the shadow of the avenue, his physique relaxed into lines of depression most unusual with him. Now and again the ups and downs which his life had known seemed to parade themselves rather cruelly before his mind. This fading September evening was one such time. As the wind sighed about him and he tramped along under the yellowing boughs, he looked wistfully back on eight years ago, when, rich in youth, and wealth, and schemes practically limited only by his own desires, he had been living through halcyon undergraduate days at Oxford. That was before the huge trading crash in Lancashire which deposed his father from the position of almost a cotton prince to that of a ruined man with less income than one of his own clerks had lately earned. Then came good-bye to all their moneyed state. His father's death followed quickly. Every penny that was saved from the wreck was needed by Mrs. Stafford, a delicate woman nursed by years of luxury into chronic invalidism. In a cheap Continental town she and her daughters elected to take refuge, and Norris was pitchforked by circumstances into a profession he had never dreamed of entering. The uncle of one of his Oriel chums, who had taken to the young fellow on a chance meeting, offered him a title to orders. Friends pressed the timely proposal upon him, and nigh eight years back he had become curate of Netley. Nowadays, less regret attached to the step than when he first took it. Then, as soon as the deed was done, the young man had felt appalled by a sense of his own incompetence—almost paralysed by realisation of what he ought to be for such a post. Curates in general may not be afflicted with such lowly self-estimation, but this one had it strongly. And what is more odd is that never, even with success at his work, did he outgrow it. A vivid sense of his own insufficiency for the highest labour a man can be called to, remained woven in with his nature, binding him always to be doing his very best with all entrusted to him, whether that were teaching a preternaturally stupid school-child or rebuilding the church left now in his sole charge by the rector whose ill-health kept him resident on the Riviera.

Consciousness that he was doing to the very zenith of his ability was one of the curate's crutches through many a halting season of self-doubt and care: the warm confidence and rough liking of his people was another. There was scarce a boy in the place who would not own his misdemeanours to Mr. Stafford, be they what they might; and more men found their way to his small, tumble-down church than might have been counted in the congregations of any four parishes around. Another and yet stronger staff than all unquestionably guided the steps of this thirty-year-old clergyman, but it was one he lived rather than talked of. There never was a man less of a prig than he in any sense of the word. "He haven't got no cant," an old ploughman said of him; "he don't give none of us physic that he haven't tasted of hisself!" and perhaps that same "physic" had brought his constitution into contentment with his life as it had to be; and seldom was that content ruffled by thought of what it might have been. But to-night—by the gate of the rectory, part of which he inhabited—Norris Stafford looked back

at Abbotswick, with its windows gleaming in the light of the rising harvest moon, and felt as though he had borne away thence some new intangible care. It was not, surely, Miss Humphreys' resolute opposition to the scheme he had carried to her? No; candidly, he knew it was not. It was something, strange though it sounded, still closer to himself. What had possessed her to bid him go and get married? His stipend was wanted ten ways at once—for his mother, his sister, his people. He gave a curt laugh at the notion as he stood there solitary and silent; and yet——

A figure with hazel-brown eyes and ruffled rippling hair, a someone full of winsome ways and perverse contradictions, floated before him—the someone who had just, to his bewilderment and often pain, tripped over girlhood into woman's rank. Thought of her sprang into the man's heart unbidden, undesired, swiftly checked. It was like an instant's rift in heavy clouds that let through just one gleam of blue sky beyond. But the blue sky was absolutely unreachable. Such heights were not for him. He turned indoors smiling at his own ineffable folly.

"Ah! if I were young and rich," quoth he to himself, "and she were—— Pooh, Norris, my man, don't make an ass of yourself!" Then he plunged into the intricate accounts of his labourers' provident society, and set-to to drown his fleeting folly neck and crop.

But, however he succeeded, never again could he have told Miss Humphreys he had not seen the woman he would have cared to make his wife.

CHAPTER III.

MISS HUMPHREYS' fit of abstraction hung about her all through that evening. She was not feeling very well, though obstinately refusing to admit as much to herself or anyone else; and she had reached the age when the world's small frets and jars are either dwarfed by shadows of a great change assuredly not far off, or else rise into perplexing over-prominence.

Hers took the latter course. The afternoon, take it all in all, had not been an agreeable one. Mr. Stafford's stubbornness about that restoration craze had been most unpalatable. She dearly loved to domineer; was willing enough to make amends if yielded to, but apt to cherish resentment against any stronger force to which she had to bend. Then the provoking part of the business was, she knew the man was in the right; and yet, because the last six owners of Abbotswick had sat in the square oak pew decorated with the Humphreys "griffin rampant" at the four corners, which had blocked up nigh all the chancel since the days of good Queen Anne, there she had resolved to sit to the end of her time, and interference with this intention chafed her inconceivably.

Then, again, she was discontented at having had to oppose Norris Stafford. By some irrational process of feminine reasoning, she liked him all the better for not having submitted to her imperiousness. So altogether she was out of sorts. Even Hilary had added to rather than abated her fit of spleen, and Miss Humphreys was so gloomily silent while her maid performed her slight dinner toilet that Joyce ventured an artifice that rarely failed to lure her mistress into conversation.

"Ah, ma'am," said she, sorting her mistress's rings out of an old leather-covered jewel-box—one, a gleaming arrangement of diamonds close set round a sapphire as big as a fourpenny bit; another, a double row of rubies packed so tight that the half-hoop might have been cut from a single gem—"Ah, ma'am, I often say, these 'll never look as well on nobody's fingers as they do on yours. Short hands don't show them off nothin' like so well."

"Whose short hands are going to show them off?" said Miss Humphreys.

"Nobody's, for many a day, I hope, ma'am; but I was saying to Miss Hilary, when she once stood tryin' of them on—'Ah,' said I, 'miss, they don't look of a piece with you same as with my mistress. You only take six and a quarter, but you haven't got the real Humphreys hand.'"

"And what did Miss Hilary say?"

"Only laughed, ma'am, and told me about some she 'd seen Mrs. Clement Keen wear, set quite different, in thick gold bands. 'These would look lovely,' she said, 'done like that.'"

Miss Humphreys puckered up her mouth as she slid her rare old gems over her long white fingers.

"Ah, Joyce," she said, her afternoon notion reasserting itself, "if I had got married fifty years ago and had a grandchild coming after me, she might have cared for these ancient things. But now—you'll see changes in Miss Hilary's time, Joyce."

"Just the words Bell said to me, ma'am, when he was tellin' of me how Miss Hilary had been talkin' about orchard-houses here and orchid-houses there. 'Ah!' says Bell, 'Miss Hilary thinks she 'll make a rare fine place of it some day. She 've a pretty taste, and will spend a mint of money, I 'll warrant.' And I made answer, 'Don't you go spellin' of no such things, Mr. Bell. Missis is hale and hearty yet, thank God, and you and me mayn't never live to see Miss Hilary rule here.'" Here catching a distinct scowl on Miss Humphreys' face in the glass opposite, Joyce saw she was making a blunder, and began to hedge wildly with, "Though, to be sure, she 's a young lady no one could help being fond of; and of course young folks like new fashions."

Miss Humphreys cut the woman's gossip short. "Go and see if Miss Hilary wants you now," she said peremptorily. "It is nearly dinner time."

"Oh'm, Miss Hilary made me do her hair afore I came to you to-night. She 's foragin' up pounds' worth of things for them Scotts. I 'm to clear up when she 's left the room."

"That 's your own needlework hour, Joyce."

"Yes 'm, but Miss Hilary did not think of that; and"—trying to avert another heavy frown—"I really don't mind; it does not matter a mite, ma'am."

"When Miss Hilary bids you do anything of that kind in the evening," said Miss Humphreys slowly, "say—respectfully, of course—that by my orders your evenings are your own. Now go down-stairs."

And Joyce descended to report confidentially to Mrs. Wilkins, the housekeeper, "that missus was in

one of her contrariest moods to-night—there was no pleasin' her noways." And the two women fell talking over the peculiarities of the lady who paid and treated them well, and yet whose uncertain temperament made serving her no sinecure.

Dinner accomplished with little conversation, save over the toughness of the first partridges and the unripeness of the last peaches—nothing went pleasantly that special day—Aunt Phil sat over the bright wood fire in the drawing-room watching Hilary flit hither and thither; holding back a curtain to peep at the great round moon, dipping a thirsty rosebud deeper in its bowl, changing this ornament or that to suit her fancy, and the strong liking, nearest approach to loving her later life had known, swept over the elder woman.

"Come here, Hilary," she commanded; and as the girl seated herself on a low stool in full light of the dancing flames, her kinswoman seemed to study intently the young frank face, which, without being beautiful, was wonderfully winning, with a sweet, generous mouth, and ready trustfulness written on every line, from the broad white brow to the curve of the round, childlike chin.

"Well, Aunt Phil, what are you thinking of?" quoth Hilary at last, reddening under this long inspection.

"I am wondering," was the answer, as Miss Humphreys brushed her hand over Hilary's thick, nut-brown braids, "what you would do with all this if you had no Joyce to attend to it, Miss St. John."

"Why, let Maria do it instead, to be sure." Maria was a house-servant earnestly desiring promotion to attend on Miss Hilary.

"Ah, but suppose you couldn't—suppose I said I couldn't afford anyone to arrange it? What then?"

"It can't happen, so we won't think about it," said Hilary comfortably.

"But you *are* to think about it! What then?"

"Why, I should—cut it off! Someone has always done it for me, and someone always must."

"H'm." Hilary rather expected a homily after this audacious speech, but Miss Humphreys suddenly changed the subject. "Where did you ride to-day?"

"Into Brainford, auntie. I was going to tell you at dinner, only you were not inclined to talk."

"Child, you know I don't like you going into the town with only Pullen."

"Oh, but I'd Captain Cavenham too, Aunt Phil. I'd not intended to go there when I set out, but I suddenly remembered it was the twins' birthday, so I thought you would not mind my riding over. I called at Drew's, and bought them some little gold bangles. They were charmed with them, and said I was their good fairy, and capered about me till they frightened Daphne, so Captain Cavenham was kind enough to get down and hold her bridle himself."

"Very polite! And did you see your father?"

"Oh, yes; he agitated himself," laughing, "over my dear pony; thought she was too frisky, and gave me dozens of instructions how to manage her. I ought not to joke about it, though, for he is very good to be so careful of me."

"He knows your value," said Miss Humphreys drily. "Did Madam St. John appear too?"

"Certainly; in raptures with my new habit. She paid me so many compliments I was ashamed for Captain Cavenham to hear them."

"Oh, the Captain would agree with them all, I've no question. He was bound to do so."

Hilary lost the faint sarcasm of this.

"He said he did, auntie," she acknowledged with perfect innocence, a pair of dimples lurking about her cheeks at the recollection.

"And you believed him?"

"Why should I not, Aunt Phil?"

But to this Miss Humphreys replied nothing. She simply sat stroking the girl's head, gazing with knit brows on the sparkling logs. In the stillness Hilary's glance roved about the room, lighting critically upon pictures of one century, furniture of the next, *bric-à-brac* of yet another; and presently she gave the result of her cogitation freely, according to custom.

"We have an *omnium gatherum* here, auntie! This room would look delightful with all the modern things weeded out, and everything left of a piece, as Mrs. Dasent has one of hers at the Heath. We could furnish that empty south room with what we could spare from here. Old chintz would suit that bow better than rep. Suppose we make the change, Aunt Phil?"

Miss Humphreys caught back her hand, and sat bolt upright.

"Suppose we do not," she retorted.

"Then," said Hilary cheerfully, "we will do without it till——"

"I'm tired," said Miss Humphreys abruptly; "keep your improvements to yourself, if you please. Go to bed now, and send Joyce to me."

That tone was not to be questioned. Hilary obeyed instantly, though with dark eyebrows lifted in surprise. She was not often so summarily dismissed; but Aunt Phil brooked no investigation of her moods, and now vouchsafing only the top of her cheekbone to the girl's good-night salute, was immediately left as she desired.

"Has anything worried auntie from down-stairs?" Hilary asked Joyce half an hour later; sometimes the iniquities of a kitchen-maid would make the mistress irate for days. But Joyce answered that nothing had gone wrong; and Miss Humphreys was only a little low-like at the turn of the seasons perhaps, but she did wish she would go to bed like a Christian lady, and not sit up poising by herself till goodness knew how late. Some night she would turn faint, as she did come Christmas five year, and then she'd be tumbling down and doing herself mischief.

Hilary sat up anxiously between her white curtains as the woman set her room straight for the night. "But, Joyce, could not Aunt Phil let you sleep in her dressing-room? Then you could see after her better."

"Goodness, Miss Hilary! I daren't speak of such a thing; it would anger her wonderful"

"How?"

"It would make her think she was getting old; and mistress can't abide that notion. Good-night Miss Hilary."

Joyce spoke as one who had learned her mistress by

five-and-twenty years' experience, and spoke the truth. Miss Humphreys *did* hate, with all her remaining vitality, that notion of growing old, and yet it would keep coming to the fore. It haunted her now, as she sat wrapped up by her bedroom fire, and made her avoid a single glance at any mirror. The sight of herself without her gleaming teeth, all her wrinkles blazoning themselves under the crinkly lace of her nightcap, disgusted her. Hilary had never been allowed to see her in this undress. Sometimes it seemed only the other day she was young and smooth-skinned as Hilary herself only the other day, and yet it was nigh sixty years ago—that time when her father's death had left her mistress of Abbotswick, and she might have picked a husband where she chose. She need not have died Miss Humphreys"—pshaw! she was not going to die at all yet. The Humphreys had always been folks of small families and long lives. How would it have been if she had let that neighbouring squire (who had been buried these thirty years) have the marriage settlements to his liking, if she had not sent him adrift over the contested mastership of a few thousand pounds? They said he had made the wife he wedded a good husband enough. Still, she might have done well. At any rate, she had had every penny of her property under her own control her whole life through, and that had brought her pleasure equal perhaps to what she had otherwise missed. It had brought her power which none could say she had used altogether ill; and it had brought her Hilary!—Hilary, who kept youth alight in the old house—Hilary St. John—not a Humphreys, it is true, only the grandchild of a cousin on a mother's side; still, centre of all Aunt Phil's softest, most womanly, nearest-to-maternity care and love; a baby plaything for years after her young mother died; a growing amusement, a something whose prettiness was a thing to be proud of as an appendage of Abbotswick when she grew into gay and graceful girlhood. Companion pug-dogs, cockatoos, charitable societies—what such things are to many spinsters, Hilary had been to Aunt Phil. Fondness for her had grown with every stage. *Had* she spoiled Hilary? That insufferably straightforward man had as good as said so, and, to be sure, she had never permitted the slightest reproof to be visited on the girl by any but herself. Perhaps she *was* thoughtless. Time might mend that. As for money, what need had Hilary to count its worth? And yet—Miss Humphreys' face lowered ominously—Hilary did disperse pounds as though she had a mine of them. Owned—a—mine! Ah, Abbotswick, with its comfortable rent-roll, was to be Hilary's mine! So everyone, Miss Humphreys included, had settled long ago. But a most curious jealousy of her successor had disturbed her lately, fed from all sources. Hilary's rising sun would be worshipped as her own went down, and Hilary made very sure of this. Truly the girl might be only following her training; Miss Humphreys forgot that, as she sat silently fuming till midnight was long passed. But Hilary carried her own way nowadays against all rules: ordered the servants, scoffed at the tenants, meant to reset the old Abbotswick gems according to the latest fad of Bond Street jewellers—did she, indeed!—would build here, pull down there, alter everywhere, when, when——

Miss Humphreys' old eyes flashed out quite fiercely from under her frills. "Shall she?" she muttered; and then they dimmed again as, in profound perplexity, the sunken mouth worked nervously over some problem. "The toadies the child will have about her!" she soliloquised, "all helping her to spend, all preying on her—that father of hers the foremost; and she'll take all their flattery for gospel. George Cavenham would marry her then, the spendthrift! and her life here and the old place might turn into a curse to her. She has no right to Abbotswick. She'd be a better woman and a happier——"

The stable clock struck one. Fagged with long self-debate, Miss Humphreys got stiffly up. "I'll think no more," she said; "it's all a maze—all a maze," and then betook herself to bed to finish in uneasy dreams her last-born project for Miss Hilary—her heiress.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

NEW SERIES

QUESTIONS.

1. What family was specially noted for their obedience to the commands of their ancestor?

2. Which of the prophets was a descendant of Aaron?

3. What particular day in the year was connected with the saddest events in the history of the Jews?

4. Quote some words of the prophet Haggai which were fulfilled when Christ entered the Temple.

5. In what way did the prophet Ezekiel foreshadow the destruction of Jerusalem?

6. What prophet foretold the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem? Quote passage.

7. Quote some words of Jeremiah in which he sets forth God's providential care.

8. What wonderful prophecy does the prophet Habakkuk give concerning the progress of God's Kingdom?

9. What king burned the letter which God had sent him by a prophet?

10. What prayer did God command His people to use during the time of their captivity?

11. Which of the prophets is considered to have been descended from King Hezekiah?

12. To what passage in the Book of Malachi did the Angel Gabriel refer when foretelling the birth of St. John the Baptist?

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

"THE QUIVER" GOOD-CONDUCT PRIZES.

AGAIN the best girl and boy in various institutions for the young have received THE QUIVER prizes, and our readers will be gratified to know that much pleasure and encouragement have been given by these rewards. In the Gordon Boys' Home the recipient is S. C. ROBINSON, "a boy of exemplary character, perfectly trustworthy and obedient, attentive to all his duties;" at Reedham the prizes are taken by E. C. RICHARDSON and JESSIE HARDING, who tells us she made up her mind at the beginning of the year to be prize-winner; JULIA JOHNSON was successful at the Ham Orphan Home; CHARLES ELLIS and ELIZABETH SMITH represent Field Lane Schools; LINDA MARBROOK was unanimously chosen from the inmates of the Princess Louise Home, and she informs us she has purchased for her prize "a very nice work-box, and everything to fit it with." Most of us can remember what prize-day meant at school, and the pride and joy, the resolve to excel yet more in the future, that thrilled us when we were so fortunate as to carry off some trophy from the fascinating-looking table, and, better still, the rejoicing at home when the book was passed from friend to friend. We are glad to know that THE QUIVER prizes are inspiring young lives to do their best, to excel in *character*, and to form good habits which will prove more valuable than book, desk, or money. May they all be good for the *sake* of goodness! yet let us not forget that even in our Christian course *we* are cheered and encouraged by the All-wise, All-loving One with the hope of a prize set before us, an incorruptible crown awaiting those that love His appearing.

A SOCIETY FOR SHAKING HANDS.

Much has been said and sung in praise of solitude, but though most things are good in their place, it is not the right thing for fellow-Christians to feel solitary when they are gathered together in the House of God, and Christ Himself is in the midst of them. "I have been there two years, and nobody has shaken hands with me yet," said one, referring to a place of worship. This might have been a slight exaggeration, and, if quite true, it might be suggested that he could have started the hand-shaking himself, but this is a difficult effort for a new-comer unless gifted with unusual courage and confidence. Our congregations should care that the new-comer feels at home in the Father's House—that on entering a pew rented by somebody else he is not greeted with an astonished stare of disapproval, and that the social, benevolent side of Christianity is not kept only for the fellow-worshippers with whom we are on visiting terms already. "They shook hands with us and smiled at us the Sunday we dropped in, and here we are," said a worthy couple, who had settled down thankfully amid a kindly congregation with their numerous olive-branches. It has been said of our Lord, not irreverently, that He was "the first true Gentleman that ever breathed," and if His religion does not refine us into courtesy and care for the feelings of others, we have yet to learn much more of His spirit. We read lately of a new society to shake hands with every fellow-worshipper: "Thus one day," say the members, "we hope to shake the world." Let each of us personally take care that the stranger worshipping beside us does not feel isolated, or as the monk praying under a vow of loneliness.

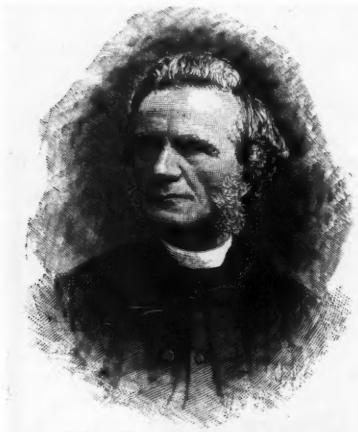
LIFEBOAT WORK IN THE HUMAN SEA.



A RESCUING HAND.

Readers of THE QUIVER will remember our description of "Babies' Castle," Hawkhurst, Kent, the home maintained by Dr. Barnardo for his infants. One of these little ones, he relates, is "Shadwell Moggy," whose sole nursery was the streets, and whose nurse was a little eight-year-old sister. This little maid had to be taken to the hospital, having hurt herself by a fall. "Shadwell Moggy" came under Dr. Barnardo's charge, and the ten-months-old mite, without teeth, was found equal to the hardest crusts, potato-parings, and street garbage. "Now," says the Doctor, "Moggy is as round and rosy as the best of her happy foster-

brothers and sisters." Dr. Barnardo truly affirms that no work on God's earth can be greater than to save poor boys and girls from the perils of the streets—a work in which he will press on unfalteringly if Christian men and women and children will uphold his hands. "You don't know what it is to be all alone in the world, sir," said a boy found in one of the recesses on London Bridge; "you don't know what it is to be chucked about without anybody caring for you."—"My lad," said the Doctor, "from this night forth I will be your friend;" and a true friend he has proved to many in similar case. There was a cheery children's service this summer at Bournemouth on the subject of a bright penny, when a collection was made on behalf of Dr. Barnardo's little ones, needing so many pennies to keep them clothed and fed. This is a suggestion for leaders of children's meetings, as in many cases there is no charge for membership of children's bands; but thank-offering gifts are a privilege even children may share, and they could not be devoted to a tenderer purpose.



THE REV. CANON WESTCOTT, D.D.

CANON WESTCOTT ON PRAYER.

We give this month a portrait of Canon Westcott, whose writings are doubtless known to many of our readers. Canon Westcott was educated at Cambridge, and was at one time assistant-master at Harrow; he has distinguished critical gifts, and is eminent as a scholar and commentator. Preaching this summer at Westminster, Canon Westcott emphasized the need of prayer if, amid the restlessness of much serving, Christians would receive more and more of the Divine fulness, and embody His spirit in action. He pointed out that prayer should be the voice of loving self-surrender, and not of self-seeking; "from God, through God, unto God"—that is the whole history of prayer. Jesus Himself has taught us the last word of prayer, "*Father, glorify Thy Name;*" therefore, let us seek to make God's will our own, that His love, His patience, His righteousness, may through His dealings with us be shown unto men. The preacher pointed out that private prayer rests upon careful reflection, and must belong to the essential fabric of our daily life; it will show us God as the living God, make the world to us as His temple, and cast our lives upon the Love that is infinite. There are Christians half-starved, restless, tossed and troubled now, who would live in peace and joy did they kneel more at the Mercy-seat. Truly does Richter say concerning prayer, "It purifies; it is a self-preached sermon."

RENOUNCING SORROW.

Self-sacrifice has justly been the theme of orator and poet for centuries; the patriot who leaped into the gulf, the warrior who rushed upon the spear-points to open a way for his countrymen, have won the laurels due to self-abnegation, and pointed many a moral worth remembering. We have heard of mothers perishing of cold that their infants may be warm; and of a poor gifted sculptor, who put all his clothing round the damp clay of his masterpiece, and died himself from cold rather than his statue should suffer. But we think it is Mrs. Browning who points out how hard, yet how great, a thing it is to sacrifice *sorrow;* sometimes renouncing pleasure is far easier than renouncing grief. We have had losses, troubles, disappointments; we feel we want to be alone and brood over our griefs; our summer days are over, we ask but to live in our past. This is natural, but scarcely healthy or even Christian; not for one moment would we underrate the weight of sorrow—God knows it, understands it, cares about it; nor do we think Time always heals the heart-ache—God will do that by-and-by in the Meeting-Land. But in this world of human needs, where love and help and sympathy are wanted all around, is it right for us to brood year by year over the cross the Master has laid upon us, while His fields are untended, His lambs are friendless? Let us arise and take up some work full of love, Divine and human.

"VOICES FROM THE DUST."

Under the title of "Proofs of Holy Writ; or, Voices from the Dust" (A. H. Barker, Queen's Road, Hastings), Mr. J. N. Fennings has published a small book, showing how the discoveries of modern times corroborate the truth of historical records found in the Bible, and also of various prophecies. Nineveh and Babylon *have* become "heaps," their ancient ruins having been discovered as mounds of earth were dug up; and Mr. Layard found inscribed on the pedestal of one of the great bulls Sennacherib's dealings concerning Judah and Hezekiah, as recorded in Scripture. The Moabitish stone is "like another page added to the Bible," taking us back to the time of Omri and Ahab, and throwing additional light upon Scriptural passages. Modern discoveries have witnessed the truth of prophetic words as to the site of the Temple, the condition of Egypt, the desolation of Babylon. It yet remains for the promise to be fulfilled that "the Lord shall smite Egypt, He shall smite and heal it, and they shall return even to the Lord." Mr. Fennings' book treats also of the Egyptian kings, the Israelitish captivity, and many other subjects in connection with latter-day

evidence. Scriptural truth finds many assailants; there is room for many a diligent, thoughtful Christian in the ranks of those who by outside evidence strive to help the sincere seeker, the earnest Scriptural student; but let us also remember, when shadows of doubt arise, the promise of the Master—"If any man will *do His will*, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." The critical, antagonistic spirit, even in face of evidence, will scorn the Word of God; but the humble, obedient heart that prays for teaching and light and understanding, will daily hold the Scriptures more wonderful, more precious.

> "Happiest they of human race
> To whom their God has given grace
> To read, to mark, to learn, to pray,
> To lift the latch and force the way."

"THOU SHALT KNOW HEREAFTER."

Part of the gladness of our future life will be our progress in knowledge and understanding—the glorious explanation of every problem, the ravelling-out of lines that have seemed dark and crooked. How little, after all, do the wisest among us understand! how much lies beyond the capacity of human intellect, beyond the grasp of the mind that is even familiar with deep-sea marvels and the pathways of the stars! The other day we were out walking with a little child and listening to her gay chatter, when she suddenly grew grave, and asked, earnestly, "Whereabouts is my soul?" It was a question that had evidently perplexed her before, and she had treasured it up to bring it trustfully for our explanation. We tried to tell her simply that the part of her that *loves*, the part that never will die, is her soul, though she cannot feel it, like arm, and hand, and property; but we felt what a problem was perplexing the little heart, and that only our Creator can truly know the nature of the immortal soul. A boy about five years old asked with concern why God had ever made the devil—the problem of evil was perplexing him early in life, and though in game and romp he doubtless soon forgot his deliberations, the childish question lingered long with those to whom it was addressed. In face of questions and spiritual problems like these, we are ourselves but as little children, guessing at solutions which only God understands; it is vain to say we will believe only the things we can search into and understand, for many questions are past finding out here below. Our best days are yet to come, when the Master himself will make everything clear that has perplexed, and, recognising His glory and wisdom in what we deemed shadows and difficulties, we shall own in adoration, "He hath done all things well."

LIFE-SERMONS.

In an earnest sermon to which we listened lately, concerning the privileges and responsibilities of the Christian, the preacher likened the Christ-like disciple to a humble white cottage on the hill-top, which is as a landmark to labourer, traveller, and sailor, not on account of its own dignity, but from the fact that it is built upon the hill. We are called to an open, breezy, hill-top religion, seen and read of all men; even unbelievers take quiet count of professing Christians, and many will judge of our Master from our own every-day lives. A monk invited a young companion to go out preaching with him, and the young man asked him, as they threaded their way from court to court, ministering to the poor, when the sermon was to begin. "We have been preaching all the morning," was the reply, and it was true. Christian charity, sympathy, practical help, are sermons that assuredly represent the Master, even though no doctrines may have been expounded. There are many whose lives are of necessity so busy, whose hands are perforce so tireless, that they feel they are doing nothing for Jesus; but if their hearts commune with Him, even amid the work and all the pressure of life, some will be taking knowledge of them that they have been with Him. The preacher remarked suggestively that our attention is directed to the gas, or a lamp or candle, when it seems out of order and needing repair: otherwise we are only conscious of a bright and shining light, and think little about the channel whereby it reaches us; so, said he, when *you* get much talked about, beware lest there be something out of order. What the Christian lives for is not personal notice and adulation, but that others may be led to give glory to our Father in heaven.

"RELIGION CONSISTS IN A HOLY LIFE."

Guthrie illustrated the emptiness of a mere profession by the simile of a tree lying across the path, apparently a fair and mighty object; but the foot lightly placed upon it breaks through the bark and sinks down into the body, for insects and poisonous fungi have attacked the core and hollowed out the heart. "Take care," said he, "that your heart is not hollowed out, and nothing left but the crust and shell of empty profession." There are some who began the Christian life full of warmth, ardour, and zeal, who are still regular attendants at religious services, but scarcely the fruit-bearing branches that witness nearness to the Master; it would be possible to live beneath their roof in a state of unconsciousness as to religious influences, which certainly ought not to be the case with any who name the name of Christ. Children, servants, friends, if they think about the matter at all, secretly discredit church- and chapel-going when worshippers on their return abandon themselves to ill-temper, selfishness, worldliness. Religion is not a matter for Sundays only, for outside respectability, or even a mere matter of subscriptions and religious work, but it is a vital every-day concern, affecting the *heart*. It is an easy thing, but a dangerous condition, for us to glide into the customary groove of attending meetings and performing good works, thereby increasing our responsibilities the more while our own souls are full of worldly tendrils. It has been truly said that it costs but little nowadays to multiply copies of the Bible in our homes; our personal concern must be that God's Word is hidden within our hearts, and that it is the rule and chart whereby we are steering the bark of our every-day life, not only in perilous places when storms seem threatening, but when, all around us, things betoken fair weather and prosperity.

GOOD USES FOR LONG EVENINGS.

It has been said that the road to home happiness lies over small stepping-stones; *little things* make or mar the memories which those around us will keep in coming years of our homes. Outside duties have their claim upon us, but only as we do our part faithfully by those at home. There must be something out of gear when, at the entrance of a distinguished leader of public meetings, the children hush to guilty silence with an awed "Here 's father!" and when the modern mother is too busy with philanthropic details to notice the kind of reading her children are devouring, and the urgent need of mission-work in her own domestic circle. It is a difficult thing at times for the best-meaning Christian to find the happy medium between neglect of home and neglect of outside religious work; only prayer can settle this question, which must vary with the differing circumstances of each. But home meant so much in the past, and the wisdom of God has so tenderly arranged to set us in families, that it is worth time and thought to make home precious to the growing generation. Can we not drop one evening at least from our engagements and find content at home in reading aloud some noble, wholesome volumes to the young ones, or training their voices in inspiring music, while for the benefit of those less fortunate they employ the long evenings in mechanical, artistic, or needle work? for even the smallest can string beads, cut out and fix scraps, and take part in kindly contributions that will come in acceptably at Christmas time. Book-lovers are inclined to be a little selfish sometimes; it seems a sacrifice to read aloud instead of enjoying the book by oneself, but it does the cleverest of us no harm to "go shares" with our literary stores, and the happy fireside will be a precious memory that may be a safeguard to these young ones by-and-by. And if we chance to know some lonely lives at whose fireside are empty places, or boys and girls who know little of what home can mean, let us take advantage of the winter evenings now and then to gather them in with our own happy circle in the name of Christ.



READING ALOUD IN THE LONG EVENINGS.

PRAYER-TIME IN OUR SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

"All close your eyes!" is the familiar mandate issued from Sunday-school platforms when the leaders are about to engage in prayer; but teachers are obliged to be watchful even then, and the state of the school at such times is frequently a matter for grief and regret. Boys and girls are staring about—some are engaged in affectionate or wrathful converse with neighbours, and some are even engaged in attack and defence—and becoming reverence is exceptional. What can be done to improve the behaviour of the children during prayer-time? Some friends urge standing, some kneeling, some sitting quietly back with closed eyes; anything seems better than the careless, lounging, irreverent attitude so often adopted, as though the prayer had nothing at all to do with the scholars, as the *hymns* have, or the class-lessons. Let it be made very clear to the children that they possess a part in these supplications that are rising to the Divine Teacher—that definite mercies are asked and expected, in which every scholar may share. "Do you not want God's blessing?" we have sometimes pointedly asked a scholar fidgeting and playing with widely opened eyes. It has appeared quite a new idea to some that a blessing is descending while the prayers arise, or that the benediction is aught but a formality.

Every prayer should be so simply worded that the scholars can understand and inly unite with the leaders; it is still better when they can join in openly, either responsively, or by repeating the words of the leader. Reverence during prayer can only be attained by making the solemn privilege of prayer clear to the mind of each child, by simplicity and reverence in the words of him who leads, and by giving the scholars, if possible, some opportunity of taking part aloud in what seems to many of them too often a trial of patience.

"OPENED FROM END TO END."

"China is opened from end to end," said a speaker in connection with the Friends' Foreign Missions; "we can go throughout the whole country with the message from on high." The language is difficult to learn, and the inhabitants form a vast multitude, many of whom have had no opportunity of hearing the Gospel; but prejudice, exclusiveness, enmity, are breaking down not only as to religion but in social and educational matters likewise. Fifty years ago a missionary to China said he could number the Christians there at *six*, and there was only one city in the empire near which an Englishman might reside—even then not in the city itself. "What does the present opening up of China mean?" our missionary brethren ask. They praise God for it, and take it as a mighty call to the Christian Church to go in and possess the land for God. We hear of a native Christian praying for years that the Gospel may reach his own village, and not very long ago a devoted worker journeyed to that very place in company with the man who had prayed in faith so long. More labourers are needed in that great harvest-field, and more sympathisers at home to uphold their hands by prayer and help; year by year Divine prophecy is finding fulfilment in the spread of Christ's Kingdom—be it ours to aid in working out the glorious intercession—

> "Baptise the nations: far and nigh
> The triumphs of the Cross record:
> The Name of Jesus glorify,
> Till every kindred call Him Lord."

BOOKS FOR ALL READERS.

An illustrated edition of the Bible in weekly numbers, at the low price of one halfpenny, is a novel step in the right direction. Messrs. Cassell and Company have decided to publish their well-known Doré edition in this popular form, and we would advise our readers to use their influence in securing in their own localities the widest possible acceptance of this cheapest of issues.—Under the suggestive title of "The Sun of Righteousness and the Dark River" (Elliot Stock), Mr. William M. Ferrar has produced a lengthy essay on Christianity and Freethought, which contains some useful points, and, occasionally, some striking passages. But we are bound to express the opinion that the book would have been more effective if the language here and there were less stilted and unnatural. The highest praise we are able to give to this work is that the motive which prompted the author to the labour of producing it is very laudable indeed.—Another series of those little illustrated books of texts which of late have become so popular has been issued by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. "He Leadeth Me" is the title of a pretty little booklet containing illustrations—not only of the twenty-third Psalm, but also of the well-known paraphrase, "The King of Love my Shepherd is." In "Twilight Memories" we have a series of selections from Wordsworth, Kirke White, Mrs. Hemans, and other well-known poets. "The Voice of Nature" is a similar collection, and, on the whole, the illustrations are excellent of their kind.—Mrs. Arthur Brookfield's edition of "Æsop's Fables for Little Readers" (Fisher Unwin) is very attractively put together, the illustrations in red contrasting well with the black of the letterpress. The syllables are divided for the use of the very tiny folk who are just learning to read.

PATHS OF SERVICE.

"This is a big world," said one, bravely searching for employment; "God has something for *me* to do in it, and I will try and find out my work." There is a saying that "God hath His plan for every man;" it may be to mirror the Saviour's trust and patience under suffering, but, where possible, let the passive Christianity awaken into active working life. Some say they are not clever enough to teach, though in the pages of The Quiver some time ago a Sunday-school worker told of one who successfully taught the little ones of the flock of Jesus, though "hard words" in reading were to herself a stumbling-block. Some can talk of everything save the Master, though a soul brought in contact with them may be athirst for His Name—will they not try to find "a word for Jesus" sometimes, to show their colours more bravely than in past days, to serve Him not only within their own hearts, but openly by their lips? Pen, needle, and purse, may be serving Him too; and it has struck us that visiting members of our different societies for the young have almost become a necessity. Of course Sunday-school teachers are the best visitors of their scholars, but we have many meetings nowadays, such as Bands of Hope, young Christian societies, and the like, which suffer as to attendance unless absentees can be looked up, gathered back, and the causes of absence duly reported to the conductor, who is usually too hard-worked to act as visitor. Christian friends who cannot take part in the management might volunteer for this work of visitation, inspecting the attendance-list, noting absentees, and taking care they are not allowed to lapse without an effort to retain them. Even if half a dozen such absentees could be looked up weekly, our winter meetings and the children themselves would be vastly the better.

THE CHANGELESSNESS OF GOD.

"Change and decay," says the poet, "in all around I see;" whether in Nature, in our own lives, amid our friends, in every surrounding circumstance this ceaseless change goes on. A poor man of our acquaintance travelled to his native place this year to look up

old friends. He had not been there for forty years, and anticipated seeing familiar faces and things again; but nothing looked the same, and of the old faces he found not one. Many of us have been through a like experience, passing the house where once we lived, the streets where we feel people *ought* to know us; but changes have arisen and we are forgotten, and we learn the profitable lesson that the old places have got on very well without us. Still, there would be a touch of sadness about these changes could we not be sure that wherever else we are forgotten, "the Lord thinketh upon us," and amid all these varying circumstances, God remains the same for ever, and with Him is no shadow of turning. He is Rest, though Nature may seem restless; Life, though death may appear to triumph; whatever else may come and go, our Father's name is still I AM. Mr. Spurgeon relates that he deemed it a strange thing when he saw on a country weathercock the motto, "God is Love," and he asked his friend if he meant to imply that the Divine Love can be fickle as the wind. "No," said he, "this is what I mean—*whichever* way the wind blows, God is Love; through the cold north wind, the biting east wind, still God is Love, as much as when the warm, genial breezes refresh our fields and flocks."



MR. P. H. GOSSE, F.R.S.
(From a Photograph by W. Widger, Torquay.)

"THE WONDROUS WORKS OF GOD."

Milton reminds us

> "In contemplation of created things,
> By steps we may ascend to God."

The Master taught His love, His care, through nature, and His children may learn more and more of Him as they search out the marvels of creation even in those forms of life we call "the lower." Many a noble mind has proved that religion and science are not foes, that the earnest, honest truth-seeker is not compelled, as some appear to believe, to come to the conclusion that the various forms of life confess no God. Mr. Philip Henry Gosse, F.R.S., was an ardent lover of natural history, concerning which he published many books, and made valuable investigations and drawings; he formed collections of marine animals, studied sea-anemones and corals, and both at home and abroad he made tireless researches into the various branches of zoology and entomology. The great naturalist was also a devoted Scriptural student, having written concerning the "Rivers of the Bible," the "History of the Jews," the "Relation of Egyptian Monuments to the Word of God," and a number of helpful works, his latest being "The Mysteries of God: a series of expositions of Holy Scripture"—a book full of beautiful thought and true devotional feeling. Mr. Gosse died in August this year, at the age of seventy-eight.

THE MEDICINE OF HUMOUR.

"A merry heart," we are told on good authority, "doeth good like medicine," yet there is a latent feeling about some of us that we are not living the religious life when we are thoroughly enjoying ourselves and appreciating a witticism. Having had occasionally a guilty sense of over-fondness for the humorous, we were struck by the words of George MacDonald on this subject: "Who made laughter? did God make it, or the devil? did a man ever laugh heartily and honestly when engaged in the devil's work?" Why should we be inclined to consider, somehow, the joyous things of life as the devil's possession? Surely none should be able to smile and laugh in such genuine enjoyment as those who know they have a Father and a Friend, the Giver of sunshine and flowers and radiant colouring and everything gladsome and beautiful. No sincere disciple will give himself licence as to worldly pursuits under the plea of wholesome fun and recreation, but there is no reason why the children of the King should go mourning all their days—and Cheever has well remarked that to unite genuine humour with deep piety, to use it with chastened judgment yet spontaneously and richly, must be counted one of the manifestations of a powerful intellect. There are Christian standard-bearers among us to-day who form bright illustrations of the worth of consecrated humour.

"BRING HIM HITHER TO ME."

Such were the words of our Lord, when the poor distracted father knew not what to do with his afflicted child; and thus is He still speaking to every parent, every teacher, everyone to whom has been entrusted a child's immortal soul. What is to be done with the careless, giddy, indifferent one, the listless, stolid one, the wilful, incorrigible scholar, the black sheep of the class? Concerning every child the Master's bidding is the same—"Bring him hither to Me." Have we *tried* to do so yet? Mr. Moody told of a young man to whom death was drawing near: "I shall be with Jesus to-night," he said; "and, father, when I get to heaven, I shall go straight to Jesus, and tell Him you brought me to Him when I was a child." Will our scholars be able to bear witness such as this concerning ourselves? Are we

using our best efforts, our prayers, our energies, to this end, that each one shall find a personal Saviour? Let every teacher solemnly, prayerfully face the responsibilities of the position. The teaching-time is very brief; let us of course acquaint our scholars as far as possible with historical, geographical, doctrinal details of the subject of our lesson, but let our central thought and aim, our direct prayer and purpose, be to bring in contact with Christ Himself every soul amid our scholars.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE READING SOCIETY.

SELECTED PASSAGES FOR NOVEMBER.

Day.	Morning.	Evening.
1.	Jer. xxix., 4—14.	Hab. i., ver. 1—4, 12—14; ii., ver. 1.
2.	Jer. xxxi., to ver. 12.	Hab. ii., ver. 2 14.
3.	Jer. xxxi, 25—34.	Hab. ii., ver. 15–20; iii., ver. 1, 2.
4.	Jer. xxxiii., to ver. 9, 14—16.	Hab. iii., ver. 3—11.
5.	Jer. xxxv, to ver. 8, 13—15, 18, 19.	Hab. iii., from ver. 12.
6.	Jer. xxxvii., from ver. 11.	Zeph. i., to ver. 7, ver. 14, 18; ii., to ver. 3
7.	Jer. xxxix, to ver. 7; ver. 13—18.	Zeph iii., to ver. 10.
8.	Jer. xlii., to ver. 12.	Zeph. iii., from ver. 11.
9.	Jer. xlv.; xlvi., from ver. 24.	Haggai i., to ver. 8.
10.	Jer. l., to ver. 7; li., 5–10.	Haggai i., from ver. 9.
11.	Jer. lii., to ver. 5, and from ver. 29.	Haggai ii., to ver. 9.
12.	Lam. i., to ver. 12.	Haggai ii., from ver. 10.
13.	Lam. iii., 17—26.	Zech. i., to ver. 11.
14.	Lam. iii, 27—36, 55–58.	Zech. i., from ver. 12.
15.	Lam. v., to ver. v., and from ver. 19; iv., ver. 22.	Zech. ii., to ver. 9.
16.	Ezekiel i., to ver 14	Zech ii., 10—13; iii., to ver. 5.
17.	Ezekiel ii.; iii., to ver 3.	Zech. iii., from ver. 6.
18.	Ezekiel iii., 10—21.	Zech. iv., to ver 7.
19.	Ezekiel iv., 1—3; v., 5 11.	Zech iv, from ver. 8.
20.	Ezekiel vi., to ver. 10.	Zech. vi., from ver. 11; viii., to ver. 8.
21.	Ezekiel x., to ver. 14.	Zech. ix., from ver. 9.
22.	Ezekiel xv.; xvi., from ver. 60.	Zech. x.
23.	Ezekiel xx., to ver. 12.	Zech. xi., ver. 10—14; xii., from ver. 6.
24.	Ezekiel xx., 13—22.	Zech. xiii; xiv., ver. 3–7, 20, 21.
25.	Ezekiel xxiv., from ver. 15.	Mal. i., to ver 8.
26.	Ezekiel xxvii, 1—3, and from ver. 26.	Mal. i., from ver. 9.
27.	Ezekiel xxviii., to ver. 9, and from ver. 24.	Mal. ii., to ver. 13.
28.	Ezekiel xxxiii., 7—19.	Mal. iii., to ver. 9.
29.	Ezekiel xxxiv, to ver. 12.	Mal. iii., from ver. 10.
30.	Ezekiel xxxiv., ver. 15, and from ver. 23.	Mal. iv.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS.

It has been very encouraging to see that our appeal for THE QUIVER Waifs has met with such a hearty response. From all parts hands have been stretched forth to help, and happily all expenses have been met.

We are sure that those of our readers who took this work to heart last year will rally round us again; and we trust that many others, especially among our younger readers, will join hands with us.

Let those whom God has surrounded with countless joys and benefits think awhile of the many young ones who have to begin life with disadvantages and sorrows enough to crush the heart of a strong man.

We are told that the hard, sharp flint-stones were once sponges soft and receptive: and are there not many hard, bad men going up and down the world, troubling the stream of life and making it muddy, whose lives might have been rendered noble and pure if they had known somewhat of the milk of human kindness in the pliant days of childhood?

Now to give some account of what this year has done for "THE QUIVER Waifs."

MARY JANE.

Mary Jane, whose life-story we gave last November, has crossed the great Atlantic. The money subscribed was sufficient to pay for her outfit, her passage to Canada, and for her support whilst under the care of Miss Rye. She has found a good home in her adopted land, where she will be loved, taught, and cared for, and so we may consider that she is fairly started in the way of an honest, happy, and useful life. We are thus free to hold out the helping hand this year to another little girl.

WINIFRED.

Poor little eight-year-old Winifred, bright and winsome as she looks, has a sad history.

What a volume it would make—the tragedies of humble life!

On Christmas Day—that children's day of rejoicing—her mother, wasted by consumption, lay dead. Her father, an honest, respectable man, was broken-hearted at his loss. For some time he struggled on, burdened with sorrow and the care of his children—for Winifred was not the only one—and at last, in a fit of mental derangement, he destroyed himself. It is a sad outline—who has the heart to do so can fill in the details.

Winifred has been received into Miss Sharman's Home, in South London, to be, under the care of that large-hearted lady, trained for domestic service. Who amongst our readers will help in keeping her there?

LITTLE WILLIE.

Little Willie has been boarded out in a Hampshire village, where he will remain until he is old enough to be taken into the Home in Stepney Causeway and instructed in a trade.

A few days ago we paid a visit to him at his village home. He is growing a fine, intelligent little fellow, with the same winning manners that we noticed at first.

Those who remember the portrait-sketch of him last November, with ragged clothes and matted hair,



WINIFRED, OUR NEW WAIF.

would certainly not recognise him now. We found his home a pretty thatched cottage, with a vine trained over the front and an arbour of tea-plant about the door.

It was dinner-time when we entered, and Willie was one at the table doing justice to a dish of boiled bacon and cabbage.

He seems to be a general favourite, attends Sunday-school, and sings in the church choir. At the village school he is in the second standard, which is not so bad when we consider that when rescued from his wandering life he did not even know his alphabet.

"I didn't know my a b c," he said; "they put me in the babies' class at first, but I soon got out of that."

He tells us he should like, when he grows up, to be a sailor.

"Why, Willie, you told us last year that you would like to be a carpenter."

"Yes, sir," he replied, with amusing gravity, "I've thought of a carpenter, and I've thought of a sailor. They tell me a carpenter isn't a good trade now, so I think I'd like to be a sailor. Then, if I served twenty-one years, and didn't get shot, I should have a pension, and I could work at something else, and have enough money to keep a house, and then, if I could find my mother, I could let her live in it."

Oh, yes, Willie's plans are very far-reaching. God bless him, and all those who stretch forth the hand to help such as he.

N.B.—Contributions towards the support of "THE QUIVER" Waifs will be gladly received from readers of THE QUIVER by the Editor. All subscriptions will be acknowledged in THE QUIVER, and amounts of £1 and upwards will be separately acknowledged through the post. All communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.



WILLIE AND HIS COTTAGE HOME.


UNIV. OF MICH.



"Shall it be Yea or Nay?"

See p. 141.
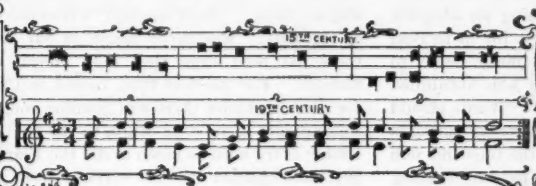
The Music of the Protestant Reformation



BY J. F. ROWBOTHAM.

THE music of the Protestant Reformation was the dawn of a new music to the world, as completely as the great religious movement itself was the dawn of a higher faith and creed. The music that we enjoy to-day—the music of Beethoven, Bach, Mozart, Handel, all that is noble, popular, and appealing, in the secular side of the art no less than in the sacred—was set in motion when that little rill of Reformation began to run which was soon to overspread Europe with its waters. Such an assertion may seem a strange one, but when we bear in mind how thoroughly the Reformation emancipated the spirit of man from the degrading bondage to priest-craft and tradition, we shall not refuse to believe that all his faculties alike participated in the glorious birthright which it secured him.

Up till the time of the Reformation there was but one kind of music in the world—that, namely, which is known as the Gregorian. All the services of the Romish Church were arranged to tunes of this peculiar system, and when once words and music had been put together, there was no change ever allowed. Given, that is to say, the Missal and the Book of the Hours with the music noted throughout—whenever and wherever the mass was chanted or the Psalms sung, the same musical settings accompanied them. Not a single quaver was different. To change a note in the old traditional tunes was accounted a heinous sin. There was thus a fearful uniformity spread throughout public worship, which was as dull and uninteresting to the congregation as it was painful to the singers. Singing and praying had become alike mechanical; both craved for some potent stimulus to arouse them into life again. What made matters worse for music, was the fact that all the theorists and teachers of the art were ecclesiastics, who were in duty bound to frown at all divergences from and



innovations on the Gregorian system. "So long as the Gregorian song remains," were the words of Pope Gregory, "the Church of Rome will remain." It was "the golden chain which bound Christendom together." Its founder had spared no pains to propagate the knowledge of it, and the Emperor Charlemagne, in his zeal for the Romish Church, had gone the length of massacring the supporters of another school of music, viz., the Ambrosian, which at first was a dangerous rival of the Gregorian. Now, the Gregorian song was the same in those days as some of us may know it now—that is to say, full of strange and unexpected turns, very difficult to follow, and which few but trained singers could sing. It was, besides, always accompanied with Latin words. And further, it was encumbered with a variety of intricate and artificial scales, so hard to learn, that choristers required a six years' course of study before they could be reckoned competent singers. Such, then, was the music which prevailed in Europe before the time of the Reformation, and we shall see what marvellous changes took place in the art before the Reformation had ended.

Luther's first care, as soon as he could find a breathing-space amid his labours of controversy and Church reform, was the publication of his opinions on the subject of music. Two pamphlets bearing reference to this theme appeared in 1520, and were, as he confesses, but the expression of views which he had all along entertained. In these pamphlets he condemns the Gregorian song *in toto*, and roundly accuses it of being the cause of nearly all the abuses which had crept into the Church service. Its first ground of offence in Luther's eyes was, as we may imagine, the association of Latin words with the music. "What barbarism," he says, "that music, which is the common speech of all nations, should be tied to the company of one, and that, forsooth, the very one which no ordinary man can understand!" Next, the strange and fastidious turns of the Gregorian song aroused his contempt: "Such twisting and turning," he says, "which no one can follow." And elsewhere he compares the sound of the Gregorian music to "the braying of an ass." Then its difficulty excited his censure, and he hints pretty plainly that not only is labour thrown away in learning such stuff, but those who are familiar with it had best employ their time in forgetting it. Having thus condemned as worthless the entire system of contemporary Church music, a more difficult task awaited him in proposing an adequate substitute; and most interesting is it for us to read Luther's opinions of what an ideal music ought to be, since many things that were to him unfulfilled dreams have since become realities. "Words should have a swing," he says, "and a good strong metre, so that the congregation may catch up the tune and join in with it." "The singing is for the congregation, and not for the choristers." "German words, and music that will go with German words—this is the proper song for Church service." "On high festivals," he writes, "I would allow Latin songs to be sung, but only until there were enough German ones arranged to do duty for them; and after that we would have no more Latin." A number of similar suggestions are thrown out in the two pamphlets, and for a time they remained suggestions merely. To speculate on what the new music ought to be was one thing, to carry these speculations into effect was another. For no one knew how to proceed in the work of reform. Take the simplest, apparently, of Luther's suggestions—the substitution of German words for the Latin. How was this to be effected? If the Latin were simply translated into German, after the syllables had been with much difficulty each fitted to its tone, even then the peculiar lengthenings, inflections, retardations of the Gregorian music, which suited excellently with the frequent open vowels of the Latin language, would be entirely discordant, and even grotesque, when in company with the abundant consonants and harsh gutturals of the German. Still more difficult of achievement was the task of "giving a swing to the words, so that all the congregation might catch up and join in with the tune"; for to do this, the whole of the music must be altered, and its difficult scales abolished, which were a puzzle to the singers themselves, much more to uneducated worshippers. This requirement alone, if there had been no others beside it, was sufficient to strike at the roots of Gregorianism, and make the musicians of the time turn pale with apprehension at what Luther's new music of the future might lead to.

Many trials were made to reconcile the old system with the new conditions which the essentially popular religion of Protestantism required. Nothing succeeded. Partial reform was as much out of the question in the music as in the religion. Entire separation was the only course practicable; and it was Luther himself who took the step. "Let us," he said, "bid good-bye to the music of Gregory, and take the common songs of our own people, as they sing them at harvests, at village festivals, at weddings, and at funerals, for use in our churches. Man can as well praise God in one tune as in another, and it is a pity that such pretty songs as these should be kept any longer from the service of their Maker." The effect of this bold move at innovation was immediate and electrical. Musicians took pains to search out and arrange the most beautiful of these truly national ditties, and congregations found untold pleasure in singing them. "Such singing," writes one old author of the time, "was never heard in our churches as there has been since the 'Folk Songs' came into fashion." For the first time, indeed, in Christendom for many centuries there was genuine congregational singing, and it owed its origin to the fertile brain of Luther every whit as much as did the hearty worship that accompanied it. Yet strange were the juxtapositions of sacred and profane that occurred in the hymn-books; for it was the fashion to write above the hymn its own first line, and next to this the first

line of the "Folk Song" to which it was to be sung, with somewhat grotesque results at times. The principle of adaptation met with such favour that it threatened to run riot for a while; but it was too great a principle for its excesses to be feared. Good taste and the strong devotional feeling of the early Protestants curbed all extravagances, and the work of adapting went on so successfully and so surely that the secular elements incorporated into the services soon lost their old associations, and the music of religion was daily being enriched from an almost inexhaustible store.

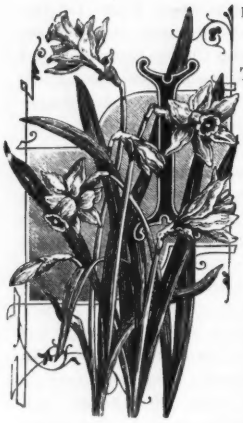
In the height of the movement Luther enforced his teachings practically by the publication of a "Song Book." The object of the publication was partly to encourage musicians by his own example in their task of editing and arranging, and partly to show them how far discretion might go in borrowing from secular sources, and at what point a line ought to be drawn. In this "Song Book" he gave admission to numerous popular ditties of the day as chants and hymns; two or three pieces of the Romish Church music he likewise included, which had the unusual merit of extreme simplicity to recommend them, and had become familiar to the people; and the third source from whence he drew were the hymns of the Moravian Brothers, which had likewise been based on the popular songs of the day, though at an earlier date than the movement which he headed. In preparing this "Song Book" he was aided by two excellent musicians of the time, Johannes Walther and Conrad Rupff, "two good Protestants," as he puts it, "who, for the love of Christ, would undertake any toil to make our German liturgy better than the Roman." A curious feature of this earlier work of Protestant music is that the melody of the tunes is invariably assigned to the tenor part, the soprano and alto merely singing an added harmony above it. The object of this arrangement was "to allow all the people of the congregation to join in without effort, neither straining their voices to rise to the high notes of the treble, nor labouring to depress them to the deep and difficult notes of the bass." Such is the quaint reason given by an old author for this sole element which distinguished the music of Luther's "Song Book" from the ordinary Church music of to-day.

Let us now see the result of these reforms, and notice how entirely they had transformed Church music by their operation. They had taught composers to go to a new source for their inspiration—no longer to worn-out manuscripts and to quaint archaic scales which it was an effort of ingenuity to twist into tune, but to the fresh and healthy melodies of the common people, which had a strong metre and a bold swing; and, what is more, were founded on the simplest musical scale—the ordinary major and minor scale which we use to-day. For while the profound theorists of the Gregorian School had been trafficking and coquetting with all sorts of scales and modes, till their music had attained such a pitch of intricacy as we have described, the common music of the people had run on in a pure and simple stream, not poisoned by affectations or clouded by the obscure teachings of dusty science. Here was a beautiful fount for the new art of Europe to wet its wings in; and accordingly, beginning with the Church composers, and extending more and more, as music became secularised, to all branches of the art, this common and simple scale of nature came to be used, to the exclusion of all other scales. The scale in which Beethoven, Handel, and Mozart wrote their compositions was the same simple scale which was first brought into notice when Luther heard the peasants singing their melodies in it, and determined to adapt these beautiful strains to the service of the Church. Without the Reformation and its strong popular tendencies, whereby it broke down the fetters of a dull and antiquated tradition, modern music could never have come into being; for the Gregorian system was in a state of stagnation, and promised no hope for any future. Even more perhaps than the scale, the form of these "Folk Songs" was of untold value on the development of the art of music. The form was that of the simple ballad, or, in its religious dress, the hymn. The "common metre" of our hymn-books was the rhythm of most of them. But there were also some in long metre, and a few in short metre. Now let us think for a moment how ubiquitous is "common metre" in our music. Nearly every second song of the present day, if analysed and compared with a common metre tune, will be found to tally exactly. But more than this, the melodies of the great composers—such, for instance, as Beethoven or Haydn employ as themes in their most elaborate symphonies and sonatas—can in nearly every case be assigned to one or other of these hymn metres. Such was the wonderful vitality of the beautiful chants of the early Reformers, that even yet we may find their pulsations beating in full vigour amid the noblest musical works of modern times. But the Gregorian music of the Roman ritual, which consisted in interminable runs on Latin syllables, and which was formless, and devoid of all crisp metre and melody, has passed away for every purpose of art, and it would be hard to show a single piece in the range of modern musical literature which bears any affinity to it.

Such, then, was the effect of the Reformation on the art of music—to renovate and re-create it. Music has been well called the handmaid of religion. And when religion was purified by a return to the simplicity of early Christianity, most natural was it that music should receive a similar purification by a similar means. "To praise God and give Him thanks," said Luther, "let us have a voice that will enter not only into the vaults of our churches, but into the cottages of our labouring men." Such a voice was the Protestant music—a music that all could understand, a music for the poor no less than for the rich, and which, springing up hand in hand with the great Reformation itself, seems destined to as eternal a vitality.

THE SHEEP OF THE LORD.

BY THE REV. HARRY JONES, M.A., PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S AND HON. CHAPLAIN TO HER MAJESTY.



IT was no strange thing for Jesus to compare Himself to a shepherd. Any leader of simple people might do that. The point of His comparison lies in the character of the shepherd. Shepherds of all sorts are mentioned in the Bible, but mostly the shepherd fills a devoted and exalted place, from righteous Abel to Him who lays down His life for the sheep. The Shepherd, too, is especially distinguished as the recipient of the Divine Word. It is the Shepherd to whom revelations are made—from Moses, who was feeding his sheep on the slopes of Sinai, to those who were keeping watch over their flocks by night. To one comes the incommunicable name and the commission of the Exodus; to the others the announcement of the Saviour, and the message of goodwill to all mankind.

Shepherds are highly honoured in the sacred story. The Bible smells of the sheepfold. David, who was following the ewes great with young ones when God took him, said, "The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing." This saying has expressed the deepest thoughts of thousands upon thousands in their sorrow, and brought comfort to multitudes in their last hours. It showed the inner soul of the warrior-king of Israel. It was the sound of final peace among the memories of battle. He faces many dangers in safety, and as to the end he says, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." When the Court Chaplain read this verse to the old German Emperor as he lay a dying, he said, "That is beautiful."

We may well feel at a loss which to follow of all the thoughts which crowd into the mind when we pause over the lessons which the shepherd is set to teach us in the Scriptures. For instance, his was a lonely calling, giving much room for meditation, which is associated in the Bible history with fresh knowledge of God, and lasting influence upon men. We might ask ourselves about the nature of our solitary thoughts, and whether we pass from them to renewed strength and usefulness of life. With us, enforced periods of loneliness and silence suggest intolerable punishment, rather than a renovation of the soul. Nevertheless, the conspicuous honour and blessing which come to the lonely watcher in the field and on the hill-side might hint to us the righteous uses which may be made of seclusion.

Many other lessons are found in the pastoral imagery of the Bible. Among them I would try to set before you a few familiar thoughts about some ways both of shepherds and of sheep. The sheep is the typical wanderer. However cared for, it is apt to leave the field in which it is kept; and when this comes to pass, it mostly loses itself. It does not find its own way back. It does not, like some other animals, know the road by which to return to its home. Thus, though in a figure it may remind us of our Divine relationship, it also illustrates our human offences. The sheep is a typical wanderer, and is held to set forth some ways of ourselves.

It is, moreover, dependent. With neither claw nor tooth, with neither tusk nor heel can it defend itself. It eminently needs to be protected. It is a type of helplessness. It relies upon the shepherd, however ungraciously it may desert him. And thus, too, after a fashion, it sets forth man. We sometimes pique ourselves upon our independence, but it is only undue reliance upon *man* that we should avoid. We are associated with, and rest upon, God. The very consciousness of our manifold faculties, and the sense of dominion which we undoubtedly have, should really lead us to apprehend our peculiar Divine kinship, and how dependent we are, though in no humiliating sense. Our dependence upon God shows a closeness to Him—a closeness which is exalting. We are not told this only by the Church. There are many things beside the Bible which tell us of our relationship to, or union with, an Almighty One. The very excellence of our abilities (which excellence sets us above all the rest of creation) should teach us of our nearness to the Creator. Thus, though the relationship of the sheep to the shepherd does not really illustrate the *nature* of ours to God, yet the *nearness* is very suggestive. Speaking generally, *e.g.*, while deer do not remind us at once of the Ranger of the Park, we do not for a moment think of sheep without a shepherd. If we see a flock, we know that there must be a shepherd near at hand. Thus, in a figure, they hint at the truth that man and God go together, though with high and peculiar connection. We are conscious and (so to speak) proud of our likeness to God, in respect both of incarnation and inspiration. It is with no feeling of abasement, but rather one of gladness and buoyancy, that we say "we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves." We draw upon an eternal store, and thus show strength, not weakness, when we "are kept outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls." We are near to, in union with, God after a fashion which seems to be apprehended by no other of His creatures, though the tie between the sheep and the shepherd dimly and imperfectly shadows it forth. We can

hardly think of one without the other. We lose much by not realising our closeness to God.

I pass on. The sheep is fruitful in human illustrations. I will remind you of one more, which is by no means grateful to our self-esteem; which, indeed, reminds us of our most humiliating ways—ways in which we lose sight of our individual responsibility. However dependent we may be upon our fellows for instruction and support of various kinds, we are individually responsible to God, through our own consciences, for the use of such powers as we may have. Each one is in direct touch with the Almighty. In other words, as learners, workers, discoverers, creators, we can consciously use at first hand the great power of nature, which is God's. The bird in the spring builds its nest with the same skill for the first time as well as at the last. But man learns and grows. He "increases in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Each one does, or *may*.

But, too often, with what humiliating resemblance does he behave like the silly imitative sheep, which follow one another simply because one of them leads! Thus, we perceive not merely that sheep wander; a single sheep will sometimes do that. There was only one in the parabolic hundred which was lost. The ninety-nine were safe. I rather point to that curiously imitative behaviour which sheep sometimes display, when, with unaccountable impulse, they follow one another simply because one has begun to lead. With what degrading aptness does this illustrate some follies of human fashion! It seems as if, at times, those men and women who compose society (I am not thinking of any special rank, for the movement I refer to affects both sexes, all ages, all sorts and conditions of men) discharge from their minds and brains all honourable individuality; and in the formation of opinions, social, political, and religious, in the adoption of some phraseology or dress, in the taking up or dropping some way of life, show no more sense than a flock of sheep. With unconscious concession to mere fashion, and abandonment or abdication of that individuality which is a distinguishing characteristic of man, or humanity, we say that such and such a thing is "the *rage*." There is a panic of approval, and a consensus of agreement without any exercise of private judgment, intellectual perception, or religious need. So social parties are formed of congregated individuals who can no more give a reason of the fashion that is in them, or tell why they are gathered together, than the several sheep who compose a flock. Of course it is of little use for the Church to make a protest, since the religious world is subject to shallow impulses, and (the creeds and sacraments being still the same) omnipotent fashion frequently directs the procedure and outward equipment of worship, and the tone of ecclesiastical conversation. But whether or no this sheeplike imitativeness marks the behaviour of many in the world or the Church, it is a thing which we should strive against as degrading to the members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

I have said that the sheep and the shepherd are ever found together. We cannot see a flock without thinking of the keeper of the flock. And so it is with God and man. But the Gospel teaching of this truth has a fuller meaning than that of old, since Jesus has said, "I am the good Shepherd." He does not appear before us merely as one who leads, feeds, and folds the flock. A hireling does that; and in respect to these duties he does them well. Nor are they small matters. They are, so to speak, all that a flock has any right to require at his hands. The honest hireling (for no reproach is intended to be cast upon his fairness) watches the flock, sees that the sheep do not stray, and gives fodder to the cattle. He does what he is paid to do. But there is an interest in his charge that he cannot be expected to feel. And here comes in the difference between him and the good shepherd. The first mark of the good shepherd would seem to be that he owns the sheep. Here I pause to notice that the parable (for such I must call it) was not intended to apply to the modern English shepherd who receives wages for his work, who is thus a hireling, and whose own the sheep are not. The modern owner mostly knows only the number and cost of his flock. Sometimes he troubles himself merely about their breed and value in the market. Now, it is the hireling whose voice they follow. It is the hireling who has been known to distinguish each animal in the flock, and herein he often shows a marvellous gift of discernment. It is the hireling who, in lambing time, stays out all night in the bitter March wind, seeing to the ewes great with young ones, while the owner is warm in bed. It is the hireling whom the sheep follow, and whose voice they hear. The relation of the two characters to the flock is reversed in our modern experience. If he does not die for the sheep, the hireling exposes himself to discomfort in the blast and the snow-drift more or rather than their owner.

But the meaning of the old lesson taught by Jesus is plain. In his language the good shepherd not only owns the sheep, but is personally concerned in leading and tending them. And all the excellence of the owner (seen in the diligent modern hired shepherd) is found in him. Moreover, in the parable, the good shepherd knows his sheep. The hireling may know the flock, but the good shepherd calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

This must help us to realise the intimacy of our relation to Christ. Each one of us has the closest connection with God, in Him. If the Christian religion is essentially superior to others, it is not alone in the beauty of its sentiment, its inculcation of self-sacrifice, and devotion to truth for the truth's sake. These mark its excellence in several respects, and such as thus follow the teaching of Christ are blessed

and sanctified, though they may meet with much tribulation in living so high and devoted a life. But there is a peculiar charm and value in the personal knowledge of the sheep by the shepherd. "I know My sheep," says Jesus, "and am known of Mine." This brings before us not merely the words of a departed Teacher, but the presence of a living Friend, who knows us now. And it is knowledge of His sheep by their good Shepherd that gives its peculiar excellence to Christianity; for the care of our Good Shepherd does not refer to what He did for His friends while on earth. He talks of the contrasts among His own disciples, and His plan for collecting them together in the *end*. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and there shall be one flock." He goes on applying this pastoral language to the last things which shall come to pass. He represents Himself as using it on the judgment-seat. He did not feed His flock here, and then leave them to live upon the food He left behind, but He goes on being their Shepherd, knowing His sheep by name and feeding them Himself.

In this ownership, personal knowledge of, and continuous concern for, the sheep, we have one sign of the Good Shepherd as distinguished from the hireling. But a clearer mark may be seen. "The Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Here we have that act of self-sacrifice which leads us into the heart of Christianity. What it fully meant and means we cannot yet tell. It was an offering which cast all others into the shade; one which made all propitiation needless, and yet demanded a living sacrifice on the part of the worshipper. Thus the image of the shepherd and the sheep grows into greater value and significance. Though we have erred and strayed from God's ways, the living Christ is ever ready to lead us back, recovered and forgiven—forgiven, and restored to our place. And we need such a friend, both to face our work with freshness and hope here, and to look without undue shrinking towards the unseen which awaits us. A Friend who seeks us when we stray and brings us back; a Friend who claims us as His, though we be lost or deserted by our fellows; a Friend always ready to receive us into the fold again, though, like a bewildered wandering sheep, we can do nothing of ourselves to save ourselves, and only yield to the Good Shepherd's care.

"TO THE LIONS!"

A TALE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS. BY THE REV. PROFESSOR CHURCH, M.A.

CHAPTER IV.—LOVE OR DUTY?



THE two sisters, Rhoda and Cleoné, did not lack admirers. Maidens so fair and gracious would have attracted suitors even had they been portionless. But it was well known that they would bring handsome dowries with them, for Dion's farm had prospered under his hands, while Dion's wife had inherited the savings which her adopting father, the centurion Manilius, had made from his pay and prize-money.

But Rhoda's admirers found it impossible to get beyond admiration. In those early days of Christianity there were no vows of celibacy for men or women; though, indeed, the feelings and thoughts that led to them were rapidly growing up. Yet no cloistered nun of after times could have been more absolutely shut out from all thoughts of love and marriage than this daughter of a Bithynian farmer. She did not affect anything like seclusion, or seek to stand aloof from the business, and even the little pleasures of daily life. She took her part in the work of the farm. No fingers milked the cows or made the butter more deftly than hers. In the harvest-field she would follow the reapers, and bind the sheaves more untiringly and more skilfully than any, except Cleoné. When the vintage came round, and the purple and amber grapes were plucked by the women for the men to tread in the vats, no one filled her baskets more quickly than Rhoda. And if a weakly calf, or lamb, or an early brood of chickens, hatched before the frosts were fairly gone, wanted care, there was no one who could give it so efficiently and tenderly as Rhoda. In fact, it was her vocation from her cradle to serve others. Every good woman has such a vocation in her degree, but some embrace it with a devotion that leaves no room for any personal ties. Rhoda was one of these rare souls; and the boldest lover soon found that she was not for him, and, indeed, had no care for any earthly suit. She never needed to repulse an admirer. A very short time sufficed to show that she was absolutely unapproachable; and she went untroubled on her way, followed by something of the awe which might be felt for an angel come down from heaven.

It was natural, of course, that her first thought should be to serve the community of believers to which she belonged. And there was a way in which this desire could be fulfilled. The early Church had the practice, lately revived among ourselves, of calling devout women to the office of deaconess, and of thus making a regular use of their zeal. The need of such helpers in the ministry was especially great when the Greek habits of life prevailed, and women were in a large measure secluded from society. They



"He caught her hand in his as he spoke."—*p.* 91.

wanted helpers and advisers of their own sex who might go where men would not have been admitted. Such a helper the Church of Cenchreæ, the busy port of Corinth, had at an earlier time in Phœbe, whom St. Paul commends so kindly to his fellow-Christians at Rome. This was the office to which Rhoda inclined. It was her youth only that hindered her admission to it. Though no vows were demanded, still there was a natural feeling that those who put their hands to such a work should not go back from it, and the presiding minister of the Christian community hesitated about giving this regular call to one so young and so beautiful as Rhoda. Dion too, and his wife, though they would not offer a direct opposition to their daughter's wish, were not sorry to see its full accomplishment postponed. They were too good people to grudge her to the service of Christ and His Church; yet they could not help shrinking from all that this vocation seemed to mean. In any case it could hardly fail to take her much from their family life. Nor could they hide from themselves that, if troublous times should come, if the persecution which was always possible, and even probable, should begin, the first victims would be those who held office in the Church.

Next to her own feeling of devotion, Rhoda's strongest desire was to make her sister a sharer in her work. Nothing could have made her draw back, but the thought of not having Cleoné by her side was inexpressibly painful to her, and she banished it with all the force of her resolute will. Her best and truest course would have been to recognise the difference between her sister and herself, of which, indeed, she could not fail to have some knowledge, to acknowledge that Cleone was made for the duties of happiness and home, and to crush down all the feelings and wishes in her heart that helped to hide this from her. But, in common with many great natures, she had, to use a common phrase, the defects of her good qualities. She said to herself, "I am called to serve my Lord; this service is the highest aim in life, the most perfect happiness that I can enjoy, and what can I do better for the sister who is like a part of my own soul than to bring her to share in it? Shall I not be doing well if I can bring two hearts instead of one to Him?"

Cleoné would have yielded with scarcely a struggle to the strong will of her sister—for she was in her way not less devout—if it had not been for another influence. She had found among her suitors one to whose affections her own went out in answer.

Clitus was a Greek, an Athenian by birth, who had come to Bithynia in the train of Pliny, the Roman Governor. He had been a remarkably successful student in the University of Athens. He had been chosen, though then only a junior, to give the complimentary address with which the City of the Muses welcomed a visit from Pliny, as a distinguished Roman man of letters; and his pure Attic style and manly delivery had attracted the visitor's notice. He had been no less successful as an athlete than he was as a learner in the school of philosophy and rhetoric. No competitor could throw him in the wrestling ring or outstrip him in the foot-race. The crew captained by him had won for three years in succession—an unparalleled distinction—the prize in the boat-races in the Bay of Salamis. In the midst of these triumphs he was struck with a sudden sense of the vanity of the pursuits to which he had been devoting himself. A fellow-student, a friendly rival, who had been only less successful than himself in study and sport, had been carried off by a violent fever. He was a stranger from Ephesus, and, as none of his kindred were at hand, Clitus, as his nearest friend, had the sad duty assigned to him of putting the torch to the funeral pile on which the body was to be consumed, and of gathering the ashes for the urn which was to be placed in the family sepulchre at Ephesus. The most brilliant rhetorician that the University contained had been

chosen to speak the funeral oration. Clitus listened to him with the closest attention, for he eagerly desired some word of comfort and hope. The speaker was a disciple of a well-known school, which asserted nothing and questioned everything. As long as he spoke of the dead man, of his virtues and his achievements, nothing could be better than his language, so full was it of tenderness and grace; but when he came to treat of the future, he failed. He could only disparage or doubt the beliefs of others. He ridiculed the popular faith, the gloomy pit of Tartarus, the shining fields of Elysium. He reviewed the speculations of philosophers only to express his dissatisfaction. But his chief scorn was for a doctrine which he said had been proclaimed not far from the place where they were standing, some sixty years before. "It was a Jew," he said, "who had the boldness to propound these absurdities in this city of philosophers; nor was he a man without culture. I have heard it said by one who listened to him that, though his accent was detestable, he quoted from our poets. But his teaching was sheer frenzy. Every man was to rise from his grave! Mark you, *every man!* Criminals, slaves, barbarians—did you ever hear such madness?" And then the speaker went on to propound his own theory, which, by the way, was amazingly like some that are being thrust upon us now. "Men will survive in their race. The individual perishes; but if he has done anything for his fellows, has been a poet, or an orator, or an inventor, he lives in the greatness of what he has done, and in the fame which waits upon it."

Clitus turned away in profound discontent. Then it occurred to him, "Can I find what I want elsewhere? There is Dion the Golden-Mouth lecturing at Ephesus. Perhaps he has something more satisfying to tell me." To Ephesus he went. But there Clitus heard nothing more than he had heard at Athens. Yet his visit was not fruitless. One day, when his restless thoughts drew him from his bed before sunrise, he fell in with a little company of men and women who were making their way through the half-lighted street. He followed them, entered with them a building in the outskirts of the city, and listened to a discourse on the subject of the very doctrine which he had heard ridiculed at Athens. "Then," he said to himself, "this wild fancy still holds its ground!" He came again and again. What he heard interested him deeply, and when he came to make acquaintance with some of his fellow-hearers, he found that, humble mechanics or slaves as they were, they had a wonderful elevation of thought, and even of language. Meanwhile, it was necessary to find some employment. Just at that time the younger Pliny came to Ephesus, on his way to take possession of his government in Bithynia, and Clitus attended his *levée*. Pliny, always glad to surround himself with educated men, offered employment as a secretary, and Clitus accompanied him to his province. It was thus that he became acquainted with the little community that worshipped in the guild-house of the wool-combers of Nicæa, with the household of Dion, and with the beautiful Cleoné. An opportunity had occurred of serving Dion in some matter that brought him into the proconsul's court, and the acquaintance had grown into intimacy. Clitus was now a catechumen, or person under instruction, and it was intended that he should be baptised at Whitsuntide.

In the afternoon of the day following the assembly described in the first chapter, the young Roman had found his way to the farm by help of one of the excuses which lovers are never at a loss to invent. Possibly it was not an accident that his coming was timed for an hour at which Rhoda would be busy with some errand of mercy, for Rhoda viewed the young man as a formidable opponent, and, for all her unworldliness, was clever enough to prevent any private interview between him and her sister. The elder Rhoda was busy with her household cares; Cleoné was helping her father in the vineyard. He was pruning—a delicate task, which he was unwilling to trust to any hands but his own; she followed him along the rows, tying up to their supports the shoots which were left to bear the vintage of the year. It was here that Clitus found her, and as Dion was inclined to favour his suit, no place could have suited him better. If we listen awhile to their talk, we shall see how matters stood between them. Clitus was in high spirits.

"Give me joy, Cleoné," he said; "the letter from the Emperor arrived this morning, and it grants the Governor's request. I am to have the Roman citizenship; and now everything is open to me."

The girl could not refuse her sympathies to his manifest delight; but her mind was somewhat sad, and it was with a forced gaiety that she answered, "Well, my lord—for you will soon be one of the lords of us poor provincials—how shall we speak to you? What Roman name shall you be pleased to adopt? Shall you be a Julius Cæsar or a Tullius Cicero?"

"To you, Cleoné," said the young man, "I shall always be Clitus, the name under which I had the happiness first to know you. But, seriously, the Governor is kind enough to let me take his own family name, and I shall be Quintus Cæcilius."

"And when do you leave us for Rome?" said the girl, giving all her attention, it seemed, to binding up a refractory shoot.

"Leave you? for Rome? I said nothing about leaving."

"But the career—in this poor place there is nothing to satisfy you. You said that all things were now open to you, and where are 'all things' to be found but at Rome?"

"You misunderstand me—you wrong me, Cleoné. I have no such ambition as you seem to think. I desire nothing better than to spend the rest of my days here, if I can but find here the thing that I want. I did but mean that no road by which I may find it well to travel will be shut to me when I am a citizen of Rome. But be sure that the road, whatever it is, will never take me very far from Nicæa."

The girl was silent. She had seen from the first, with a woman's quick apprehension of such things, that there was a serious purpose in the young Greek's manner, and she had tried, as women will try, even when they are not face to face with such perplexities as were troubling poor Cleoné, to put off the crisis.

Clitus went on: "I am to have the government business as a notary in the province. The Governor promises me that other things will follow. But I am afraid this does not interest you."

"I am sure," answered the girl, "we all feel the greatest interest in you."

"But you, Cleoné, you!" cried the young man, and he caught her hand in his as he spoke. "You know that this is my ambition: to have something which I can ask you to share. I came to tell you that it seems to be within my reach, and you ask me when I am going to Rome! Oh! it is cruel; and when I have been hoping all the time that there might be something to work for."

Poor Cleoné was in a sad strait. The struggle between love and duty is often a hard one; but at least the issue is clear, and a loyal heart crushes down its pain, and chooses the better course. But here there seemed to be love on both sides, and duty on both sides. Which was she to choose? She knew that Clitus loved her, and though she had never looked quite closely and steadfastly into her own heart, she felt that she loved him. And he was worthy, too. Any woman might be proud of him. Why should she not do as her mother had done before her, and give herself to a good man who loved her? There was love and there was duty here. But then, on the other side, there was the Church, its claim upon her, the work that lay ready for her hand—and Rhoda, who was her second self, from whom she had never had a thought apart, whose love had been the better half of her life ever since she could remember anything. It was a sore perplexity in which she was entangled.

She stood silent. But her silence was eloquent. Clitus, though he was no confident lover, saw that it was not her indifference that he had to fear. If he had been no more to her than other men, she could easily have found words—kind, doubtless, but plain and decisive enough—in which to bid him go. She had even left her hand in his. She was scarcely conscious of it, so full was her mind of the struggle; but the consciousness would have come quickly enough if his touch had been repugnant to her.

At last she spoke: "Oh, Clitus, this is not a time for such things as you talk of. Remember what the elder said the other day. There is danger at hand, and we must be ready to meet it. Would it be right to hamper ourselves with things of this world? Does not the holy Apostle Paul tell that they who marry——"

She paused, blushing crimson when she remembered that her lover, though his meaning was plain enough, had not gone as far as speaking of marriage.

"Ah! if you were only my wife," cried Clitus, "I should fear nothing."

"Has he not said," she went on, "that they who marry shall have trouble in the flesh? And, when I might be comforting and strengthening others, to have to think of myself! Oh, Clitus, I feel that I am called to other things. Rhoda and I are not as other women; she tells me so, and she is always right. I could not go against her."

Perhaps it was as well that just at that moment, Dion, who had finished his work for the time among the vines, advanced with outstretched hands to greet the guest. It was a relief to both to have the interruption.

CHAPTER V.—A PLOT.

ON the evening of the day when Clitus and Cleoné held their conversation among the vines, as described in the last chapter, another conversation, which was to have no little influence on their fate, was going on. The place was a wine-shop, kept by a certain Theran, in the outskirts of Nicæa, and not far from the Christian meeting-house. Theran's customers were, for the most part, of the artisan class. But he kept a room reserved for his few patrons that were of a higher rank. In this room three persons were sitting at a citron-wood table, one of the innkeeper's most cherished possessions, which only favoured customers were permitted to see uncovered. A flagon, which could not have held less than two gallons, stood in the middle of the table. It was about half full of the potent wine from Mount Tmolus, mixed, however, with about half its bulk of water. From this flagon each guest ladled out the liquid into his own drinking-cup.

One of the three is already known to us. This is Verus, the unworthy member whose banishment from the Christian community has been described. The second, to whom, it may be observed, his companions pay a certain respect, is an elderly man, in the ordinary dress of a well-to-do merchant. There is a certain air of intelligence in his face. But the keen, hungry look of the eyes, the pinched nose, the thin, bloodless lips, tightly closed, but sometimes parting in a smile that never reaches the eyes, give it a sinister look. Lucilius—for this was his name—was a man of good birth and education, but he had given up all his thoughts to money-making, and the tyrant passion had set the mark of his servitude on his face.

The third is a professional soothsayer, or fortune-teller. The fortune-teller of to-day commonly exercises his art by means of a pack of cards, while he sometimes consults a tattered book of dreams, or even professes to gather his knowledge of the future from the motions of the planets. Cards were not then invented; dream-interpreting and star-reading were not held in very great repute. Our soothsayer practised the curious art of discovering the future by the signs that might be discerned in the entrails of animals. My readers would think it tedious were I to give them the details of this system. Let it suffice to say that the liver was held to carry most meaning in its appearance. If the proper top to it were wanting, something terrible was sure to happen. There were lines of life in it, and lines of wealth. Each of the four "fibres" into which it was divided had its own province. From this you could discern perils by water, from that perils by fire; a third warned you of losses in business, a fourth gave you hopes of a legacy. This was the art, then, which the third of the three guests professed. He called himself Arruns, but this was not his real name. Arruns is Etruscan, whilst the man was a Sicilian, who, after trying almost

everything for a livelihood, had settled down as an *haruspex** in Nicæa. But the Etruscans were famous over all the Roman world as the inventors of the soothsaying art, and professors of it found an Etruscan name as useful as singers sometimes find one that is borrowed from Italy, or French teachers a supposed birthplace in Paris. Arruns, if he had little of the Etruscan about him in his language, which was Latin of the rudest kind, spoken in a broad Greek accent, had at least the corpulence for which the foretellers of the future were proverbial. His small dull eyes, sometimes lit up with a little spark of greed or cunning, his thick sensual lips, and heavy bloated cheeks, flushed with habitual potations, showed how the animal predominated in him.

He was now holding forth on his grievances in a loud, harsh voice, which he did not forget to refresh with frequent draughts of Tmolian wine.

"It is monstrous, this neglect of the gods! It must bring a curse upon the country. There will be nothing left sacred soon. Who can suppose that if men do not care for the gods, they will go on caring for each other? Children will not honour their parents, nor parents love their children. The sanctity of marriage, the rights of property, everything will disappear, if these atheists are suffered to go unpunished, while they spread abroad their pernicious doctrines."

"Your zeal does you credit," interrupted Lucilius, with a slight cynical smile. "But we all know that Arruns is careful of all that concerns the sacredness of the home."

Arruns was a notoriously ill-conducted fellow, whose life was a scandal to the better behaved, not to say the more pious of the heathen. His wife had long since left him in disgust, and was supporting herself as a nurse. His children he had turned out of doors. The shaft did not wound him very deeply, but he took the hint and became more practical.

"Look at the temples," he went on; "the court-yards are grass-grown. Day after day not a worshipper comes near them. To see smoke going from the altars is as rare as to see snow in summer. And when a man does bring a beast, 'tis some paltry, half-starved creature: a scabby sheep, or a worn-out bullock from the plough, which are not good enough for the butcher's knife, let alone the priest's hatchet. And as often as not, when there is a decent sacrifice, they do not call me in. They grudge me my ten drachmas—for I have had to cut down the fee to ten. 'What should a calf or a sheep's liver have to tell us about the future?' they say. What monstrous impiety! What a flagrant contradiction of all history! Did not Galba's *haruspex*, on the very day of his death, warn him that he was in danger from an intimate friend? and did not Otho, who was such a friend, kill him within two hours afterwards?"

"Yes," said Lucilius, a little peremptorily, "we know all about these examples and instances. But go on to your own grievances."

"Well, to put the matter plainly, it is simple starvation to me. Twice, thrice last week I had to live on beans and bread. Ten years ago there did not a day pass without two or three sacrifices. I had my pick of good things—beef, mutton, lamb, veal, pork, every day; and now I am positively thankful for a rank piece of goat's flesh, that once I would not have given to my slave. Oh! it is awful; there must be a judgment from the gods on such impiety."

"One would hardly think, from your looks, my Arruns," said Lucilius, "that things were quite so bad as you say. But tell me, what do you suppose to be the cause of this impious neglect of the gods, and this indifference to the future?"

"The Christians, of course," said Arruns; "the Christians."

"But," interrupted Lucilius, "they can be scarcely numerous enough to make much difference, and I am told that they are mostly poor people, and even slaves; so that they could hardly, in any case, be clients of yours."

"My good lord," said Arruns, "it is not so much the Christians themselves; it is the example they set. People say to themselves, 'These seem to be very decent, honest sort of fellows; they never murder or rob; they are very kind to the sick and poor; we can always be safe in having dealings with them; and they seem to be tolerably prosperous too. And yet they never go inside a temple, nor offer so much as a lamb to the gods.' What could be worse than that? They do ten times more harm than if they were so many murderers and thieves. A good citizen who neglects the gods is a most mischievous person. There is sure to be a number of people who imitate him so far. It is the Christians who are at the bottom of all this trouble."

"But what do you want me to do?" said Lucilius. "Grant that what you say is true, still I see no reason for interfering. I have two or three tenants who are said to be Christians, and they are honest and industrious fellows, who always pay me my rent to the day. Why should I trouble them?"

"Pardon me, sir," interrupted Verus, who had as yet taken no part in the conversation. "Pardon me if I remind you that there is something more to be said. This association of the Christians is an unlawful society."

"Of course it is," cried Lucilius; "we all know that; though you, my dear Verus, seem to have been a long time finding it out, if, as I understand, you have been acting as their treasurer."

"I have but lately discovered their true character," said Verus. "When I did, I hastened to leave them."

"Ah!" said Lucilius, with a sneer, "that must have been at the very time when they examined your accounts. Do you know that people have been saying that they, too, made some discoveries?"

Verus, who would have given a great deal to be able to stab the speaker, forced his features into a sickly smile. "You are pleased to jest, honourable sir," he said. "But these Christians are not quite so insignificant or so poor as you think. There is the old knight, Antistius. No one would suppose that he was a rich man. He drinks wine that cannot cost more than a denarius* a gallon, and very little of that; but we know

* One who foretells the future by the inspection of the entrails of animals.

* Something about ninepence.

what he gives away in alms. It is not only here that he gives. His money goes to Smyrna, to Ephesus, and positively to Rome. You may rely upon this, because it used to pass through my hands."

"And stick there sometimes, I have heard," retorted the other, whose passion for saying bitter things was sometimes too strong for his prudence, and even for his avarice. "But what does that matter to me? What do I care for the way in which an old fool and his money are parted? It does not concern me if he feeds all the beggars and cripples in the Empire."

"You forget, sir," returned Verus, "that if Antistius is convicted of belonging to an unlawful society—and there can be no doubt that the community of Christians is such a society—his goods are confiscated to the Emperor's purse, and that those who assist the cause of justice will have their share."

There was a sudden change in Lucilius's careless, supercilious manner, though he did his best not to seem too eager.

"Ah!" he said, "there may be something in that, though I should not particularly like a business of that kind."

"Don't suppose, sir," went on Verus, "that there are not others besides Antistius. There are plenty who are worth looking after. Dion the farmer is wealthy, though one would hardly think it. And there are others who are entangled in this business. You would hardly believe it, if I were to tell you their names. And then it is not only here, it is all through the province that you may find them. I have all the threads in my hand, and I could make a very pretty unravelling if I chose."

"What, then, do you propose?" asked Lucilius.

"That we should lay information to the Governor."

"Will he act? He is all for being philosophic and tolerant."

"He cannot choose but act. The Emperor's orders are stringent. He is very strict about these secret societies. Did you not hear about the fire-brigade that the people of Nicomedia wanted to have? They were nearly ruined by the fire last December. Nothing was ready: not a bucket nor a yard of hose; and when some things were got together, then there was nobody to work. The consequence was that more than half the city, and all the finest buildings in it, were burnt. The people wanted to have a fire-brigade, and the Governor wrote to the Emperor recommending that the request should be granted. But no. Trajan would not have anything of the kind. If it was not a secret society, it might be turned into one, he said in his letter. No; if we once set the thing going, the Governor must act, whether he like it or no. We must send in as many informations as we can. There will be one from you, and another from Arruns here, who can back it up if he likes with his complaint about the sacrifices. Then there is Theron, our host here, who complains that the Christians are so sober that they are taking the bread out of the tavern-keepers' mouths. As for myself, perhaps my name had better not appear. I should not like to be seen acting against old friends and employers. But it does not much matter who signs them, or, indeed, whether they are signed or not. As long as there are plenty of them, it will be enough; and your secretary can see to that."

At Verus's suggestion, Theron, the inn-keeper, was called into council. He, of course, had a very bad opinion of the Christians. "They are a very poor, mean-spirited lot," he said; "if they had their way there would not be a tavern open in the Empire. I never see one of them inside my doors. Sometimes, when I have a late company here, I have seen them on their way to their meeting-place, one of the guild-houses in the cemetery here. They are a shabby lot, for the most part—half of them slaves, I should think. I suspect an out-door man of my own of being one of them. He never drinks, or gambles, or fights. I always suspect there is something wrong with a young fellow when he goes on like that. Yes, I should very much like to see the whole business put a stop to. If it is not, the world will soon be no place for an honest man to live in."



"Pliny received the new-comer with enthusiasm."—*p.* 91.

A plan of action was agreed upon. A number of memorials were to be presented to the Governor, praying him to interfere with a certain unlawful society, bearing the name of Christians, or followers of Jesus, that was accustomed to meet in the neighbourhood of Nicæa. Lucilius, Verus, and Arruns were each to send in such a document, and were to get others sent in by their friends. A number of anonymous memorials in various handwritings were also to be prepared. The more there were, the more likely was the Governor to be impressed.

When the party was separating, Arruns tried to do a little stroke of business on his own account. "This is an important undertaking," he said, in his most professional tone, to Lucilius. "Don't you think that it would be well to consult the gods?"

"My Arruns," said Lucilius, who had no idea of spending his money in any such way, "when I make an offering, I prefer that it should be a thank-offering. When we have done something, I shall not be ungrateful."

The soothsayer was not going to let himself be baffled. If he could get nothing out of the cupidity of Lucilius, he might be more successful in working on the fears of Verus.

"It would have an excellent effect, my dear Verus," he said, "if people could see some proof of your piety. They know that you have been mixed up with these Christians, and they don't all know that you have come out from among them. If there should be anything like a rising of the people—there was one in Galatia the other day, and half a dozen of these impious creatures were torn in pieces before the Governor's guard could interfere—there might be some awkward mistake. We should have plenty of people protesting that they had never been Christians at all, or had left off being so, and you might not be believed, particularly if you had anything to lose. Now, if you were to offer a sacrifice, you would be perfectly safe. No one would dare to wag his tongue against you."

Verus, who, if he had not learnt to believe Christianity, must have at least learned thoroughly to disbelieve the whole Pagan system, heard the suggestion with very little fervour, but felt too uneasy about his position to reject it. He knew that he had compromised himself, and that the danger which Arruns had pictured was not completely imaginary.

"There may be something in what you suggest," he said, after a pause. "Perhaps a lamb to Jupiter or Apollo——"

"A *lamb!*" interrupted Arruns, who was not disposed to be satisfied with so paltry an offering. "A *lamb!* the whole country would cry shame upon you. It ought to be nothing less than a hecatomb." *

"A hecatomb!" cried Verus, "what are you talking about? Am I the Emperor, that you should suggest such a thing?"

"Well," returned the other, "a hecatomb might, perhaps, be a little ostentatious for a man in your position. But I assure you that nothing less than a 'swine, sheep, and bull' sacrifice would be acceptable. It must be something a little out of the common, for yours is not a common case."

"Well, let it be so," said Verus, "only it must be done cheaply. No gilding of the bull's horns or expensive flowers; I really cannot afford it."

"Leave it to me," answered Arruns. "I will spare your pocket."

With this they separated, the soothsayer chuckling over his success, and the prospect of a plenty which he had not enjoyed for some months, Verus ruefully calculating how many gold pieces the three animals, with the ornaments and the temple fees, would cost him.

* A "hecatomb" means an offering of one hundred oxen.

CHAPTER VI.

CAIUS PLINIUS CÆCILIUS SECUNDUS, commonly known to posterity as the Younger Pliny, has just finished his day's work as Proprætor—that is to say, Governor—of the Roman province of Bithynia. It has evidently worn him out almost to the verge of exhaustion. He has, indeed, the look of feeble health. His gentle, delicate features are drawn as with habitual pain; his cheeks are pale, with just one spot of hectic colour in the middle; the lines on his forehead are deeper than befits his age, for he is but in his forty-seventh or forty-eighth year; his figure is bent and frail, and thin almost to emaciation.

The room shows evident signs of the occupation of a man of culture. Though it is his official apartment, and he has his study elsewhere, it has something of the look of a library. A little book-case, elegantly made of ivory and ebony, stands close to his official chair. Half a dozen rolls—for such were the volumes of those days—are within reach of his hand. He can refresh himself with a few minutes' reading of one or other of them, when the tedium of his official duties becomes more than he can bear; using a writer's privilege, we can see that Homer is one of the six, and Virgil another. The wall facing him is covered with a huge map of the province; and most of the available space elsewhere is occupied with documents, plans of public buildings, and other matters relating to the details of government; but room has been found for busts of eminent writers, for some tasteful little pieces of Corinthian ware, and for two or three statuettes of Parian marble. At a table in the corner a secretary is busy with his pen; but were we to look over his shoulder, we should see that he is not occupied with the answer to a petition or with a report to the Emperor, but with the fair copy of a poem which the Governor has found time to dictate to him in the course of the day.

Pliny had just risen from his seat, after swallowing a cordial which his body physician has concocted for him, when the soldier who kept the door announced a visitor—"Cornelius Tacitus, for his Excellency the Governor." Pliny received the new-comer, who, indeed, had been his guest for several days, with enthusiasm.

"You were never more welcome, my Tacitus," he cried. "Either I am in worse trim for business than usual, or the business of the day has been extraordinarily tiresome. In the first place, everything that they do here seems to be blundered over. In

one town they build an aqueduct at the cost of I don't know how many millions of sesterces, and one of the arches tumbles down. Then, in Nicæa here, they have been spending millions more on a theatre, and, lo and behold! the walls begin to sink and crack, for the wise people have laid the foundations in a marsh. Then everybody seems to want something. The number of people, for instance, who want to be made Roman citizens is beyond belief. If Rome were empty, we could almost people it again with them. But, after all, these things need not trouble me very much. One only has to be firm and say 'No!' But here is a more serious matter, upon which I should like to have your advice."

The Governor handed to his friend two or three small parchment rolls, which he took from a greater number that were lying upon a table. As Tacitus read them, his look became grave, and even troubled.

"What am I to do in this matter?" said the Governor, after a short pause. "For the last two or three days these things have been positively crowding in upon me. You don't see there more than half that I have had. They all run in the same style: I could fancy that a good many are in the same handwriting. 'The most excellent Governor is hereby informed that there is a secret society, calling itself by the name of Christus, that holds illegal meetings in the neighbourhood of this city; that the members thereof are guilty of many offences against the majesty of the Emperor, as well as of impiety to the gods;' and then there follows a long list of names of these same members. Some of these names I recognise, and, curiously enough, there is not one against which I know any harm. Can you tell me anything about this secret society which calls itself by the name of Christus?"

"Yes," answered Tacitus; "it is more than fifty years ago since I first heard of them, and I have always watched them with a good deal of interest since. It was in the eleventh year of Nero—you could only have been an infant then, but it was the time when more than half Rome was burnt down."

"I remember it," interrupted Pliny, "though I was only three years old; but one does not forget being woke up in the middle of the night because the house was on fire, as I was."

Tacitus went on: "Well, I shall never forget that dreadful time. The fire was bad enough, but the horrors that followed were worse. People, you know, began to whisper that the Emperor himself had had the city set on fire, because he wanted to build it again on a better plan. Whether he did it or no, he was capable of it; and it is certain that he behaved as if he were delighted with what had happened, looking on at the fire, for instance, and singing some silly verses of his own about the burning of Troy. Well, the people began to murmur in an ominous way—you see, more than half of them were homeless. So the monster found it convenient to throw the blame on someone else, and he threw it upon the Christians. You know what a Roman mob is; as long as it has its victims, it does not much care about the rights and wrongs of a case. I did not see much of what was done to these poor wretches, but I saw enough to make me shudder to this day when I go by the place. It was at a corner of the Gardens on the Palatine. They had fastened one of the miserable creatures to a stake, and piled up a quantity of combustibles about him, but not near enough to kill him at once when they were set on fire. I shall never forget his face. It was night, but I could see it plainly in the light of the flames, which yet had not begun to scorch it. There was not a trace of fear on it. He might have been a bridegroom. Boy as I was, it struck me very much, and I said to myself, 'These are strangely obstinate people, I take it, and might be very dangerous to the State.' And that is the view I have always taken of them; and it has been borne out by everything that I have seen or heard."

"But," said the Governor, "have you ever made out that there is anything wicked or harmful in this superstition of theirs? I have heard strange stories of their doings: that they mix the blood of children with their sacrifices, that they indulge in disgraceful licence, and so forth. Do you believe that there is anything in these reports?"

"To speak frankly," replied Tacitus, "I do not. On the contrary, I believe that they are a singularly innocent and harmless set of people; that they neither murder nor steal; and that if all the world were like them our guards and soldiers would have very little to do."

"Yet," said Plinius, "you seem to speak of them in a somewhat hostile tone. If they are so blameless they cannot fail to be good citizens."

"No, this is precisely what they are not," was Tacitus's answer after a few moments' pause. "I take it that obedience is the foundation of our commonwealth, obedience to the Emperor now, as it once was to the Senate and people. No man must set his own will or his own belief above obedience. If he does, he takes away the foundation. Tell one of these Christians to throw a pinch of incense on an altar, and he will refuse. Not the Emperor himself could make him do it. The pinch of incense may be nothing. Neither the State nor any single soul in it may be one whit the worse for its not being thrown; but it is an intolerable thing that any citizen should take it upon himself to say whether he will or will not do it. Depend upon it, my dear Pliny, these Christians, though they never trouble our courts, civil or criminal, are very dangerous people, and either the Empire must put them down, or they will put the Empire down."

"What, then, would you have me do?" asked the Governor.

"Act with energy; arrest these people; stamp the whole thing out."

"But it is too horrible. It is—if you will allow me to say it—it is even absurd. Here are thieves and cutthroats without number at large; profligates who spend their whole lives in doing mischief, and villains of every kind. Yet a Governor is to leave these hawks and kites to themselves, and pounce down upon a flock of innocent doves. Forgive me if I say, my dear Tacitus, that I never saw you so little like a philosopher."

"There are times," replied Tacitus, "when one has to think not about philosophy, but about policy,

Look at the Emperor. You know what manner of man he is. He is not a madman, like Nero; he is not a monster, like Domitian, who was so fond of killing that he could not spare even the flies. But Nero and Domitian were not so stern with the Christians as he is. 'Obey me,' he says, 'or suffer for it. If I let you choose your own way, the Empire falls to pieces.' Yes, my dear Pliny, distasteful as it must be to a man of your sensibility, you must act."

"I shall consult the Emperor," said the Governor, who felt himself hard pressed by his friend's arguments.

Nor should I take much heed of artisans and labourers; but you will keep any persons of consequence that there may be, and, above all, their priests, or elders, or rulers, or whatever they call them."

The Governor pressed a handbell that stood on the table at his elbow, and bade the attendant who answered the summons send for the centurion on duty.

In the course of a few minutes this officer appeared.

"Fabius," said Pliny, "you have heard. I suppose, of certain people that call themselves Christians?"



"Do you know their place of meeting?"—*p.* 97.

"Certainly," said Tacitus; "it would be well to do so. I understand that he wishes to be consulted about everything; though how he contrives to get through his business is beyond my understanding. But meanwhile act. You need not do anything final, but Trajan, if I know him, would be much displeased if he were to find that you had done nothing."

"What would you advise, then?"

"Send a guard of soldiers, and arrest the whole company at one of their meetings. It will be easy to learn the place and the time. These societies have always someone among them to betray their secrets; though, indeed, this can hardly be a secret. You need not keep them all in custody. Probably many will be slaves. I hear that the slaves everywhere are deeply infected with the superstition. You can let them go, and make their masters answerable for them.

"Yes, my lord," answered the centurion, "I have heard of them."

It required all the composure—one might almost say the stolidity of look—that is one of the results of a soldier's discipline, to enable Fabius to reply without showing any change of countenance. He had been for some months a "*catechumen*"—one, that is, who was receiving instruction preparatory for baptism. He had been somewhat inclined of late to draw back. The new faith attracted him as much as ever, but there were difficulties which it put in his way. Could he hold it and be a soldier? His teachers differed. The eldest minister, a man of liberal views, thought that he could. Cornelius, the godly centurion, who was the first-fruits of the Gentiles, had not been bidden to give up his profession. One of the younger men, whose temper was

fiery, almost fanatical, took the opposite view. The soldier was essentially a man of the world, and the world was at enmity with the Church. Nor could Fabius hide from himself the difficulties. Idolatry was everywhere. His arms, for instance, bore the images of gods; to be present at sacrifice to gods was a frequent duty; worst of all, he would himself be called upon to sacrifice by burning incense before the image of the Emperor. All this had made him hesitate.

"Do you know their place of meeting?" asked the Governor.

Fabius assented.

"And the time?"

To answer readily would have been to betray too intimate a knowledge of the Christians' proceedings.

"Doubtless, my lord," he said, despising himself at the same time for the prevarication, "I can find it out."

"Then take a guard on the first occasion that occurs, and arrest in the name of the Emperor all that you may find assembled."

"It shall be done, my lord," said Fabius, still unmoved, and, after saluting, withdrew.

No one would have recognised the centurion Fabius, with his almost mechanical rigidity of movement, in the agitated man who, for the next hour, paced up and down his chamber. It is to be feared that he wished over and over again that this disturbing influence had never come into his life. Here was a conflict of duties such as he had never even dreamed of. Could he let these men and women whom he knew, some of whom had been so kind to him, who would have done all they could for him, run blindly into danger? And yet, would it not be a breach of duty to warn them? The Governor trusted him; the charge laid upon him was a secret. Could he, as a soldier, betray it? Again and again he made up his mind, only to unmake it the next moment. At last the struggle ended, as such struggles often do, in a compromise; and here circumstances helped him. The meeting would be the next day, he knew; and it was now afternoon. There would not be time to warn all the members of the community, even had he known—what he did not know—where they were to be found. But there was one to whom word must be sent at any cost. This was Rhoda, the daughter of Dion. Fabius had been one of the many who had been struck by the girl's singular beauty. Like his rivals, he had seen that her heart had no room for any earthly love. Still, he cherished her image as one might cherish the vision of an angel. To think of her in the rude hands of soldiers, or dragged to the common prison, was simply intolerable. That must be prevented, if it cost him his officer's rank, or even his honour.

No sooner had he made up his mind to send the girl a warning message, than, as if by the ordering of some higher Power, an opportunity presented itself to him. He caught sight of one of Dion's slaves, who was driving down the street an ass laden with farm produce. To accost the man as he passed might have raised suspicion. A safer plan would be to waylay him as he returned, which he would scarcely do before evening was drawing on. And this he was able to carry out without, as he felt sure, being observed by anyone. He thrust into the hands of the old man—a faithful creature, whom he knew to be deeply attached to Dion and his family—a letter thus inscribed:—

"Fabius the Centurion, to Rhoda, daughter of Dion.

"I implore you that to-morrow you remain at home. This shall be well both for you and for those whom you love. Farewell."

(To be continued.)

"PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERINGS."

BY THE REV. NEWMAN HALL, LL.B.

"It became Him, for Whom are all things, and through Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings."—HEB. ii. 10.

ALL suffering is mysterious, especially the suffering of those who trust in God, and desire to do His will. Why should He who rules the universe, and is able to do all things, allow His children to endure so many trials? Why should they suffer sickness, bereavement, disappointment, mental anguish? Why should they, because of their very piety, be often specially afflicted and persecuted?

To this question Faith replies, Even the well-beloved Son of God, the perfect Man, the Incarnate Word, even He suffered, was the chief of sufferers, was "The Man of Sorrows," suffered for His perfect goodness, needed to be perfected for His work and fitted for His triumphby suffering. We may not understand the mysteries of this, but we accept the fact. It is, therefore, a less mystery that we, sinful as we are, and needing the discipline of trial, should also suffer.

It was a "stumbling-block" to the Jews that the Messiah was poor, despised, crucified. The argument of the writer to the Hebrews is that although God had power to prevent such suffering, He not only allowed but ordained it, in order that the Christ might thus be fully qualified for His great work, and by the grief be exalted to higher glory. Every portion of the argument suggests comfort to suffering believers.

1. There is comfort in the representation given of God, "for Whom are all things, and through whom are all things." His glory is inseparable from the good of His creatures, who may therefore rejoice that He is

the sole Creator, Ruler, Possessor of the universe. Everything is by Him, everything is for Him. There is no superior force to counteract, no accident or fate or destiny to defeat His purposes. His control includes "all things," small and great: the daisy and the oak, the pebble and the mountain, the rivulet and the ocean, the glow-worm and the sun, men and angels, the poorest, the youngest, the most unworthy. What confidence this should inspire! If Christ suffered it was not because His Father was unable to prevent it. "It pleased the Father to bruise Him." So He "for Whom and by Whom are all things" is able to protect all His children.

2. There is comfort in the purpose of God. He is "bringing many sons unto glory." All are His children by creation. But many, like the prodigal, are rebellious, and by self-exile forfeit the privileges of sonship. By repentance and faith they return, and become, by God's grace, His true adopted children. "As many as received him (Jesus), to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John i. 12.) These children He purposes to bring to glory. He is actually bringing them. He does not adopt them and then forsake them as foundlings. They are new-born as heirs of an "inheritance that fadeth not away." He destines them to glory. The sonship precedes the glory, and is a pledge of it. They are "sealed with the Holy Spirit, which is an earnest of our inheritance." (Eph. i. 14.) This promise of glory is not the privilege of a few. God is "bringing *many* sons unto glory." It is provided for all, offered to all, accepted by a multitude "whom no man can number"; for whom "many mansions" are prepared. The purpose of God towards His "many sons" cannot be frustrated by any sufferings which they may endure. Their adoption as "sons," their call to "glory," their being "brought" along the way by their Father, should encourage them in the assurance that no afflictions on the road shall prevent them from reaching their home.

3. There is comfort in contemplating the "Captain" or "Author of their salvation." Christ procures for us salvation by the sacrifice of Himself; as our Guide He leads us onward towards its full possession; as our Champion He fights for us against Satan, sin and death; as our Commander He directs us what to do; as our ever-present Helper He enables to say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me"; as our Forerunner He lights up the dark valley, bursts the tomb, and "opens the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers"; as our Intercessor He pleads our cause before the throne of God. How essential that He, our Captain, should be competent for this great work, that nothing should be lacking in qualification, and that He should be preserved by God for its perfect completion! Our safety is bound up in His. His triumph is a pledge of ours. He is "made perfect."

4. There is comfort in the fact that the Captain of salvation has been made thus "perfect by suffering." As Divine He was perfect from the beginning. Morally, as man, He who was "holy, harmless, undefiled," needed no fiery trial, for there was no dross to consume. But officially, as Captain and Saviour, suffering was needed: partly as atonement for sin, "He was wounded for our transgressions"; partly as a pattern for our imitation, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps"; partly as a sympathising Friend and High Priest, "In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, for in that He himself hath suffered, being tempted [or tried] He is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. ii. 17, 18.) Thus as our Leader, Captain, Saviour, He was perfected or qualified by suffering.

Christ did not need suffering to purify from sin; but we do. Our faith is more precious than gold, but, like gold, is mixed with dross, and needs the purifying furnace. It must be "tried with fire" in order to be perfected. While thus called to suffer, let us be comforted and strengthened by looking to Him who is the "Author and Finisher of the Faith," its chief Exemplar, our Leader and Captain. He goes before us. Every step of the road has been trodden by Him. The foes who threaten us have been vanquished by Him. Through all the obstacles that threaten to impede us He has forced a passage.

His crown of thorns gave dignity to grief and royalty to woe. Let us not shrink from wearing it. By that circlet of thorns He won a coronet of stars. His groans on the Cross were preludes to the hallelujahs of heaven. His victory secures ours. If we suffer with Him we shall rejoice with Him. He beckons to us from on high, saying, "Because I live, ye shall live also." As our Captain, so also His followers; as the Only Begotten, so also His brethren —"the many sons" whom God is bringing to glory —shall be made "perfect through suffering."

Suffering was also needed for His perfected triumph. As Divine Man, He was to be rewarded, exalted, and glorified. His former glory in heaven appertained to Him as Son of God. The glory of humanity could only be His by His becoming Son of Man; and, as Man, suffering was needed for the perfection of glory. Thus we honour patriots, philanthropists, martyrs, in relation to their sufferings. They would not be so honoured had they not endured so much. Thus we behold "Jesus, because of the sufferings of death, crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He should taste death for every man." (Heb. ii. 9.) "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, yea, the death of the Cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him." (Phil. ii. 8, 9.) Sorrow was the highway to joy. The Cross was the ladder to the Crown. Christ was "made perfect by suffering." Surely there is comfort in knowing that if suffering was thus right and fit for the Captain of salvation, so it must be for all His followers.

It was not weakness in God, but wisdom, which ordained those sufferings. It "became God," as Ruler,

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that law should be honoured: it "became God," as Father, that love should be manifested; it "became God," in bringing many sons to glory, to provide for them a Ransom, an Example, a Sympathiser; it became Him to bring their Captain to glory by the same path along which they must necessarily walk. Can the "many sons" complain of the roughness of the road which their Elder Brother had to tread with bleeding feet and weeping eyes? If He, in whom the Father was always "well pleased," suffered, shall not we, who have so often grieved our Father? If we follow Him as our Captain, we must expect the suffering, and may be sure of the glory. Like Himself, "we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom." The Vale of Tears leads to the Delectable Mountains. The short night of weeping heralds the dawn of endless rejoicing. In suffering pain of body, anguish of heart, spiritual conflict and depression, we must not think it "strange," when not only all the "many sons" are sharers in the trial, but when God's well-beloved Son endured the same. His Father is our Father. What it "became Him" to appoint for Jesus we should welcome, rather than resent. Great privileges are linked with great trials. The mountain summit has an exhilarating atmosphere, and commands extensive views, but is exposed to fierce tempests and darkening mists. Shall we not endure these cheerfully when the mountain is the Mountain of God's Holiness, and the highway to His Abode?

WITH DR. W. M. TAYLOR IN NEW YORK.

BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.

IT was raining "cats and dogs" when I leaped down from the car of the "elevator track," in New York, on my way to the house of Dr. Taylor. From the station to his house in "Thirty-fifth" Street was but a short distance, but my great-coat was soon heavily saturated, spite of an umbrella. I was almost ashamed to present myself—though by appointment—at the house of the eminent New York divine. He met me, however, and extended a cordial welcome that made me soon forget the deluge through which I had almost had to swim. Soon I was seated in an easy-chair in his study, and enjoying the grateful warmth from an open fireplace, so uncommon in New York.

"Better take off your boots and have some slippers," said the genial minister. "Have something to eat." Declining the courteous offers, I was nevertheless struck with the kindliness that suggested them.

"Just wait a moment; I must telephone a message."

While Dr. Taylor was writing a message to be telephoned, I had a good view of his rotund figure at his adjustable writing-table. Soon he wheeled round, and, leaning back in his great easy-chair, uttered many words of wisdom, which, alas! I have not retained in memory. Scarcely had I finished the outline of a sketch and sipped a cup of tea, thoughtfully brought by Miss Taylor, when the Doctor said, "Just try that chair. That is my horseback exercise." With this Dr. Taylor rose, and, seating himself in the chair with complicated machinery beneath it, moved backwards and forwards two handles, which brought him down at regular intervals with a "dumping" sound, and with so much force that I feared the ladies in the room below would be alarmed. "Very beneficial, but very noisy, is it not?"

"I wonder the flooring does not give way. Your house must be very strong."

"It ought to be. I pay seven hundred pounds sterling for it a year. You think that a great amount: but is this larger or more convenient than the pastor of the Tabernacle Church ought to occupy?"

Dr. Taylor has a large congregation, and they pay him a large sum a year—about three thousand pounds sterling; but his expenses are great, and the demands on his purse constant. Having leading merchants, lawyers, physicians, editors, and politicians in his congregation, he must be compelled to entertain at times in a style costly and in keeping with their tastes and position. The fact is that everything is only relative. A man gets a large salary, and he has large expenses. A pastor with a salary half the amount that Dr. Taylor pays for his house told me that he could manage very well, even though living in a suburb of New York.

Since the pastor of the Tabernacle went to America and became such a success, many ministers have sought a home in the States. Many have gone over "prospecting." "Some who have failed in their own land have sought success in the new, and many have been disappointed," said Dr. Taylor. "They have then gone back to England, and given dreary accounts of things religious in America. Many thought they had only to come over, and they would find a deputation waiting at the steamboat wharf ready to conduct them to the pastorate of a first-class church. Such men, when they come, find they must take positions in the West, and learn to do home mission work. This irks them, and they soon return. But there are others doing splendid service in the home mission field, and sacrificing far more to do it than if they went to some foreign land."

Detailing how he himself was led to leave England, Dr. Taylor said, "I was brought to the point in a peculiar way. I had a brother-in-law living in New York. He led me to come over and supply for an eminent minister for three months. I had been sixteen years in Bootle. My position there was such that no other church in England seemed so attractive. I did not care to leave. When the invitation came to me, and I laid it before my officers, they said, 'There is no place in England for which we should give you up, but we dare not hinder you from taking up such a work as that in New York.' Men who said this, said it with tears standing in their eyes at the thought of parting from me. I came, and I have never regretted it. My influence here has been greater than it could ever have been in England."

Dr. William Mackergo Taylor was born in Kilmarnock. He descended from those who had suffered for their Covenanting principles. He had godly parents, who did their best to give him a good education in the academy of his native town. He entered the University of Glasgow at sixteen, and took his M.A. when he was twenty. He was trained for the pastorate at the Divinity Hall of the United Presbyterian Church in Edinburgh, and went first as minister to the village of Kilmaurs, near his birthplace. Here he laboured with such zeal that the newly formed Presbyterian Church at Bootle asked for his services, and at that place he laboured until the membership rose from forty to six hundred.

We drifted into speaking not only of the religious outlook, but of the material prosperity of America. The Doctor believes that if Free Trade became operative in the States, there would be a season of great prosperity at first for England, but that in two or three years America, having such immense resources, would beat England out of the markets of the world. "The resources of this country are tremendous, and at our doors. Look at Pittsburg smelting iron by natural gas; what can stand against that? There is nothing to pay for raising heat, as when obtained from coal. Down in the South, in Alabama, there is a place that is rivalling Pittsburg. England cannot long have the iron trade." I have been through Pennsylvania since listening to these words, and have seen the natural gas utilised in lighting in a flaring and profuse manner the various towns beyond the Alleghanies, and in heating rooms, as well as smelting iron. I strongly suspect the opinion of Dr. Taylor is not merely gaseous. So plentiful is petroleum even in Michigan, that a man who has prospered by boring for oil told me that "he can sell it at fifteen cents [7½d.] a barrel, and get good profit on the transaction."

It was pleasant to sit talking frankly with this genial minister. But time flew. The warmth of that open English grate was enjoyable, and the thought of the downpour outside repellent. I rise to go, but the Doctor insists on my inspection of a splendid copy of a "Menzies" Bible, which had been published at a hundred pounds a copy. Then he pointed out pictures of his home and of the Bootle Church, still dear. Then he took me to another room, where more very valuable books filled elaborately finished cases. Then he hunted up a photograph for me, and then led the way down into the drawing-room, where two sons and daughters were passing in various ways the eventide. One daughter, on seeing the portrait which had been given to me, protested that it was not a good one, and insisted on bringing from her album one much



DR. TAYLOR'S STUDY.
(From a Sketch by our Special Commissioner.)

better. Right merrily she reminded her father that she had been at the expense of taking that "superior photo."

As I went away, the invitation was given, and the promise made, to dine with Dr. Taylor and the ministers of the Manhattan Association. So I passed into the wet street, and hurried back by "elevator railway" to the Astor House.

I was glad afterwards to see the Manhattan gathering, and to listen to their examination of candidates for the Congregational ministry. Fifty men listened, while one or two appointed examined the young graduates in theology and Church principles. Then licences to preach were granted, renewable at the end of two years. One learned how much more like Presbyterianism is the Congregationalism of the States than that of England. Dr. Storrs and Dr. Behrends, with Dr. Taylor, were among those who took a prominent part in the examination.



THE REV. W. M. TAYLOR, D.D.
(From a Photograph by Anderson, New York.)

The "church-parlour" in which the gathering was held is at the back of the church, and is a most convenient, well-carpeted double-room, such as should be found in connection with all churches.

The Tabernacle is a large, airy Gothic edifice, seating about seventeen hundred people, and it is filled on Sunday mornings, but in the evening only half-full. I could not but be struck with the fact that two-thirds of those present were men. Dr. Taylor is perhaps a little proud of the fact that he has so large a proportion of the male sex in his congregation. They come and listen to his masculine utterances with evident delight. He reads closely his discourse, and perhaps there is in his manner a slightly don't-care style. His accent is slightly Scotch. He is, when the velvet-edged robe is off, a typical "John Bull" in appearance, and there is somewhat of that bluntness in the pulpit. His voice is clear and strong, and his action moderate. His face beamed with intellectual fire, and was well lit-up by a peculiar gas arrangement that, while suspended over his head, did not interfere with his movements or with the comfort of the auditors in gazing at him. That arrangement, he told me, was his own device. At first I wondered as to what the ornamental box over his head was intended for. It reminded me of what I had seen in Roman Catholic churches. It was like the receptacle for the Wafer, or "Host," on the altar. The mystery was explained however, and Dr. Taylor is very proud of his invention. He could not be quite so proud of the arrangement which, allowing the quartette choir to sit behind the pulpit, does not prevent the constantly moving faces and tall, nodding bonnets from detracting from the power of the discourse. One's attention was, alas! drawn off ever and anon by the noiseless movement.

As a listener, I was struck with the great disadvantage every minister must labour under who has a choir and perhaps an organ behind him. Whoever invented the wretched system? I am coming to think that it is a Satanic device to check the power of the preaching.

But let me speak of the sermon of Dr. Taylor. It was on "God's will being done on earth." "The will of God must be either decretive or perceptive. The Mohammedan seeks to do nothing to thwart that will. If a pestilence breaks out, he says, 'It is God's will,' and allows it to run on. We should do God's will by checking it, if possible, and seeing to better sanitation. . . . The hardest words to say are, 'Thy will be done.' If we can say 'Our Father,' we can say 'Thy will be done.' . . . The true analogue of the Jewish economy is the spiritual Church of Christ. . . . There is a disposition to-day to take out of the Bible that which does not please us. The commands of God are so many pearls on a string. Disobedience breaks the string, and lets fall the pearls. . . . We have a stronger motive for praising God and doing His will than the angels have—we have had so much forgiven. We never read of an angel being too late to do what he was sent to do. God's will *is* done in heaven. He that delays obedience, disobeys. There is no delay, and no cavilling at or criticising commands in heaven.

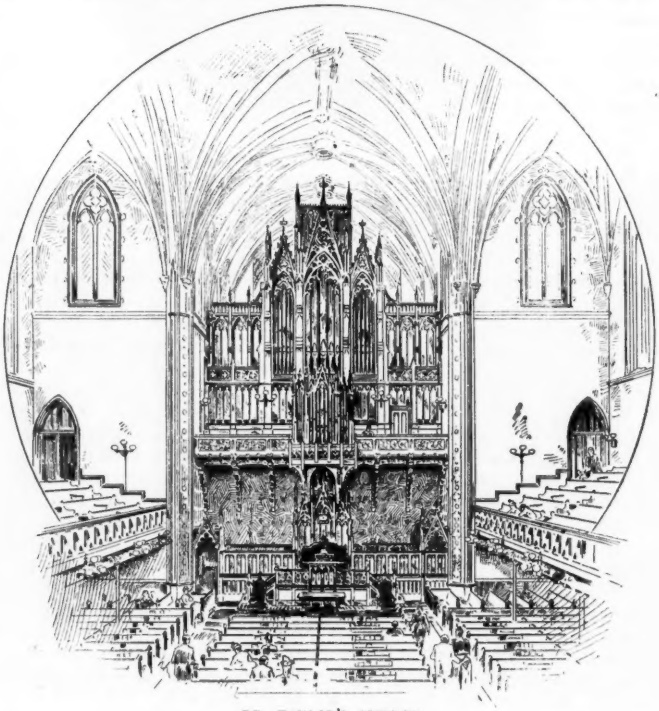
. . . We have no need to seek to be as wise as God, and pry into His secrets. It may suit the purpose of anarchists and infidels to misrepresent God, but the welfare of the race can only be brought about by man obeying God. That is the solution of all social problems. That done, a sight will be presented such as Heaven will stoop to see. Combinations and brotherhoods, and Labour Knighthoods, ignore the solution of the problem which is found in the words, 'Thy will be done on earth,' and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'"

It is not the object of this paper to criticise the style of Dr. Taylor; suffice it to say that there is a solidity about his style that compels attention and demands thought. No great appeal is made to the emotional or imaginative in the hearers. Deep earnestness pervades the whole discourse.

Speaking once of his manner and object, he said at another time, "If I have been in any degree successful in comforting the sorrowful, or directing the perplexed, or strengthening the tempted, or encouraging the desponding, it is because I have tried to take as my motto the words of the greatest of all preachers: 'I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint by the way.' I have tried to inspire men with a new courage for the daily battle; I have sought to make them stronger for the wear and tear of character that modern business necessitates. I have endeavoured to make this life on earth sublimer by bringing to bear upon it the motives and sanctions of eternity."

It ought to be mentioned that Dr. Taylor has been a voluminous author. His occasional contributions to THE QUIVER must be within the recollection of our readers. He has published "Life Truths," "Miracles Helps to Faith, not Hindrances," "The Lost Found, the Wanderer Welcomed," "David, King of Israel," "Elijah the Prophet," "Daniel the Beloved," "Peter the Apostle," "Moses the Lawgiver," "Paul the Missionary," "Limitations of Life," "Contrary Winds and other Sermons," and "The Ministry of the Word." This last was a course of lectures which he delivered in Yale Divinity School. Then in 1880 he issued another course of lectures, given in Princeton Theological Seminary, called "The Gospel Miracles in their Relation to Christ and Christianity." For several years he edited the *Christian at Work*, and wrote many of the articles himself. "It was too much," he said, "to carry, in addition to the burden of a great church. I was glad when the weight slipped from my shoulders. The ministry of the Word is the *one* thing a preacher has to attend to."

Two young men immediately after the service came to me—seeing I was a stranger—and presented a card of invitation to a prayer-meeting in the church-parlour. It was delightful to see such evident earnestness and watchfulness on the part of the young men. They believed in their pastor, and sought as best they could to supplement his pulpit efforts by personal influence and persistent prayer. Would that every minister had such prayerful supporters!



DR. TAYLOR'S CHURCH.
(From a Photograph by Gubelman, Jersey City, New York.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

No. 23. Israel under Judges.

To read—Judges ii. 11—23. *Golden Text—Hebrews iii.* 12.

I. BACKSLIDING. (11—13.) About twenty years passed since death of Joshua. Israelites continued faithful to God during time of elders who had over-lived Joshua, and had seen God's works (Josh. xxiv. 31), but now began to get remiss. What did they do?

(*a*) *Forsook God—i.e.*, neglected to worship and pray—turned to evil ways.

(*b*) *Served other gods*—especially Baal and Ashtaroth (gods of sun and moon).

What caused them to do this?

(*a*) *Forgetting* God's past works, mercies, judgments.

(*b*) *Bad example* of nations around them.

Let them serve as warning. To neglect the worship of God sure to lead sooner or later to sin—choosing other things to love and honour. Examples—

Saul forsook God, was led to hate and try to kill David. (1 Sam. xix. 9.)

Jeroboam despised God's worship, made whole nation to sin. (1 Kings xv. 26.)

II. Judgment. (14, 15, 20—23.) How did God punish them?

(*a*) *His anger* was stirred up against them. What a difference between God's love and God's anger! In His love He had fed and guided them. Now He turns against them.

(*b*) *His punishments.* Allowed bands of spoilers to invade the land. Result would be loss of flocks, herds, corn, etc. Also enemies prevailed against them. No longer were put to flight as before. Remained in the country all around (ver. 21) to be a snare to them.

What effect would this have on the Israelites?

(*a*) *To humble them*—make them realise their dependence on God.

(*b*) *To prove them*—whether they would now serve God or not.

Examples of enemies turning people's hearts to God—

David after numbering the people. (2 Sam. xxiv. 17.)

Hezekiah at invasion of Assyrians. (2 Kings xix. 1.)

III. Mercy. (16—19.) God did not wholly forsake His people. Gave them Judges in their distress. What were their duties?

(*a*) *To admonish* as Samuel. (1 Sam. vii. 3.)

(*b*) *To judge* causes, as Deborah. (Judges iv. 5.)

(*c*) *To lead* to battle, as Gideon. (viii. 12.)

But not to act as rulers or kings, for the Lord was their King. (1 Sam. viii. 7.)

Notice about these Judges—they were—

(*a*) *Called* and appointed by God.

(*b*) *Raised up* only as needed.

(*c*) *Successful* only for a time.

As soon as the Judge was dead the people fell away again.

What does this show?

1. *Unbelief*—in trusting to man rather than God.

2. *Ingratitude* in so soon again forgetting God.

Beware lest we be like them. (Golden Text.)

No. 24. Gideon's Army.

To read—Judges vii. 1—8; 16—23. *Golden Text—Zechariah iv.* 6.

I. A Small Army. (1—8.) Recall past history of Gideon.

Was son of Joash the Abiezrite (vi. 11). At time when Midianites were oppressing Israel, an angel had appeared to him with message from God. He was to deliver Israelites. But first, must cut down altar of Baal in his father's house. Received name of Jerubbaal (*Let Baal plead*). Then gathered soldiers from Manasseh, Asher, Zebulon, and Naphtali, *i.e.*, all the northern tribes of Israel, ready for battle. Now the time has come to fight.

Notice the army—

(*a*) It was *well arranged.*

(*b*) It was *large*—32,000 men.

(*c*) It had *confidence* in the general.

But the army was declared by God to be too large. Command given to reduce it. Who were to go back? More than two-thirds proved cowards. Still 10,000 left. Even this too large. The people might boast that *they* had gained the victory (ver. 2). So another reduction made—only 300 left! This was to be the conquering army.

What would these men need?

(*a*) *Courage*—to fight bravely.

(*b*) *Arms*—to oppose enemy.

(*c*) *Unity*—to help one another.

(*d*) *Faith*—to believe in God's presence and help.

So this little army set out.

II. A Great Victory. (16—23.) See Gideon's wise arrangements.

(*a*) The attack was to be at night—to take enemy by surprise.

(*b*) Soldiers divided into three companies—to surround the foe.

(*c*) All were to copy their leader exactly.

But the arms—what were they? Lanterns, pitchers, trumpets!

Truly the battle, if won, would be the Lord's!

See the events of the battle.

(*a*) *Time*—midnight, just after new watch set.

(*b*) *Plan*—trumpets blown, pitchers broken, lamps flash out.

(*c*) *War-cry*—"Sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

(*d*) *Result*—enemy scared, attack one another in the confusion. Were routed and pursued.

III. LESSONS. What would all this teach the Israelites?

(*a*) *Humility*—the victory was not *their* doing.

(*b*) *Faith in God*—who saved them from their enemies.

(*c*) *God's ways not as man's ways.* (Golden Text.)

2. What does all this teach us?

(*a*) *Our enemies* must be subdued—the world, flesh, and devil.

(*b*) *The battle* is the Lord's—He will fight for us.

(*c*) *Victory* is certain. We may trust and not be afraid.

No. 25. DEATH OF SAMSON.

To read—Judges xvi. 21—31. *Golden Text—Job xxxii.* 9.

I. SAMSON HUMBLED IN LIFE. (21, 22.) Who was Samson?

(*a*) The son of godly parents—Manoah and his wife (xiii. 8).

(*b*) Dedicated to God from his birth (xiii. 24).

(*c*) Moved by God's Spirit.

As a Nazarite had made three solemn vows, viz.:

1. *Not to touch* any unclean thing.

2. *Not to taste* strong drink.

3. *Not to cut* his hair.

God gave him great strength so long as he kept his vow. But he misused his strength, and also gave way to sin. Married an ungodly woman, who led to his fall. She beguiled him to break his vow and let her cut his hair. (Ver. 19.) At once his strength went from him, and Philistines took him prisoner. (Golden Text.) What did they do with him?

(*a*) *Imprisoned* him at Gaza.

(*b*) *Put out* his eyes.

(*c*) *Made him* do slave's work—grinding corn.

Thus treated him with insult, cruelty, humiliation.

We, too, as Christians, have made like vows.

1. To have no fellowship with works of darkness. (Eph. v. 11.)

2. To be temperate in all things. (Eph. v. 18.)

3. To be modest in hair and apparel. (1 Tim. ii. 9.)

We, like him, have had strength given from God.

We may be strong in the Lord, and in His power stand against the wiles of the devil. (Eph. vi. 11.)

Have we ever broken our vows, given way to sin?

II. SAMSON VICTORIOUS IN DEATH. (23—31.) Picture Samson kept in prison.

What did he do during his bondage?

(*a*) *Thought* over his past life—his victories and sins.

(*b*) *Prayed* to God to help him in his trouble.

(*c*) *Let his hair grow*—thus renewing his vow.

At last the end comes. A great religious festival held. Dagon the fish-god is to be honoured and Samson's God insulted.

(*a*) They rejoice that Dagon has defeated Samson.

(*b*) They make sport of the poor blind captive.

But their triumph is short. See Samson's conduct—

(*a*) *Prayer*—That God would aid him.

(*b*) *Self-renunciation*—Willing to die with the Philistines.

(*c*) *Effort*—Pulls down the temple and wins great victory.

Thus slew more in his death than in his life.

LESSONS FROM SAMSON'S LIFE. 1. Strength, health, and all bodily good things come from God. (James i. 17.)

2. God's gifts must be used for God's glory. (1 Cor. x. 31.)

3. Broken vows may be renewed with repentance and prayer.

No. 26. RUTH'S CHOICE.

To read—Ruth i. 16—22. *Golden Text—Ruth i.* 16.

I. A GOOD DAUGHTER. (16—18.) Who were these two persons?

Naomi. Widow of Elimelech, a farmer—obliged to leave Bethlehem because of famine—emigrated to Moab—stayed there ten years, till husband and two married sons all dead. Thus three widows left to mourn together.

Ruth. Widow of Chilion, younger son of Elimelech and Naomi; a Moabitess, nation of idolaters—knew not God—at this time a young and childless widow. Early learned sorrow, but had learned from husband's family to know something of God. Now Naomi proposes to return to Bethlehem. Why?

(*a*) God had again sent prosperity (i. 6).

(*b*) She would like to spend the end of her life among her own people.

Naomi suggests to her two daughters-in-law to return each to her mother's house. Why?

(*a*) Because their friends are in Moab.

(*b*) They would marry again among their own kindred.

Orpah leaves her—Ruth clings to her. Why?

(*a*) She has learned to love Naomi.

(*b*) She loves Naomi's God.

She will live with her, lodge with her, adopt her people, worship her God—nothing but death shall part them.

So Naomi let her stay. What does Ruth's conduct show?

1. *Sympathy*—Sharing the sorrows of Naomi.

2. *Unselfishness*—Giving up worldly advantage for the sake of others.

3. *Piety*—Desire to serve and follow the true God.

Such a choice comes to all at some time. Examples—

(*a*) Lot's wife loved this world and perished. (Gen. xix. 26.)

(*b*) Moses chose God's service and prospered. (Heb. xi. 25.)

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." (Golden Text.)

II. A SAD WOMAN. (19—22.) The old and young widows return together. Reach Bethlehem at harvest. People gather around them. What does Naomi say?

(*a*) *God has ordered her life.* The famine—leaving home—the return—all God's doing. (Ps. xxv. 9, 10.)

(*b*) *God has ordered her sorrows.* Loss of husband, sons, property, all of God. But "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." (Heb. xii. 6.)

What consolations are left to her?

(*a*) Many old friends to cheer her.

(*b*) A devoted daughter-in-law to work for her.

(*c*) God's presence to sustain her.

The result—a happy old age. Saw Ruth well

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married, and in time became ancestress of Jesus Christ.

LESSON. *All things work together for good to them that love God.*

No. 27. REVIEW OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS.

HAVE been reading of the Israelites under two distinct periods.

1. *Their conquest* of Canaan under Joshua.

2. *Their settlement* under the Judges.

Five persons have been prominent, viz., Joshua, Caleb, Gideon, Samson, Ruth. What have we learned from each?

I. JOSHUA. Principal events noticed.

(*a*) *His commission*—called by God for his special work—encouraged to persevere—bidden to read God's law.

LESSONS. 1. God's grace sufficient for all duties.

2. God's law to be our guide.

(*b*) *Crossing the Jordan.* The ark leading—people following in safety—memorial stones erected.

LESSONS. 1. Victory comes from Divine protection.

2. National gratitude due for national mercies.

3. Remembrance of God's mercies to be perpetuated.

(*c*) *Fall of Jericho.* People marching round unarmed.

LESSON. The power of faith.

(*d*) *Defeat at Ai.* Achan's sin and punishment.

LESSONS. 1. All sin, open or secret, known to God.

2. Man's helplessness when left to himself.

3. Sin in one man may be visited on a whole nation.

(*e*) *Renewal of covenant.* Joshua a faithful servant of God. Exhorts the people to the same.

LESSONS. 1. The duty of setting a good example.

2. The benefit of renewing vows of allegiance to God.

II. CALEB. Received his promised inheritance.

LESSONS. 1. Gentiles to be fellow-heirs with Jews

2. Promises to be kept.

III. GIDEON. Chosen to put down idolatry—led small army against vast hosts of enemies.

LESSON. 1. No one too humble to work for God.

2. Putting down sin must begin at home.

3. God saveth not with many or with few.

4. The battle is the Lord's.

IV. SAMSON. Born of godly parents, dedicated from birth to God's service, endued with great strength, defeats enemies, breaks one of his vows, loses his strength, suffers punishment, repents, renews his vow, gains final victory.

LESSONS. 1. All good gifts are from God.

2. Vows broken may be renewed after repentance.

3. God's eye is on our whole lives.

4. The danger of least departure from God's law.

V. RUTH. Will not desert Naomi.

LESSONS. 1. Trials are God's discipline.

2. Those who seek God shall want no manner of thing that is good.

TYPES OF CHRIST. 1. *Joshua*—in his *name* (Lord, Saviour); his *life* as guide and captain of Israelites, leading them to Canaan. So Christ, our Saviour, leads His people to heaven.

2. *Samson*—received God's Spirit, defeated enemies, was taken prisoner, but triumphed in his death.

So Christ, full of Holy Ghost, overcame the devil, was taken to prison, but by His death saved the world.

QUEENIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST."

IT was an old London bookstall which brought her back to my memory, this dear wee child of seven, whose friendship had once gladdened a summer which, but for her bright ringing laugh and quaint sweet fancies, would have been the dreariest of my life. I had been turning over the dusty pages of the books upon the counter, and was diving into the box which was marked, "THIS LOT, 6d.," when I came across a small fat volume of poems, and, as though its touch were magic, the ugly barren streets passed from my eyes, and I was back again in the country lanes and fields, where little footsteps went trotting over the soft grass in useless envy of my own larger stride, and where a little voice was declaring, "We 'll call this *our* book, Mr. Wayne."

The little volume was torn and thumbed. Evidently it had seen hard service since the day when I had first hung over it with all a young man's pride in its dainty dress of blue and gold; but that was thirty years ago and more, and both it and the little child herself had well-nigh faded from my memory, when at the sight of the book they sprang again to life. I turned to the first page. "*Seen in the Summer Time, and other Poems, by Maurice Wayne*," said the title, and then underneath my name two words were added in a child's round hand; the pencil-marks were blurred, but I recognised them at once. I could even recall the day when my little friend had added them, sitting at the foot of the old apple-tree of whose hollowed trunk we had made an out-door desk, and with a busied look in her usually laughing eyes.

"It isn't quite fair to say 'By Maurice Wayne' *only*: do you think so?" she had asked; and then, with infinite care, she had added the words at which I was now looking, "*and Queenie.*"

I secured my treasure and carried it away in triumph, and then, finding that my reawakened memories bade fair to interfere with graver work, I turned into the Temple Gardens, and gave myself up to thoughts of vanished sunshine, and of Queenie.

It was early June when I first saw her, for I had

overworked at college, and had been sent down to dawdle away three months of my life at a country farm. "If you touch books or papers instead of resting completely, your sight will probably pay the forfeit," the doctors had told me; and being in those days overflowing with life and energy, the verdict seemed to me too intolerable to bear. A three months' rest meant flinging me back in the race for honours; it meant exile from all occupations for which I most cared; worst of all, it meant the postponement of a certain book of verses on the immediate production of which I had set my heart. The knowledge that the literary world would certainly survive its loss, and that I myself might gain my wish in the autumn, in nowise consoled me; and fretting against my hard fate, I began the enforced holiday, petulant and miserable.

I heard there was a second visitor staying at the farmhouse, the little daughter of a struggling London doctor, who had sent her out of town for the summer months, but I did not see her until the next day. It was a glorious morning when we first made friends. I was lying full length upon the grass, with my head pillowed upon my outstretched arms, when she came up to me. She had been wandering about the old orchard at the back of the ivy-covered house in the aimless, disconsolate fashion of a child who misses her accustomed playmates, when she came suddenly upon my recumbent figure, and an amazed little "Oh!" broke the stillness of the slumberous, sun-laden air. I rolled over on to my side, and lay looking up at the tiny white-frocked figure, and at the startled blue eyes which shone like stars under the huge sun-bonnet.

"Don't be frightened, little one. Sit down and let us make friends."

"*I* am not frightened," she answered, with much dignity; "but I think you are. You are crying."

"Indeed I am not!" I protested hotly, for I was still young enough to resent such an imputation even from such a scrap as this.

"Then you want to," she insisted. "You look dreadfully miser-rubble."

Having brought out the two long words to her own complete satisfaction, her serious face relaxed into a smile, and she sat down by my side, drawing up her feet, and resting her chin upon her knees.

"Do you like little girls?" she demanded suddenly.

I do not suppose I was much fonder of small children than the generality of young men, but there was a certain charm about this one in particular, with her soft voice and fearless manner, which took my heart by storm.

"I like you, at all events," I said warmly. "What is your name?"

"Queenie."

"Queenie," I echoed. "Is that your real name?"

The child considered a moment. "Perhaps it isn't," she said at last. "Oh, of course it isn't, because the big Bible at home calls me Henrietta Mary. But everybody calls me Queenie, and I like that best."

In ten minutes' time I knew all about the noisy brothers in the house at home, whose absence made her welcome me as a holiday companion, and about the little lambs in the farther field, and the old grey mare in the stable. At the end of that time she returned to her first accusation.

"You are sorry about something. Tell me what it is. I will be sorry too," she said coaxingly.

So I told her. Her own eyes brimmed with tears when I explained how mine smarted when looking at the reading of those picture-books which seemed to be her sole idea of literature; but when I went on to speak of my keen disappointment in being kept from completing my poems, it was not so easy to make her understand.

"What *is* poetry?" she asked me.

"It is another name for beauty, my pet. It means the same thing."

She had thrown back the big sun-bonnet which was hanging by its white strings to the soft, rounded throat, and the brows were drawn together in a puzzled frown.

"I wish you would make me understand," she said wistfully. "Father would."

The appeal was irresistible. I roused myself and sat up, slipping a caressing arm around her.

"Look over there, Queenie," I said, pointing with the other hand away to the westward; for our orchard stood upon a little hill, and the most lovely part of Kent was lying at our feet. "Don't you see how blue the sky is, and how pretty the green trees look with the sunshine glimmering through their branches? Look at the hayfields and the flower-sprinkled grass. They are all such common things that we forget how beautiful they are; but that is the poetry of God's earth. It is what they call 'the poetry of nature.' When we remember it, and are grateful to Him, that is poetry too, because we are thinking beautiful thoughts instead of only thinking about our stupid selves and what we want. Do you understand?"

"I think so," she said doubtfully; "but you don't 'splain as well as my father does. Is poetry anything else?"

"There is 'the poetry of life,' but that is more difficult still," I answered. "That is not written in a man's book. It is something he *does*, and very often does not know he is doing. If you are bright, and cheer somebody up when you feel more inclined to go away and have a good cry by yourself, that is poetry. Or, if you are very fond of roses, and you give away the last in your garden to a poor man who hasn't got one, that's poetry, too. It is being unselfish, and brave, and bringing happiness into other people's lives."

The little child sat looking at me intently, but the puzzled look had vanished. "I see," she said at last, with a dreamy, far-away look in her eyes, as if she really did see far more than the sunlight showed her. "Father told us about the great white angel who writes in the book. I suppose he is writing down that part of the poetry?"

I kissed the red mouth by way of answer, and before another minute had passed was engaged in a wild scamper in and out among the apple-trees, with Queenie in my arms.

"Faster! faster!" she shouted, her cheeks aglow

with excitement, and I was sufficiently unused to children to be glad that she had shaken off her serious mood. It had seemed to me positively eerie to listen to her strange comment upon my rather bungling explanation, and the change was a relief. Certainly there was nothing unchildlike about her now, as she sat perched upon my shoulder, with one tiny hand holding tightly to my collar, while with the other she snatched at the leaves and blossoms overhead. "Gee up, horsie! Go on!" she cried to me through her laughter, and two vigorous little feet beat a tattoo on my chest. I am afraid I grew tired of the game before she did, and was ungallant enough to propose that she should leave me in peace for an hour, while she paid a visit to her friend the old grey mare.

"You won't get sad again if I go away?" she asked me, anxiously, and even my lazy assurance that I should probably go to sleep did not seem wholly to satisfy her. She knelt down on the grass, and stooped to give me a good-bye kiss.

"We can *do* all your poetry together, can't we?" she went on, still trying in her quaint fashion to insure my newly established cheeriness. "We will go about and find all the pretty things, and then, at the end of the summer, when you are quite well again, it will all be finished, and you will only have to write it down."

I was only too glad to have such a dear little companion to help me through my (as I then considered it) wasted holiday, and the good woman of the farm was pleased I should take notice of her rather lonely little visitor. So that first morning was the beginning of many another which we spent together in the old orchard, or in roaming about the lanes and by-ways of smiling Kent. As I have said, I had never hitherto been much thrown in with small children, but though half a life-time stretches between the then and now, the friendship of that little child is one of the brightest memories I can recall.

Part of this, no doubt—at all events, in the earlier days of our rambles—was due to the very material aid she gave me. I grew actually ashamed, in time, of the patronising fashion in which I had once given her the benefit of my own lofty ideas. I was mightily satisfied with myself, if not with my surroundings, in those days, and having, by dint of hard reading and the companionship of better men, attained to some glimmering of the inner meaning of poetry, I was apt to pose mentally as an enlightened seer, whose inspired utterances were denied by cruel circumstances from reaching a duller world. But little Queenie did for me what no less innocent teacher had ever succeeded in doing: she shook my confidence in my own powers. What was the use of pluming myself, for instance, upon some daring simile or neatly turned couplet, when I had only to toss this child a bunch of roses to win more dainty thoughts and pretty conceits than I could compass with a week's striving? A little tale she used to tell me, about an amorous rose who stole the golden heart of a sunbeam and hid it in his crimson breast, still chimes pleasantly in my head, although the added charm of the soft baby voice stumbling over the long words—"I am telling you a story, and all stories have long words," said Queenie—is lost to it for ever. Then there was a song she used to sing, a mere lullaby—the words were nothing, but the poetry of the little scene consisted in the child's notion that she could distinguish the various tones of that sweet, confused murmur of country sounds which she called "God's music."

"Oh, of course I can hear the birds. Anybody can hear *them*," she told me one day when we were discussing the matter; "but I can hear the grass too." Down went the little fair head, until it was almost hidden in its queer crown. "I can hear it going swish! swish! The wind is telling it all the secrets it has brought from over the sea. Let's p'etend we know what the secrets are, Mr. Wayne, and then you can write them in your book."

There was a good deal of "pretending" about the whole matter, and I do not know how far she believed in her own imaginings. Her delight was certainly real enough when the view of a distant field of cornflowers made her exclaim that a scrap of the sky had fallen under the hedges; but how far she credited her own tale when she declared that a certain giant, having "taken a blunderbuss and blunderbussed a fairy," had been changed into a grim-looking oak, which she therefore declined to pass, I would not undertake to settle. Sometimes I wondered idly if she remembered what I had tried to make her understand about the farther meaning of poetry; but she never referred to our first talk, and I did not like to tease her with questions.

"I want you to come with me to see Willy."

These were the words with which she met me one August day. Further questioning elicited the facts that Willy was a poor little boy with whom she had somehow made friends, and that he lived with his mother in a lonely cottage some mile or so from our farm. Willy had been poorly lately, and was feeling dull, so Queenie proposed we should go and sit with him. The idea did not chime in with my own wishes, and I tried to dissuade the child as we sat together in the shady porch, and talked over our plans for the day.

"It is such a long walk for you, darling, and look how sunny it is!" I said, pointing to the stretch of uphill, treeless road which led to the cottage in question. "Think how much nicer it will be lounging under the trees than sitting in a stuffy little room. You can't do your little friend any good. You had much better wait until he can come out and play with you."

I thought I had convinced her, for the knitted brow grew smooth, and the child's persuasions ceased. But presently she slipped from the seat and ran down the garden path, turning to front me as she reached the open gateway which led into the field beyond.

"I don't want to be disag'eeable," she said, with a touch of that quaint dignity which I often thought must have gained her her nickname; "I know it is going to be dweadfully hot, and I would much rather be under the trees with you; but I think Willy wants me most."

She waited a full minute, as if hoping I should change my mind, a dainty, white-clad figure against the fresh green; but I grudged spending such a

glorious morning within doors, and felt vexed with the child that I could not bend her to my wishes.

"You can go by yourself, then: I shan't come," I answered roughly, and in another moment Queenie had gone.

Feeling too annoyed to follow her, I went back into the house to collect my books and papers, for my ten weeks' rest had resulted in an occasional wary use of my eyes; but the work might as well have remained in my desk for all the good I was able to do. The remembrance of little Queenie, and the piteous droop of her pretty mouth, stood between me and the papers, and finally I pushed them away in disgust, and started for a long solitary walk. When I returned the evening shadows were lengthening, and, anxious to make my peace, I went up to her room. The little girl was in bed, and instead of her usual joyous welcome, she greeted me with a burst of tears.

She was cross, she was tired. Willy hadn't been pleased to see her.

I soothed her off to sleep at last, but was startled at breakfast next morning to find her heavy-eyed and fretful. In the course of another few days Queenie's father had been wired for: his little daughter was sickening for scarlet fever.

It was from young Willy's mother we afterwards heard the story of that sad morning's work. Her boy had been poorly, but she had not troubled to send for advice, until Queenie herself, finding her endeavours to amuse the invalid had proved unavailing, had suggested she would go and see if the doctor had any stuff to make him well. This second walk to the village surgery had sorely tried the tired little feet, but Queenie's efforts had probably been the means of saving the lad's life.

Was her own to pay the forfeit? For many days we asked ourselves this question, while to the anxiety which I naturally felt, as the poor father's face grew more and more despairing, was added what was yet more terrible—remorse. It was idle to listen to the kindly



"In another moment Queenie had gone."

meant consolations—that, as no one had had any idea of the real state of affairs at the cottage, I could in nowise be held responsible for Queenie's illness; the fact remained that had I possessed but one tithe of the little child's unselfishness, I should have gone with her. But I had stayed behind, because, forsooth, my mind had been running on my work and the form of that poetry of which she had so much more thoroughly caught the spirit! If I too have better understood it since then, I think it is largely due to the humbling and repentant thoughts which were sent me during the long night-watches by that tiny sick-bed.

Our prayers were answered, and the child recovered. Urgent family affairs obliged me to return to town before she had grown strong enough to renew those sauntering rambles to which I think we both had been looking forward, but our parting was brightened by the solemn promise that I would take her a copy of my poems as soon as they should appear in all the glory of print.

That promise was fulfilled in the following spring, when I snatched a few hours from less pleasant engagements to run down again to the old farm-house. An inquiry at her London home had brought me the rather dismal intelligence that its occupants were on the point of starting for Canada, where the hard-worked doctor had recently inherited some property, and where he was now hoping to end his days in peace. Queenie had been sent into the country for a week to be rid of her during the worry of packing. So it was with the sad foreboding—a foreboding which time has since verified—that I should never see my little friend again, that I went speeding out of the close, begrimed city into the cool, delicious stretches of woods and meadows which I always associated with her gentle presence.

I found her in the orchard with the soft breezes showering the pink apple-blossom upon her bared head, and the shouts of delight with which she rushed into my arms must have startled the birds in the branches above.

"Where is the book? Do let me see the book!" she cried, as soon as the first rapturous greeting was over, and it was after I had handed this identical volume, which has now come back to me after all these years, that she demurred to the title: "It isn't quite fair to say 'By Maurice Wayne' *only*—do you think so?"

No, I did not, so I handed her a pencil, and waited for her next proceeding. When she had written her own name under mine, she made me vow I would "keep it for ever and ever," and gave it back to me, taking in exchange a second copy which I had intended for my good friends at the farm.

"You will never lose it, Mr. Wayne?"

"Never, my darling."

The contented little nod with which she received my words, and the repeated injunctions to keep it carefully, with which later on she interspersed her tearful farewells, haunted me sadly when, some eighteen months afterwards, I moved to other lodgings, and in so doing lost my cherished volume. My efforts to trace it were ceaseless for several days, but they were not successful, and the little book and I had remained strangers until it had so unexpectedly come to light upon the old bookstall. Probably it was sold at the time by the woman who took charge of my rooms, or whoever it was into whose hands it fell, and I shall never know who were the readers who came across my book with its corrected title-page.

* * * * * *

Those words had been written for some weeks, and the little story had been done with but the gracious memory which its recital had awakened refused to slumber again. It was as though one had chanced unawares upon an old vase of *pot-pourri*, and the roses which had beautified many a vanished summer had stirred their faded petals with an undiminished fragrance. So it happened that my thoughts were full of my little friend one morning when I was again sitting in my favourite Temple Gardens. Lying on the bench beside me was an illustrated paper which had been dropped by some careless owner, and, idly recalling the days when Queenie and I had so often pored over picture-books together, I picked it up and began turning over the leaves. It was apparently a paper which appealed principally to girls, and I alighted upon an essay which was entitled "Unvaunted Heroism." It was a sketchy article, and, beginning with the historical women to whose heroic deeds the world had accorded but a scanty meed of praise, it worked gradually round to instances which had been brought within the writer's personal experience. He spoke of the unrecognised courage which was so often to be found amongst that devoted band of women who toil so unceasingly in the midst of our London poor, and then, going farther afield, he thanked God that this same spirit of Christian devotion was to be found in all classes and in all lands.
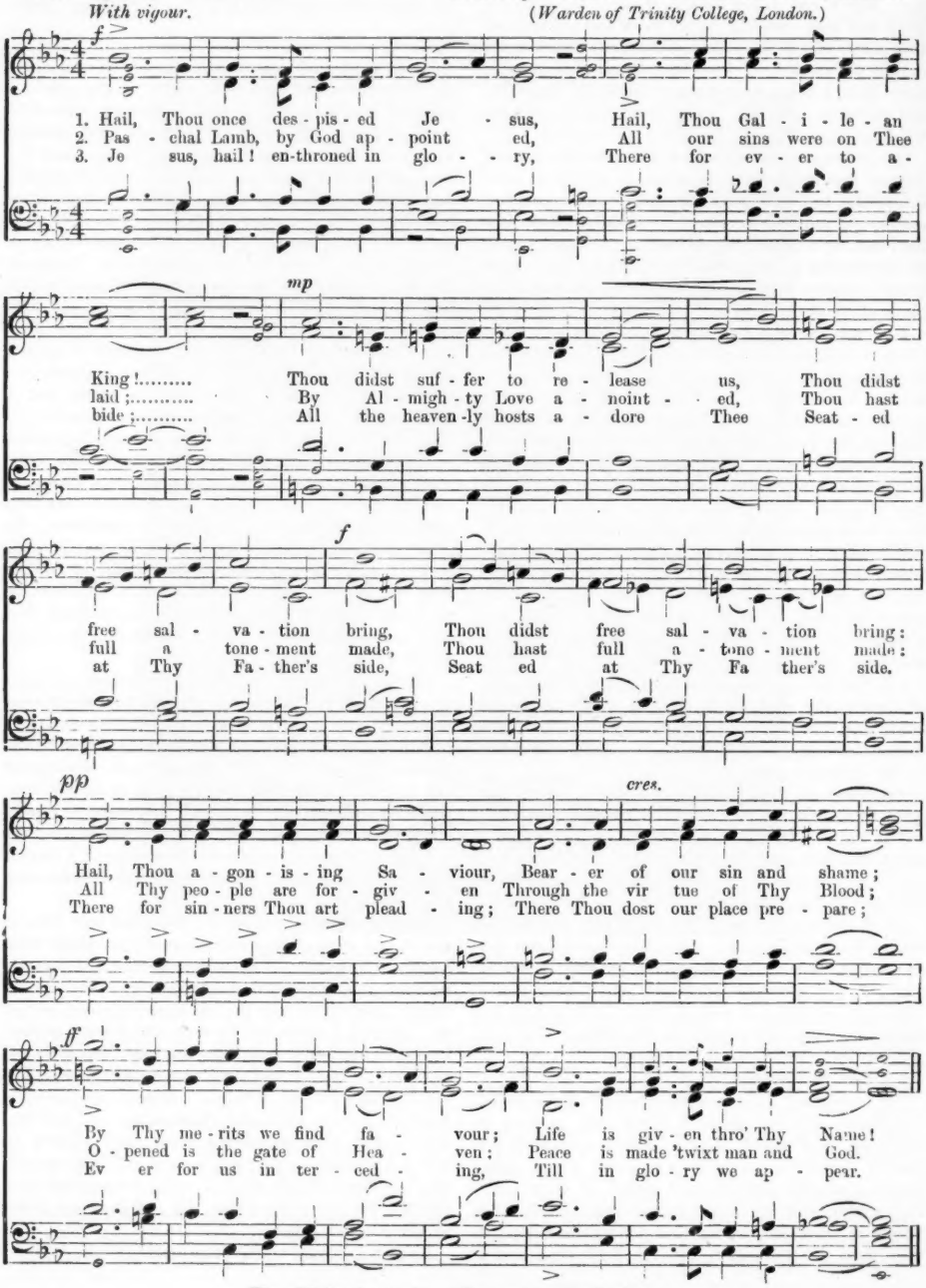
"In connection with that vast emigration scheme," he continued, "which results in so many of our poor children being taken from their harmful surroundings and helped to earn a livelihood in the healthier atmosphere of Canada, the chief obstacle to be surmounted lay in the difficulty of receiving them in the first instance, and housing them until they could be finally started on their various ways. This difficulty is now a thing of the past, thanks to the energy of a certain Englishwoman, who is the daughter of a doctor who has long resided there."

The little narrative went on, but I had only time to snatch the sense of it before my eyes grew misty with delighted surprise. What did it matter? I had no need of the confirmation afforded by the writer's loving mention of the Englishwoman's name, nor of the detailed account of the wise and tender method by which she gained the hearts of her uncouth *protégés*. For once I had stumbled across the sequel of what I myself had written. Ardent and gentle-hearted as of old, the sweet child-nature had but fulfilled itself with increasing years; and a work in which hundreds would "rise up and call her blessed" was but the outcome of that same determination to "*do* the poetry" with which she had won my heart in the Kentish lanes.

And so I found my Queenie again. M. E. W.

Hail, Thou once despised Jesus.

Words by JOHN BAKEWELL. *Music by the* REV. H. G. BONAVIA HUNT, MUS.D.
(*Warden of Trinity College, London.*)

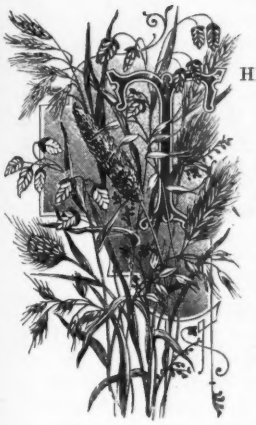


The additional notes in smaller type are for the Organ.

LIFE'S LONELY CONTEST.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM MURDOCH JOHNSTON, M.A.,
VICAR OF EAST TWICKENHAM.

"Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel?"—Isaiah lxiii. 2.



THIS is the picture of one who approaches Jerusalem from the rocky heights and the city fortress of Edom. His raiment bears the marks of contest, and is dyed in a colour prouder than the Tyrian purple. His mien is that of one who knows not what it is to be worsted, and every step he takes proclaims his victory.

"Who is he?" This is the question asked by the wondering royal city; for Edom sends few embassies of peace. Is he but a husbandman, fresh from the summer vintage upon the sunny terraces of Seir? "Yes," he hurls back in reply, "I am a husbandman, and I come from the winepress; but the winepress is a nation, and the grapes are the bodies of men."

He had done in truth a hero's deed. He went forth companionless. He outrivalled the prowess of Jonathan at Michmash, and the boldness of Joab at Jerusalem. There was work to be done and no one else to do it, and so his own stout arm, and that alone, brought him at once the triumph and the glory.

Edom lay to the south-east of Palestine, and was the land of Esau. It derived its name from the mess of red pottage for which Esau had sold his birthright, and it thus immortalised the weakness and degradation of its vagrant founder. Built upon rugged rocks where the eagles found their eyries, it spread before the sun an upland territory, fat with wheat and wine, and luxuriant in trees and flowers. It was thither that Esau retired with his wives of Canaan, and there that he was wedded also to the daughter of Ishmael. Henceforth Edom represented the separation of one portion of the stock of Abraham from the inheritance and the covenants of the chosen seed; and from the time that its churlishness drove the migrating host of Jacob from its borders, until it disappears utterly out of history at the siege of Jerusalem, Jacob and Esau lived lives of feud.

The picture is therefore rightly regarded as a description of Jesus Christ and His battle with sin. The Prince of Darkness, like Esau, was of high lineage, the lineage of angels, and every minion and follower of his bore kinship to the holy ones of God. Christ marched against them all through the Cross and the grave, and came back proclaiming to His people that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, and that the Word of God speaking in righteousness was mighty to save.

The *doctrine* is—a full and complete atonement; and the *facts* are—a ready Friend for the repentant sinner, and the Omnipotence of Heaven upon his side.

But Christ is likewise our example, and the pattern of all noble and holy life. To be associated with Him is one of the necessities, as it is the highest ambition, of sainthood. This passage tells, therefore, much of our own life, and is a prophecy of what it may be, or of what it is. Let us note the order of the events. They stand thus:—

1. The lonely undertaking.
2. The stern contest.
3. The permanent victory.

THE LONELINESS.

MAN'S life is rigidly, awfully individual. It is like a circle which touches a hundred others, but intermingles with none. Man is alone before God and before men, and he stands or falls for what he is himself.

But being thus alone, he is all the more allied to God. The sanction of every deed is God's will, and the impulse of it is God's help. They conceived this nobly in the wonderful Middle Ages. That was the birth-time of European chivalry, and in our own land we are told of the pledge which was given by the candidates for knighthood—

> "To reverence their king as if he were
> Their conscience, and their conscience as their king:
> To break the heathen, and uphold the Christ,
> To ride abroad redressing human wrongs."

Their courage was not mere dash and brutish bravery. It might seek Death where he ravened among his prey, but it sought first the triumph of a great cause, and every man within his own sole entity was bound to do his best.

He goes forth also in the loneliness of faith. The communion of God's people is one of the sweet lights that cheer our earth; but faith is born in us from God Himself, and each man's faith is his own. Any man who in this world's work will prove his title to a worthy place must trust to this, and this only. And it is by doing so that faith grows definite, and strong, and comprehensive, and is able to recognise not men, but God. It is then that it can understand God's mightiness in the world: that it can trace God's path athwart the world's crooked ways: that it can know of times of refreshing which are in store,

when the nations shall look upon God's righteousness, and Zion shall see her salvation coming.

And what is this but the account of a strong and good man, who has rested his life for eternity as for time upon the Lord, who trusts his God infinitely and implicitly, who is ready for his duty, though he must do it alone, and who, whether in the land that foes inherit—or friends—will do what God tells him is right?

THE CONTEST.



IT was one of purpose, for his fury was roused; it was one of fierceness, for the blood-gouts had stained his raiment. But it was necessary. The eternal Easter Day lies ever behind an eternal Good Friday. The road to life is through death, and the King's Highway of good is over the moors of suffering. This holds true in everything. It is true of personal success in life. The young man who will attain to this must "scorn delights, and lead laborious days." He is bound to deny himself pleasures which are within his reach—even common comforts, which many suppose to be essential. The body must suffer, and the mind. All must lie in subjection to the purpose he has in view; and no man can control either the affairs of the world or the men who are in it, if he has not first learnt to control himself. The road to success leads through self-discipline and pain.

It is true in spiritual life. The first lesson to be learnt by the man who seeks salvation is so hard that he often refuses to learn it at all. The door of life is opened by God, but man erects another door in front of it, and closes and locks that himself. God makes salvation easy; man himself makes it hard. But repentance is no doubt an unpleasant task. It means the cutting away of much which we have cherished because it was wrong, although it yielded fascination, or was an element of pleasure. It is the dying of a portion of ourselves. It is not a merely definite act, but a continuous operation. Our soul's apparel is red from the first till the last blow in the onset.

And neither can religion be cheap. The contest against it is the mightiest that the world has known. Forces of Gog and Magog are marshalled, and, surrounding the saints, assail the outworks of the Church at every point. The operations of religion, too, are the most extensive and the most enduring. The campaigns of nations, when they last a score of years, are landmarks of the world; and yet the Church of Christ has been militant for eighteen centuries. The future is unknown. Christ may come back soon, or delay for centuries still; but so long as He is absent, the fight is bound to continue.

Besides this, the rewards of religion are the highest and most precious to individual Christians. They are certain: no man is disappointed in either attaining or enjoying them. How, then, can any expect, or is any mean enough to think, that they shall be possessed without cost? If it be a treasure to us, not locked up, but lived upon, it will cost us our best, our best of all that we are and all that we have, and we, too, shall come forth red in our apparel.

THE PERMANENT VICTORY.



ALL this means conquest, victory, and success. No force in all nature is lost. It may be transformed or translated, but it exists; and spiritual power comes back again to the faithful as truly and fully as Jesus came back from Edom. There are, however, three points to be kept in mind—

The first is to have a definite object in view. This is one of the secrets of earthly success. But too often we make earth's ambition distinct and separate from that of heaven. We find the earth is too low for that great companionship, and thus life and heart, interest and effort, are divided. In the true saintly life they are one. Death is only a rest, and not a break in the career of life. Eternity is but the development of time. Earth and heaven in the true perspective of existence are blended into one.

The second point is to pursue this object with a set purpose. Vacillation is the parent of disappointment. Spiritual life means and necessitates will, conscience, and strongly directed effort. It implies a road, and a walking on it and none other. Christ calls it a narrow road because it will admit of little wandering. The Christian needs to gird up the loins of his mind and to press on.

The third is to remember that by one method only can the end be gained. It is not by ease and the rich luxuries of earth's enjoyment. It is not by making pleasure an object or personal advantage a motive. It is by the method old as Abel—the method of sacrifice.

Do you, then, because it seems hard, fear that you may fail? There is One that speaks to you in righteousness, and Who has come back mighty to save. In the bright Lexicon of Faith there is no such word as *Fail!*

FINDING EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN.

BY ANNE BEALE.

ONE of the last meetings presided over by the Earl of Shaftesbury was that of the Society for the Employment of Women. It was pleasant to watch him at these annual gatherings. We see him now, seated at the unpretentious table, listening to the report read by Miss King, the secretary; and hear his appreciative comments. He was wont to say that nowhere did he see so much useful work done at so small a cost, and praised the female talent for economy accordingly. He declared that, but for arbitrary custom, he would be waited on entirely by neat-handed Phillises; and lamented the days of his youth, when none but waitresses ministered to the needs of members of the House of Commons. He rejoiced over the successful registry kept in that office for waitresses and others; as well as over the innumerable branches of employment spreading to all points of the compass from that special centre. He pointed to the walls, hung with artistic specimens of all the industries, and wondered at the progress made by women both in intellectual and manual work during the last quarter of a century. He, who never undertook what he did not understand, knew that much of this was mainly due to the Society he praised so highly, and our readers can scarcely do better than follow the example of England's Philanthropist, and examine some of the results of twenty-nine years' labour at 22, Berners Street. Most of the new occupations found for women during this period have been either established or materially aided by this parent institution, which, unnatural as it may seem, casts off her children and bids them support themselves as soon as they are old and clever enough to find food and shelter.

The first promising child of this prolific mother that we call upon outside this central home is located at 126, Strand. Here the Type Writing Office, which is a direct offshoot of the Society, is presided over by Mrs. Marshall, a lady well fitted for her work. She introduces us into the cheerful room where a dozen girls are seated before those marvellous machines which click off your thoughts, or copy your manuscripts more rapidly than many could transcribe them. In these days, when speed is everything, people yield to machine power, and allow these complicated typewriters to copy sixty-five words a minute instead of using pen and ink for the same purpose. Here are various degrees of skill—from the accomplished typist



THE TYPE-WRITING OFFICE.

assistant who can perform the above-mentioned feat, to the plodding learner puzzling over the keys like a six-year-old pianist. Six weeks is the minimum period of apprenticeship, but a much longer time is needed to attain proficiency. Indeed, the typist should be a girl of education, and should enter into the spirit of the work copied. This is apparent from the scientific as well as amusing works submitted to our inspection. One-third of the MSS. printed are medical, many are polemical, most are abbreviated or written illegibly, and some have quotations even from the Greek and Latin. It is curious sometimes to compare the copy with the original; and one admires the patience and skill of the transcribers, or transprinters (which is it?), and understands that success in this art, as in every other, depends on perseverance and intelligence. The demand for type-writers increases, and several ladies, trained by Mrs. Marshall, are established in London as well as in Liverpool, Oxford, and Cambridge.

Although our young friends look happy, seated in a comparatively easy position at their key-boards, they rejoice at the tea-hour, and we rejoice with them at sight of the kettle on the hearth and the cups and saucers. Respite from work! how good it is! and how pleasant the flow of talk of the released prisoners! They say they like their work, which is more easily done by young than by old and stiffened hands; but anxiety to live by it is tolerably apparent. Surveying the bright young faces, in a pretty room adorned by pictures, fans, and artistic workmanship, it is difficult to realise that each individual inmate will have to struggle for daily bread. We bid them God-speed, and partake of a cup of their good tea with Mrs. Marshall in her outer chamber. She tells us how that from thirty shillings to two pounds a week may be gained by expert typists and shorthand writers, but that they should have a knowledge of one or more foreign languages. She tells us, also, of the immense progress this profession has made since her office was opened in 1884.

As type writing and shorthand writing seem to go hand in hand, we may as well proceed to inspect another branch of female industry fostered by the Society for the Employment of Women. This Society was, we believe, the originator of classes for women in shorthand, and held a class at the office weekly, until the Metropolitan School for Shorthand was established. Hither they now send their girls for instruction, and hither we will wend our way through a maze of what it is the fashion to call "vehicular traffic." We certainly find ourselves in a maze of passages; and as to the flights of stone steps we have to mount to reach our goal, we can only say that strong muscles and plenty of breath are needed for the ascent. We make it with difficulty, and are thankful to arrive at an apartment where about thirty young women are receiving the first lessons in shorthand. A master specialist superintends the writing in the strange hieroglyphics used for the purpose. The room is singularly quiet, and great is the abstraction of the learners. But this is, so to say, the infant-school. *Only* from thirty to fifty words a minute are written here from dictation, and instruction is slow and gradual. The other two rooms devoted to women are more lively. From seventy to one hundred words a minute is the maximum of No. 2; while in No. 3 the rapidity of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty is obtainable. It is no wonder that speed certificates are given to such as can perform the amazing feat of taking down, from the lips of a speaker, one hundred and fifty words in sixty seconds! We are told that ladies are among the most successful pupils



MISS KING.

in this school of phonography, and they can either go through the whole course by spending the day at the work, or employ their spare time in it. There are special instructors in every department; and the inventor of phonography, Mr. Isaac Pitman, examines every student's work and grants certificates to proficients. They are always sure of lucrative employment when they obtain "speed certificates;" so in these days "slow and sure" is an obsolete proverb, and the fable of the "hare and the tortoise" a story of the past. Five guineas is the charge for a complete education in shorthand; less sums are paid according to the instruction given; and pupils may attend at any hour between ten a.m. and ten p.m. Every facility is afforded to the learner, and in this wilderness of a mansion three of the innumerable rooms are appropriated to the weaker sex—*weaker*, it is contended, only in strength of body, but not in strength of will!

No sooner have we seen them at their type and shorthand writing than we are invited by our friend, the indefatigable secretary, to inspect the wood-engraving office, in which women are employed, in the same building. Here we find half a dozen young ladies working at this interesting but difficult art.

To acquire it, they must be able to draw well, and much skill and neatness of hand are indispensable.

"It is nice work, but it is so long before one is paid for it!" say the girls rather despondently.

The fact is that in this, as in most other arts, proficients get the lion's share of the food. An artist will scarcely entrust his block to an unskilled engraver. Still, the really competent are rarely unemployed. But it is doubtless hard for the young to sit hour after hour bending over work that they fear may not be remunerative. It is easy to advise perseverance, but difficult to persevere. At the head of the class is one who has persevered, and makes a good income, and of her the others speak admiringly. Happily they are not envious, and look very cheerful under their difficulties; though cheerfulness is almost as hard to maintain as perseverance.

We can only glance at wood-carving, plan-tracing, hair-dressing, chromo-lithography, and other branches, to which pupils have been apprenticed by the Society of which we write, because Miss King invites us to see with our own eyes how the said pupils are articled by the committee she represents. Before we proceed to the Women's Printing Office, 21B, Great College Street, Westminster, we would advise our readers to peruse the report issued from Berners Street for the current year. This gratuitous counsel given, we proceed briskly on our way.

It is refreshing to pass through quiet Dean's Yard, and to reach a rural spot, where there is actually a flower-bed near the door, and greenery about the window. Miss King is expected, and we enter the small office. Here we are joined by the secretary, one of the ladies of the committee, the young girl and her mother. The indentures are duly read and signed, and a promising young maiden of fifteen is apprenticed for three years. The premium, paid by the Society, is five pounds, but after the first three months the juvenile compositor will earn 2s. 6d. a week, rising 6d. every three months during her apprenticeship. Naturally, when her apprenticeship has expired, she will compete with others for a fixed wage.

The workroom communicates with the office, and here nine women are occupied at their high desks as compositors. Some are young, some old hands, but all are busily engaged in setting up type. The machinery is managed by a man and two boys, employed exclusively for the purpose.

"I love my work when I can get it to do," says one of the compositors. "I have been at it twelve years, and can make a good living when employed. We are here from nine till half-past six. Some printers employ women, but not all."

There is still, it appears, a latent jealousy between the sexes in this trade, but doubtless that will disappear. Indeed, competition is so keen that people have not time for jealousy. Such good and careful work is done here that customers have expressed high approval of it; and all that is wanted to insure an enlarged sphere of labour in this particular branch of women's work is the confidence and support of the public. That oft-quoted authority, Mr. Ruskin, has expressed his approval of it.

"Branches of Women's Work!" Why, they spread everywhere. We return to our starting-point, the office in Berners Street, and find one nearly opposite. This bears for title "Decorative Art Studios," and owes its growth and strength to Mrs. Louisa Avant. On the ground floor is a dazzling display of painted glass *écailline*, terra-cotta, Renaissance tapestry, painted satin sachets and bags, miniatures, and various other specimens of decorative art. No less than two thousand of the sachets a fabulous number of the dainty bags, and a portion of the beautiful painted glass, are about to be sent to America. On the first floor we find painted screens from designs by the lady workers, tapestry, Rhodian curtains, and painted window-blinds. We are so fortunate as to be introduced to Miss Turck, the inventor of *écailline* and various "mediums"—not spiritualistic, but decorative.

Écailline is a fine lustrous enamel resembling tortoiseshell, and is applied at the back of ordinary glass; and the other "mediums" appear to be colours for painting on all sorts of fabrics, from linen to glass and china. These "mediums" are used in all the artistic work we contemplate with so much pleasure. We are allowed to glance at the workers, who are just now literally "working their fingers to the bone" to complete orders received; for this is a wholesale house. Lady artists and articled pupils, as well as young girls who may be styled artistic needlewomen, are all busy as bees. Among them are several apprenticed here by Miss King and her committee, and any number of really *competent* helpers may find remunerative occupation. But, in this as in all other industries, unskilled hands are worse than useless. All employed here are women, and the energetic ladies who have originated and who carry on the business may be called public benefactors.

We will end this sketch where we began it—at 22, Berners Street. Yesterday we had tea with Mrs. Marshall; to-day it is with Miss King and her friend and co-secretary Miss Lewin. After this refreshment we are regaled by more work. Looking over a few pages of well-kept ledgers and registers, etc., we are amazed at the multifarious situations found at this office for women. Here are a few of them just as they arise:—"Clerk, book-keeper, housekeeper for an institution, compositor, shorthand secretary for member of Parliament, two auditors, nursery governess, dressmaker, waitress, superintendent of science and art examinations for women, upholstress;" in short, every occupation under the sun. And the registry is free, while two testimonials are required for the respectability of the registered.

And here is a page of what is called "odd office work," for which over £170 has been paid during the year:—"Addressing envelopes, directory, copying specifications, petitions, appeals, streeting boroughs, alphabetical list of voters;" we look up from the page and inquire. Neither sectarianism nor political bias admitted here! We learn that lists of voters were prepared, boroughs streeted, and cards and addresses sent at the last election for the Conservative, Liberal, and Radical candidates! Ten thousand addresses left the office, for which five shillings per thousand was received. When we consider the work done, and learn that the average income of this Society is £335 a year,



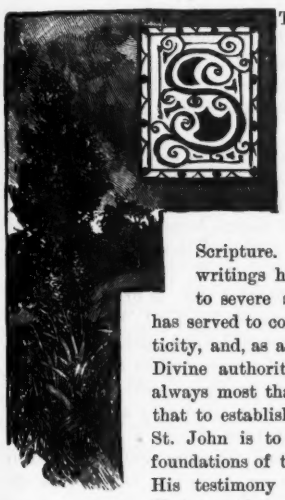
THE COMPOSITORS' ROOM.

we have no hesitation in pleading for increased aid to enable it to enlarge its borders. Debt is an unknown disgrace here; therefore care must be taken to "help those who will help themselves." To this end girls are trained and apprenticed, technical education having been long the object of the committee. Thus during the last ten years 642 girls have been thoroughly trained, and most of them now occupy important and useful places in this business world. Many thousands have been helped to employment, and the office is seldom void of candidates for it.

At the moment, we are roused from the consideration of registers by an influx of young women. It is seven o'clock, and nearly a score of them come in by twos and threes to the book-keeping class, held from seven to eight-thirty on Mondays and Thursdays. While they settle, we are shown their neatly written books—copy-book, day-book, petty-cash, cash, invoices, ledger, and journal. We hope the reader will understand them better than the writer, who yet fully appreciates the obligation on the learners to write a clear round hand, and to keep their figures and delicately drawn lines of red and black ink in mathematical order. These learners come from all parts, and truly they must have their "daily bread" much at heart to journey hither from Brockley, Hornsey, Tufnell Park, Barnsbury, Plumstead, Peckham, and other places. They pay sixpence a week, but the Society pays the teacher, who has won, not only *their* certificate, but certificates for book-keeping and commercial correspondence from the Society of Arts, and herself holds a responsible position in a large firm. She gives out the, to us, difficult problems, which are taken down by her attentive pupils, all of whom hope to gain the Society's certificate after successful examination. Several hundreds of women, so certificated, are now maintaining themselves as book-keepers, which employment is one of the most prolific branches of the Berners Street ancestral tree. While these nightingales are sheltered beneath its leaves —in less poetical parlance, while our class of future book-keepers plod on towards perfection—we take our departure, praying that ever more and more success may attend the labours of those who thus devote themselves to the welfare of their fellow-creatures.

THE WRITINGS OF ST. JOHN.

BY THE VENERABLE ARTHUR GORE, M.A., ARCHDEACON OF MACCLESFIELD.



ST. JOHN is the last of the sacred writers. His earliest work was, probably, nearly contemporaneous with the Epistle to the Hebrews; his latest closes the Canon of Holy Scripture. In our day his writings have been subjected to severe scrutiny; but this has served to confirm their authenticity, and, as a consequence, their Divine authority. And we must always most thankfully remember that to establish the authority of St. John is to establish the very foundations of the Faith of Christ. His testimony to Jesus as the Christ, as the eternal and co-equal Son of the Father, is absolutely clear and certain. Indeed, in this we can perceive the reason for the assault now delivered. Grant that St. John's Gospel was written by John the son of Zebedee and you have contemporary proof, soberly given, of supernatural religion, of the exercise of miraculous powers, especially of the great miracle of the Resurrection—in a word, of the mission of God the Son into the world. These facts could be established without St. John, but, nevertheless, everyone will feel what strong confirmation St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, St. Paul, and even St. Peter receive, when one, nearest to our Lord, sets himself deliberately to establish the true Divinity and the true humanity of the Saviour of the world.

It is noteworthy that the difficulties felt in receiving the fourth Gospel are of this internal character. The external evidence is coherent and cogent. But the contents of the Gospel are hard to accept. If it had furnished no evidence of the supernatural, if it had made no claim of Divinity for Jesus the Christ, there is no likelihood that its authorship would have been questioned, at least by the persons who now challenge it. Nay, those who now doubt would have eagerly welcomed such incontrovertible proof that one so very near to the Founder of Christianity knew nothing of any supernatural element in the religion He founded. The doubters would then have been the Christian advocates. They would have been under strong temptation to argue as their opponents argue at present. Our dearest hopes rest upon the true Divinity of our Saviour. Suppose, then, that a document were put in our hands purporting to come from the beloved disciple, and yet written expressly to prove that our Lord was nothing more than an ordinary man—we should very probably be found striving might and main against the evidence. We must not be surprised, therefore, if men who have made up their minds beforehand that there can be no such thing as the supernatural, act in the same way towards the Gospel of the Divinity. We must not be angry with them. Only this: an impartial spectator would surely say, "All this heat of controversy is to no purpose; your energies are prompted by your interests, your wish is father to your thought. If the book were the opposite to what it is, your battle would go on just the same, only you would change sides in it. That is not the way to reason. The question really is, 'Is there adequate evidence that St. John wrote the book, whatever its contents be, or is there not?' Settle that, and then you are bound to accept or to reject it and its contents accordingly." Well, the reply is that the authorship was never questioned during eighteen centuries; that it was not impugned at the epochs of the Arian and the Socinian controversies, when our Lord's true Divinity was assaulted; that the evidence which can be produced now, in the nineteenth century, is fifty times as strong, both in volume and character, as that for any secular book in the world; that the motive of the present assault is obvious and avowed, and that, such as it is, it has not stood against, it has gone down before, the counterblasts of men like Bishop Lightfoot and Professors Salmon and Westcott.

It must not be thought, however, that all rests on the adequacy of the external evidence; in some respects the internal has greater force. For one thing, it appeals to us all. We are not all learned in the Fathers; we have not all the critical faculty of weighing evidence; but we are all learned in St. John; we have all read the Gospel; we all have the faculty of knowing, or, at any rate, of feeling, whether it reads like something written by an eyewitness, or by a man looking back, say one hundred and fifty years after, through a shining but not transparent mist which magnified into heroic proportions men and things moving in and beyond it. Do the figures loom large and ill-defined, or are they clear, unexaggerated, natural?

Let us realise the alternative. Our opponents ask us to believe that the Gospel was written in the latter half of the second century,* perhaps one hundred and forty years after its events, and one hundred years after the destruction of the Temple. Between-

* The Bishop of Derry (Introduction to first Epistle of St. John, Speaker's Commentary) gives a *résumé* of Renan's theory, dating the Gospel earlier—125; and regarding it as the outcome rather of the "Ephesian School" of tradition than as the conception of one man, though doubtless compiled by one editor, and ultimately written by one writer.

times, great and terrible things had happened. Jerusalem had perished by an awful destruction; and the Jewish nation, after unparalleled sufferings, had ceased to exist as a nation. But meanwhile the Christian community had grown in numbers and in knowledge. By this time it had—circulated very generally among its Churches—its New Testament, including even the Apocalypse, but, of course, not the fourth Gospel. Its knowledge of our Lord's life was drawn from and, as one may say, fixed by the first three. It had quite ceased to depend upon oral tradition. The Apostles and apostolic men were all gone, but they had left behind their sacred literature, the inspired books. After this interval, with this literature before him, someone writes the fourth Gospel. Who he is, no one has told us. He must have been a man of transcendent ability; a profound thinker on the things of God and man; and, at the same time, with a dramatic power more vivid and realistic than Scott, or even Shakespeare; for certainly no imaginative picture ever looked so like simple life as this. Intellectual giant and genius as the man was, he has left nothing behind him but this one wonderful book—nothing, not even his name. He wrote the Gospel; he put St. John's name upon it years after the death of the Apostle; he published it in a Church where the other Gospels were known and received, and publicly read; and his work, appearing then for the first time, took its place at once without the slightest controversy among the public documents, as having come down—through those years which knew it not — from the son of Zebedee! Truly, the credulity of incredulity is wonderful! On this hypothesis the creation of the Gospel by human genius would be the greatest miracle on record, were not the creation of the hypothesis itself a greater miracle still. Here, then, let internal evidence speak. Think of the Book. Are the incidents such as a fabricator would have chosen? Are they treated as a man would treat them, who could only look back hazily through the glorifying mist which supernaturalised every commonplace occurrence? The little lifelike touches, quite easy to a spectator, sure to start out vividly in the memories of old and loved associations: are these possible to an inventor or constructor of a "Life"? We may test the question where we will: the call of the disciples in the first chapter, the wedding at Cana, the interview at Sychar, the familiar acquaintance with and reference to the Temple and its ritual, the story of the raising of Lazarus; above all, the trial, the cross, the grave, the garden on the morning of the Resurrection: these appeal to everyone. The simplest, equally with the most learned, can pronounce a verdict: can determine between the uniform tradition of the Church and the conjecture of the nineteenth century: between the unknown and impalpable novelist (if I may use the word) and the disciple whom Jesus loved.

What did St. John write? The Gospel, the three Epistles, and the Apocalypse. The Gospel and the first Epistle go together. They are plainly the work of the same hand. In these latter days, indeed, a minute criticism has sought to separate them, but it has carried no conviction to any unprejudiced mind. The motive for the attempt is plain, and weak as criticism of the kind commonly is, it becomes weaker much when it has an end to gain; and here, the end is obvious. The existence of the Epistle, side by side with the Gospel, makes the forgery theory more than doubly difficult.

In this relation, too, the second and third Epistles become important because, to speak paradoxically, they are unimportant. A pretender to St. John's name might have a motive strong enough to induce him to attempt to write the Gospel; suppose he succeeded, he might even be so foolish as to imperil his success by adding the first Epistle. But what man, in his senses, would go on to indite the minor Epistles? We can understand their being preserved simply and solely because they were prized and precious relics of so divine a man; otherwise they would have perished. We argue thus:—Because they have lived, they are St. John's; because they are his, they give us a glimpse of his style both in pen and thought; and because their style is the same as we everywhere recognise in the more important works, these also are his. Truly the Gospel and the Epistles stand together; each of them an indubitable witness for the authenticity of the others.

Can we say the same of the Apocalypse? Here, indeed, we might launch on a limitless ocean of controversy, did not the wholesome restrictions of space keep us in bounds. Alike in style! Nay, so contrasted are the styles of the Apocalypse and the Gospel, that any conclusion based on the contrast has been thought to carry enormous weight. It is curious to note how different these conclusions have been. After the Decian persecution, about the middle of the third century, some persons were inclined to derive Chiliastic or Millenarian doctrines of a very corrupting tendency from the Apocalypse. They were vigorously opposed by Dionysius, the Bishop of Alexandria, a good and fair-minded man. But in his zeal against the doctrines, he does not hesitate, although expressing a certain admiration and reverence for the book, and a belief that it contains deeper meaning than he can fathom, yet to question that St. John was the author; and his argument rests on the difference of style:—"I would not easily agree that this [John] was the Apostle, the son of Zebedee, the brother of James, who is the author of the Gospel and the General Epistle that bears his name. . . We may notice how the phraseology of the Gospel and the Epistle differs from the Apocalypse,"* and so on. His contention is:—The Apostle John certainly wrote the Gospel and Epistle, and therefore he could not have written the Apocalypse. In our day the line of argument is the same; but the conclusion is reversed. Our opponents are quite ready to assign

* Eusebius vii. 25.

the Book of the Revelation to the eagle-eyed seer. "No doubt," say they, "St. John wrote that; but then the same man could not have written the Gospel."

Now it is plain that arguments of this kind, "He never could have done so and so," are by no means demonstrative. Indeed, they are very precarious. They need sifting. We must be patient and set things in order, in true perspective, before we can assign them their proper weight and value.

Before coming to a decision in this instance, two considerations ask for careful attention. In the first place, the mental condition and the circumstances of the writer were widely different in the case of the Apocalypse and the Gospel. The seer of the Revelation was "in the Spirit," and beheld marvellous pageants, whether of heavenly splendour or of horrific terror, the description of which taxed the powers of language to the utmost. The Gospel, on the other hand, is a beautifully calm and deliberately thought-out survey of the Divine work of Christ. It is quite possible for one and the same mind to be subjected at different times to these contrasted influences, but it would be quite impossible for the same mind to treat such dissimilar subjects in the same style. We should expect, in fact, the very difference to which Dionysius points: the Gospel he describes as "most elegant in diction, in the argument, and the whole structure of the style." In the Apocalypse he finds "not very accurate Greek, barbarous idioms and solecisms." But these may, surely, be due in large measure to the stress and strain of the effort to speak of heavenly things in earthly words.

The other consideration to which we must pay regard is the question whether any long interval of time elapsed between the two compositions. Here we are met by a difficulty of no slight importance. At first, the question seems settled for us with absolute certainty. Irenæus, who in his youth often heard Polycarp speak about his master, John, and who was himself separated from the Apostle by not more than fifty years, writes explicitly: "If, however, it were necessary to proclaim his [Antichrist's] name openly at the present time, it would have been declared by him who saw the Revelation, for it is not long since it was seen, but almost in our times, at the close of Domitian's reign." Domitian died in the year 96. If we accept this statement, the date is fixed absolutely, and no important interval of time can have separated the two books. But then all circumstantial evidence exclaims loudly against such a conclusion, and circumstantial evidence is often more convincing than personal. A witness may be mistaken; circumstances, rightly before us, cannot. Irenæus, or Eusebius, who quotes him, or a copyist, may have written a wrong word; but an argument raising itself upon facts, and these independent of one another, is hard to overthrow. A few words from Professor Westcott will place the heads of the argument before our readers. "The Apocalypse is less developed both in thought and style, . . . to go back from the teaching of the Gospel to that of the Apocalypse . . . seems to involve a moral miracle which would introduce confusion into life. The Apocalypse is after the close of St. Paul's work, . . . shows a close connection with the Epistle to the Hebrews (2 Peter, Jude). And, on the other hand, it is before the destruction of Jerusalem. . . . The Gospel is the spiritual interpretation of the Apocalypse. The materials of the Gospel were treasured up, pondered, illuminated as time went on. . . . The study of the Synoptists, of the Apocalypse, and of the Gospel of St. John in succession enables us to see under what human conditions the full majesty of Christ was perceived and declared—not all at once, but step by step, and by the help of the old prophetic teaching." The learned professor's whole argument deserves attentive perusal, and it leaves little doubt on the mind. Its effect is to date the record of the great vision about the year 69, some quarter of a century before the Gospel. If some natural hesitation is felt in accepting this conclusion, because it happens to be the one arrived at also by M. Renan and by the school of Christian apologists (in the wrong sense) who give in to his view of prophecy, that hesitation will be at once dispelled by Professor Salmon in his observations on "The Date of the Apocalypse"; than which no finer piece of criticism ever pounded into dust the imaginative structures of modern unbelief.

We may now set down the probable history of St. John's compositions.

We know that he spent his later life in Ephesus, and the letters to the Seven Churches remind us of the patriarchal supervision which he exercised. The storm of persecution under Nero had scarcely subsided. Babylon the Great, the mother of abominations, was still drunk with the blood of the saints. Jerusalem was indeed standing, but the thunderclouds of doom were gathering round her. St. John's own soul was being weaned from all expectation of the restoring of the kingdom to Israel. Charged with the memory of his Lord's words, "Then shall there be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world," "And immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, . . . and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven," he had been seeking to pierce the gloom. He was mindful, too, of his own deep interest in the second Advent. Had not his Lord said, "If I will that he tarry till I come"? And the time seemed at hand. Peter had already glorified God by his death. Often must the prayer have been breathed, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Nor was he forgetful of the Old Testament prophecies which spake of the coming. Fourteen years after the former temple had perished, Ezekiel had seen, in vision, the heavenly minister measuring another temple, chamber by chamber, gate by gate, court by court; he had seen the land re-assigned to the tribes; he had witnessed the healing waters issuing from under the threshold of the house of God, and they

became a great river of the water of life, and at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. "It shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters issued out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."* Daniel, too, had lived amidst the clash of mighty nations, and when the time of redemption drew on, visions had been granted to him, visions of appalling terror; he had seen the beast exceeding dreadful, with teeth of iron and nails of brass, making war with the saints, and prevailing against them until the Ancient of Days did sit, and behold one like unto the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven before the Ancient of Days, and to Him was given dominion and glory, and a kingdom which should not pass away, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him.†

These ancient visions were gone, but they had promised what should not pass away. They asserted the abiding power of God and of His Christ. He it was who shook not the earth only, but also the heavens, and yet were these things which could not be shaken—a new heaven and a new earth, wherein should dwell righteousness. And now, the terrors, the shaking of heaven and earth, had come again, not without warning from the Lord. Should not the promise also be fulfilled? Should not the sign of the Son of Man be seen? The wave of tribulation had even reached St. John himself; he is an exile in the lonely isle of Patmos. There, on the Lord's Day, a diviner vision than any vouchsafed to ancient seer falls on his entranced sight. The old scenes are re-enacted; the heathen rage, the people imagine a vain thing, the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed. Hideous forms of beast and devil rend and slay; false prophets rise against the true, the synagogue of Satan against the synagogue of the Lord; men accept the brand of the beast who have not in their foreheads the seal of God. To the seer's eye it is but the King of kings making the wrath of man to praise Him. Watch the vision out—"Old things are passed away; behold, I make all things new." The new heavens and the new earth appear, the heavenly city is revealed and measured, the Lord God and the Lamb are her light; the river of life flows, the tree of life yields her fruit month by month, the leaves are for the healing of the nations; the troubles are past, and they have not harmed the saints: these have come out of the great tribulation, they have won the victory, they inherit all things. As the vision fades, the cry ascends again—"Even so come, come quickly, Lord Jesus."

As it was necessary that the disciples should descend from the mountain of Transfiguration that they might bring the heavenly glory nearer to the children of men, so must St. John return to and tarry upon earth, that he may reduce to order and expound the Vision, that he may elevate the material into the spiritual, that he may make the eternal present for all generations. Not amid the turmoil of conflict, not even with the pæan of victory, must the Canon close. Time was needed that the unrivalled experience of the Apostle—from the day when the Baptist pointed him to the Lamb of God to that in which he saw the Lamb alive for evermore before the Throne—might flood his soul with the true glory of God.

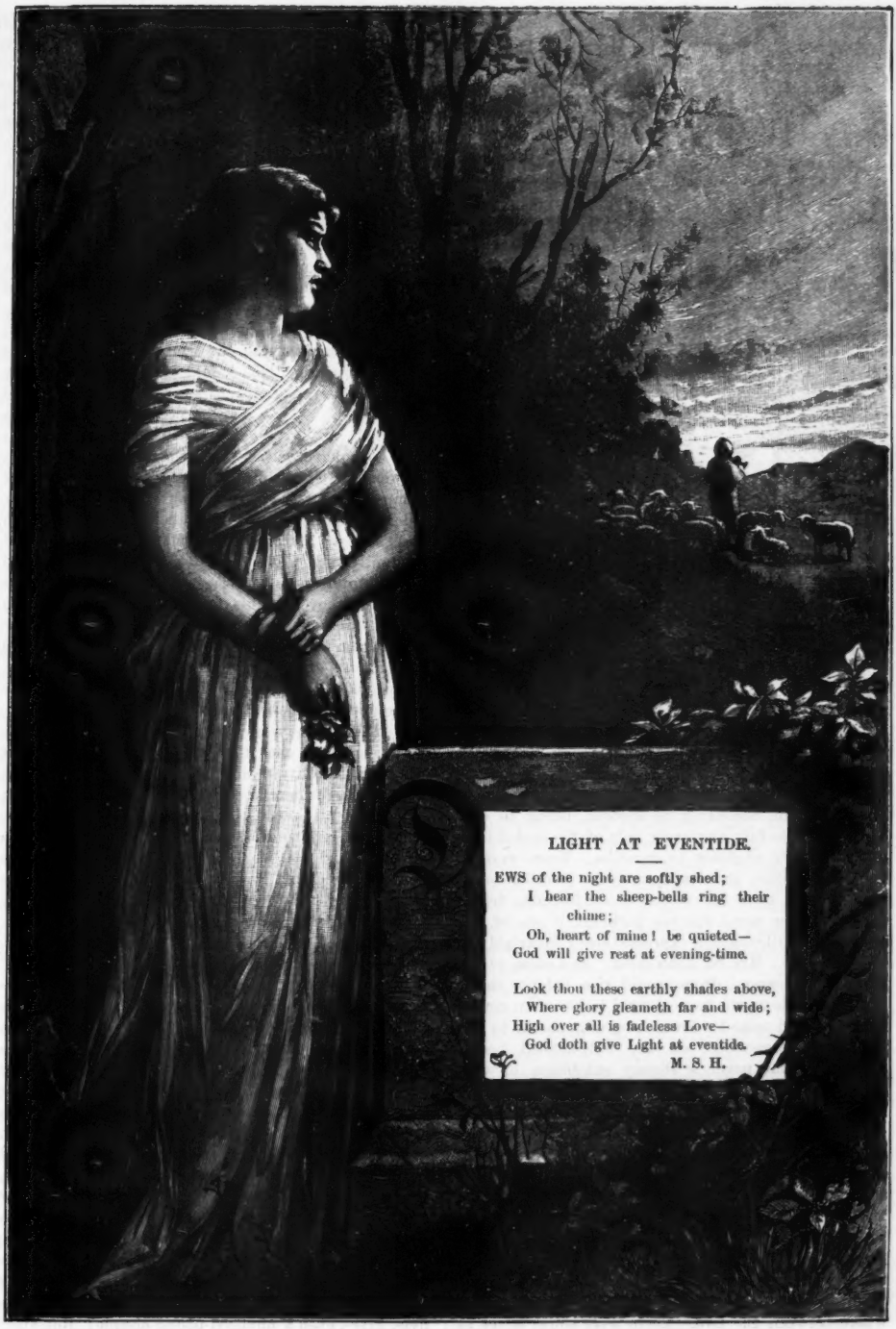
And time was given—a quarter of a century for thought and meditation, and prayer and teaching. Then the disciples gathered round the old man, and besought him to write what he had taught. "St. John last," writes Clement of Alexandria, "when he saw that the outward [bodily] facts had been set forth in the [existing] Gospels, impelled by his friends, [and] divinely moved by the Spirit, made a Spiritual Gospel." Ruggedness of thought and speech are gone. Though searching the deep things of God, all is simple, clear, calm; and the authority and certainty are those of one who knoweth that he saith true. The truth has unfolded itself upon his mind; the teaching of Christ has come out to him in the fulness of its meaning. To him, the old things are passed away, all things are become new. The heavens, once unveiled, can never more be closed. The Church in heaven and earth is One. God's people have already passed from death unto life; they have been born of water and of the Spirit; they have entered into the Kingdom; they drink of the Water of Life; they eat of the true Bread from heaven; they are already sons of God; they have an unction from the Holy One, and they know all things; they walk in the light of God; their fellowship is with the Father and the Son. "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him." Eternal life is already theirs, because they know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He sent.

Thus, even now, the Apocalypse has its fulfilment: the new heavens and the new earth are revealed, and the Tabernacle of God is with men. The "Come, Lord Jesus," is answered. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and Eternal Life."

But the end is not yet. "I go to prepare a place for you." "I will come again and receive you unto Myself." "Beloved," comments the Apostle, "now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

Here is the undying hope: "He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself even as He is pure."

* Ezek. xlvii. 1—12. † Dan. vii. 1—14.



LIGHT AT EVENTIDE.

EWS of the night are softly shed;
I hear the sheep-bells ring their chime;
Oh, heart of mine! be quieted—
God will give rest at evening-time.

Look thou these earthly shades above,
Where glory gleameth far and wide;
High over all is fadeless Love—
God doth give Light at eventide.

M. S. H.

MISS HILARY'S SUITORS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WILFUL YOUNG WOMAN," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

"THURSDAY will be my daughter Hilary's birthday. This note from Miss Humphreys tells me she is not equal to a dinner, so people are invited to luncheon. Of course we are expected."

So somewhat pompously spake Mr. St. John across a remarkably untidy breakfast-table. An equally untidy wife responded from behind a murky, unpolished coffee-pot.

"You can go, Reginald; it is perfectly clear that I cannot."

"Why not, Maria?"

"Because, as you very well know, though no doubt you have forgotten, I have no dress fit to meet the people who will be there."

"My love, you would offend Miss Humphreys by stopping away!"

"I can't help it. It will be better than disgracing her by going shabby."

"Nonsense, Maria! you must find means of getting a dress."

"Well, Reginald, will you find money to pay for it?"

Then, no reply coming to this pertinent question, Mrs. St. John, according to custom, began to cry. She cried, this fair, slatternly lady of five-and-thirty, upon the very slightest provocation. Tears were to her what gesture and ejaculation are to other folks. If a servant gave her notice, or an intimate friend died, or a new novel was too pathetic, or one of her children fell ill, emotion expressed itself invariably in the same way: Mrs. St. John cried. In a calm, placid manner the crystal drops would rise, balance themselves, tremble on the hay-coloured lashes, then gently falling, would meander down the plump cheeks to lose themselves somewhere on the well-defined bodice below. It was never a stormy exhibition of woe. Mrs. St. John's nature scarcely furnished depths sufficient for storms. These mild, habitual showers were quite sufficient relief to her spirit through every phase of trouble, and when she had wept her quantum her natural easy-going calm would re-assert itself; she would clear up her countenance from distressful signs, and accept the situation, whatever it was, without the slightest effort to better it. This affecting habit gained Mrs. St. John, according to people's acquaintance with her, the character of "a sweet woman" or "a poor thing." The real individual hovered somewhere between the two. There were worse wives in the world than Mrs. St. John, though as a housemistress she could not easily be excelled for incompetence, but was as hopeless a muddler as ever entangled weekly accounts or neglected mending her children's stockings!

Such as she was, however, she fortunately suited Mr. St. John. A higher spirited woman such as Hilary's young mother had shown herself during their brief married life might have urged him to work—kept him at it, very likely, up to the present time—would have repudiated the gentlemanly do-nothing life he had enjoyed at Brainford for some dozen years, and insisted on his earning the wherewithal to help his children's future. This would have been remarkably disagreeable—repugnant to his constitution, mental and physical. That constitution of Mr. St. John's was made answerable for the wavering, and what some considered unsatisfactory, lines of his life. It had declared itself pronouncedly against the air of Hampstead and the regular hours of the War Office, and had sent him to enjoy, unemployed, the fresh Essex breezes at Brainford, "the very air to ward off his family enemy, gout"—so at least he had assured Miss Humphreys, who, suspecting other motives, was ineffably annoyed at his taking up residence within half a dozen miles of Abbotswick. Further, his constitution required unlimited hours of languid thought, out of which, being a man of some ability, he evolved beautiful theories for the remunerative employment of the million; occasionally a pamphlet, printed at his own cost and loss; inventions by the score, ingenious ones too, but all stopping short at that practicability which might have turned them into money, for here his constitution stepped in again, forbidding all association with trade. "The St. Johns," he said, "never cared to go out of their own sphere;" and the St. Johns, he impressed upon the common herd of Brainford, were people of blue blood, though his own branch and generation were not overburdened with means.

His limited resources were a sad trial to poor Mr. St. John's constitution. "Coming of the stock I do," he would lament, "a small income is positively distressing;" but as he persistently shirked any sensible effort to increase it, it was an affliction (meaning some four hundred a year, mostly his wife's) which became a permanent one; though Mrs. St. John, who among her mild excellences had profound belief in her husband's talents, never gave up expecting a sudden influx of wealth through the channel of one of Mr. St. John's clever schemes. Someone to whom he had written concerning his wonderful Smoke Preventer, or his Lift that was to supersede staircases for ever, would unexpectedly offer him an immense sum down for the patent, and send a sort of retaining fee perhaps with the first communication. The credulous lady always examined the outside of her husband's letters with deep interest. Might not one contain a five-, fifty-, even a hundred-pound cheque? But, alas! no such small Golconda had repaid her yet. In their

stead, unpaid bills had a habit of intruding themselves by post, and a sheaf of these unwelcome reminders was lying among crumbs and egg-shells and coffee-stains on this very mid-September morning. Therefore did Mrs. St. John see an infinitesimally small chance of getting properly clad to Abbotswick for Hilary's birthday, and therefore did she weep.

Thoroughly accustomed to these lachrymose episodes, Mr. St. John attempted no consolation, but his thoughts revolving round the fact that it would look awkward for him to appear at the festivity without his wife, he fell back on a device which had often before now got him out of an uncomfortable corner.

"It would reflect upon Hilary for you to absent yourself upon such paltry grounds, my love. She would be mortified when she came to know about it. She would far rather pay the few pounds your costume would require than permit you to stop away. I shall take upon myself to order you something from Corder's; and if the worst comes to the worst, I can but—er—h'm—consult my dear daughter about the payment."

Mr. St. John pushed away the pile of bills (a sadly overdue one from the long-suffering Corder among them), and walked off with the serenely magnificent air he always wore when alluding to this "dear daughter," and the depths of her purse present or future. The worth of that purse had been steadily increasing ever since he came to Brainford: in plain truth, it had considerably guided his constitution in selecting that locality for a home, and once there, he used it as much as he could venture to his own advantage.

A legacy of some few thousands he had naturally expected for his child when the rich Miss Humphreys had descended on his widower's quarters, near nineteen years before, and relieved him of the baby with whom he knew not what on earth to do. "I will bring up poor Helen's child, and educate her, and leave her a suitable provision," the middle-aged benefactress promised; and on the strength of this he had willingly agreed to leave the little mortal in her distant kinswoman's hands, maintaining over it no more supervision than was afforded by a quarterly visit of one day and night while he still kept his employment in London. But when it became clear to him that his youthful daughter was being brought up as luxuriously as a little princess, and that the mistress of Abbotswick (a pleasant estate entirely in its owner's control) thought the best of everything scarce good enough for her petted *protégée*, then Mr. St. John's expectations enlarged amazingly. Although re-married to an affable little blonde doll, and the father of other children, his paternal feelings began to draw him strongly towards Hilary—so strongly that he threw over the office, conveyed himself and his household to the nearest town to Abbotswick, and disgusted Miss Humphreys intensely by appearing there one fine day, clasping Hilary to his broad bosom, assuring them he could not endure to be so distant from his ever dear Helen's child, and for her sake, therefore, had made this startling move.

Miss Humphreys met this outburst of sentiment with business-like coolness.

"My dear sir," said she, when the little girl, who had been crumpled and caressed till she grew impatient ("her own darling mother's liveliness," murmured the fond father), had been trotted off to the nursery, "My dear sir, if you long for Hilary so much, perhaps you had better have her for good and all. No?"—as this proposal was hastily declined,—"Then, if you please, she remains on the old footing: under my management, and no one else's. Of course she can see you all now and then. Once a month will be sufficient, in my opinion; but don't think there's to be constant running backwards and forwards between the houses. I can't allow that, so let us understand one another distinctly."

Miss Humphreys had never liked her second cousin Helen's choice, and was not a woman to conceal her opinion. Mr. St. John felt she was a trifle rough on him now, and was somewhat chagrined. But it would be obviously so unwise to offend the old autocrat that he accepted her conditions with the best grace he could, and made no attempt to infringe her arbitrary rules; for the time was coming assuredly, if slowly, when he would be requited for this forbearance. Miss Humphreys was thirty years his senior, if she was a day. When his dear daughter reigned at Abbotswick—as it was clear to himself and all the world she would do some day—then Mr. St. John saw himself invested with what was delightful to anticipate. Hilary would undoubtedly double his income—make it a thousand, probably. He would become adviser, manager, controller of the young heiress's possessions—no one fitter for that office than her own father! In prospect he relished the position mightily, and though he had just enough discretion not to brag of it openly, Mr. St. John permitted himself hints in various directions, which purchased for him somewhat higher status in Brainford than he could otherwise have held. His "fine old relative at Abbotswick"; his "dearest daughter whom he had partially resigned as an infant, having no right to keep her back from the enormous advantages offered to her;" these gained him some little prestige in the shifting military society at Brainford; got him invitations to mess, gave him grounds for holding his head high at the select club to which (by the use of the same lever) he gained an *entrée*, and primed him with lofty patronage towards tradespeople, who willingly gave long credit to a gentleman through whom by-and-by they might secure the custom of the Abbotswick household. Thus using these social props with more freedom as he saw how Hilary took firmer root year by year in Miss Humphreys' regard, Mr. St. John lived contentedly about a twelvemonth's income in arrears, and if a small shopkeeper pressed inconveniently for settlement, or any other need for cash arose, the depression which overcame his constitution at such calls would invariably communicate itself to his manner the next time his dearest Hilary visited Park Villa, and Hilary, being as free-handed as sunshine, would forthwith restore "poor papa" to cheerfulness, even though that entailed a scolding from Aunt Phil for coming to an end of her handsome quarterly allowance in six weeks!

In readiness for important Miss Hilary's visit to her father's home, Park Villa would be made to look its smartest. Mrs. St. John would have all the buttons

on her dress, and her hair neat, which it rarely was at other times: the fair braids having a habit of hanging down unfastened like tufts of tow. The two elder boys wore their Sunday suits, and behaved themselves respectfully towards their step-sister, who, their father constantly dinned into them, could make men of them if she liked; the little twin girls and a brother of eight—the family baby—waited upon her assiduously, quite sure that chocolates or new sixpences would reward them before her departure. The servant always curtseyed when she opened the door to Miss St. John, and a youthful daily drudge peeped awestruck from the back to see the grand young lady go away in a carriage or "on a hoss."

So Hilary-worship was a growing form of idolatry at Park Villa, and never did Mr. St. John feel more serenely sure of the base it rested on than when, that September morning, he stepped down to Corder's, silk-mercer and draper, and condescendingly ordered a few of the best brocades to be sent up for Mrs. St. John to select from. "They were going to Abbotswick next week, on a festive occasion—his dear daughter Miss Hilary St. John's birthday. The principal county families would be there to keep it."

Mr. Corder thought, with a pang, of an eighteen months' account still running. But of course there was no risk with such a close connection with the rich Miss Humphreys—the father of the heiress. So



"She sat in dreamy thought."—*p.* 125.

the order was executed—Mrs. St. John furnished with a birthday robe; and Mr. St. John felt the expenditure so justifiable that he did not scruple to mention it casually to some dozen friends in the course of the day.

CHAPTER V.

On her birthday morning, Hilary came down blithe as a lark. Aunt Phil would not appear yet awhile. Her toilet was a lengthy mystery, carried on under the security of bolted doors. There was a whisper in the house that some of the mistress's silvery curls—which added so much to her striking appearance—were hers by purchase, not by growth. But Joyce was discreetly mute on this topic, and Hilary never enlightened thereon.

To-day she sallied forth for her free hour after breakfast, singing as she strolled about the park-like meadows that stretched some half-mile north and south of the house. Right and left of the Abbotswick hall door ran gravelled drives, one opening on the Brainford road, the other on the broad lane that led to Mosswick and profound country depths. In the thatched lodge by the town road dwelt Pullen; some of his juvenile brood always ready to admit carriages. Three of his bairns were making ostentatious bobs to Hilary as she strolled by this morning, and Mrs. Pullen, who had formerly had the honour of waiting on Hilary's upper nurse, hurried out from the wash-tub to curtsey greetings, and "humbly wish her many happy 'turns of the day."

Hilary smilingly accepted the homage as a matter of course, only just halting to say, "Pullen will bring your dinner down from the house to-day: it shall not be forgotten." And then she went her way, unnoting the woman's disappointed look, unhearing her bit of soliloquy—

"I'd sooner she'd give me a bit of talk, kind like, than any dinner, that I would. But Miss Hilary's getting the very moral of the old missis; the more's the pity!"

Unwitting of this criticism, Hilary strayed towards a cluster of beech trees, where she had a favourite seat—a combination of hillock, gnarled root, and moss. Under the thick boughs, scarcely touched yet with September gold, she sat in dreamy thought, her hands clasped round about her knees. The autumn morning was lovely: just one of those when summer makes believe it has no thought of going. Happy little white-breasted swallows were flashing through the soft upper air. An old squirrel was instructing a young one among the branches in the art of opening beech-nuts. Some handsome pheasants stepped daintily along, fully aware that no murderous guns ever scared them out of their wits in this agreeable woman-ruled domain.

Some years before, Mr. St. John had weakly yielded to a passing whim of ostentation. He had invited three or four young officers to look through his relative's covers at Abbotswick, without due licence from the lady first. Miss Humphreys austerely permitted the one day's sport, never opened her lips to Mr. St. John for six succeeding months, and, as a sure way of preventing such another liberty, gave her tenants leave to look after the game themselves, paid off her keepers, and preserved no more.

Hilary looked lazily forth over the goodly stretch of property, and if fancy wafted her to the far-off future, when all should be her own, who shall wonder? Inference, if not positive proclamation, had marked her the young heiress ever since she could remember. Power in prospective is amazingly sweet to young nineteen. Hilary's imagination took flight quick and changeful, as birds upon the wing. Would she some day, somehow, be on the full tide of a London season? Captain Cavenham's sisters had talked to her of its fascinations till she had even ventured upon sounding Miss Humphreys about it; but her suggestion had been met with stony indifference, and the bright vision went out in darkness. But some fine day!——

Ah, and papa too! poor papa, who, somehow, never got on with Aunt Phil, and yet was so exceedingly clever! Often he said he could make tens of thousands if he had capital to spend as he wished. But Miss Humphreys turned a deaf ear to these hints. She would *not* lend what might be the making of him; still, that could be righted—some day! Papa was so fond of his daughter, he was always wishing they two were in one home. Well, there might come a time when he could be here with her—here, perhaps—and then would she not make up to him for all these years of uncongenial economy?

Economy! Odious virtue! down went the corners of Hilary's pretty mouth. Instinctively she glanced along the chestnuts from house-front to St. Michael's Church, the shaky edifice which the obstinate man in charge would not suffer to tumble about as Aunt Phil desired. He had to be economical too. What a combination of disagreeables! Would he be here when—well, by-and-by? Then she should have to say to him, "As lady of the manor, I cannot allow my clergyman to vegetate on such an income. I have ordered your stipend to be doubled." Hilary laughed to herself, and then blushed. She knew exactly what that man would say—for never a farthing would he be beholden to her. For all his gentle, friendly ways with parish people, he was a-bom-i-nably proud! Then, she must help him somehow else; find him a well-dowered wife, perhaps, as Aunt Phil was always wanting. But every young woman who presented herself to Hilary's mind was rapidly dismissed, wanting in some important particular; and before Mr. Stafford's thoughtful young patroness had lighted on a suitable helpmate for him, the white curtains of Miss Humphreys' window were drawn aside—signal that dressing was over—and Hilary jumped up to run indoors and meet Aunt Phil's birthday salutation.

"Well, child, so you're nineteen, and I'm not to make a baby of you any longer," said she, standing erect in gala dress of grey satin, and presenting her cheek to be kissed. "Are you prepared to be prudent and staid, and everything that everyone expects, eh?"

"I don't care a bit about 'everyone,'" answered Hilary gaily, "if I can manage to be what you expect, Aunt Phil; and I think I can easily do that."

"Humph!" grunted the elder lady, eying this confident young person rather oddly: "remains to be

proved, my dear, remains to be proved. Come, now, are you wondering what I've got for you to-day?"

Hilary hesitated. Then said she frankly—

"Yes, Aunt Phil, I am."

"Good girl," said Miss Humphreys, with an approving nod; "tell truth and shame—someone we won't talk about! Well, I've nothing for you but this"—drawing from her hand an amethyst ring, least valuable of the ornaments she always wore—"and this you are to keep and wear, and recollect what I tell you about it. I might have married the man who gave it to me, but we jangled over money. Money; remember, I'm not sure I should not have been a happier woman, and perhaps a better, if I'd not been always rich. Don't forget that, Hilary. Run off with your ring, child; I must save our conversation for our company. This isn't going to be one of my best days."

This signified Miss Humphreys was somewhat out of sorts, either in body or mind, but unless voluntarily more explicit, Hilary knew well she resented all inquiries, so she went obediently off to busy herself among the drawing-room flowers, leaving her kinswoman to nurse her strength for their luncheon guests.

Miss Humphreys, however, was very fidgety that day. An era long expected is not always satisfactory. This nineteenth birthday had been talked of from afar. From scores of hints, it had seemed to her household, to Hilary, and Hilary's father, that it would be a formal recognition of the young heiress, an introduction of her to the county people nigh who called at Abbotswick some twice a year, perhaps, but had many of them hardly yet seen Miss St. John.

Something like this Miss Humphreys had once intended, but had now changed her mind. *Why*, it would have taken a brave person to ask. The day once come, she seemed herself hardly content with her own arrangements, and restless over every detail. She must needs inspect the luncheon table, find fault with the Wedgwood service being used, then scold when she found it replaced by something commoner. "You ought to know I wish Miss Hilary to have the best of everything, whether she appreciates the old-fashioned crockery or no," cried this unpleasable mistress; so her unfortunate domestics had altogether a bad time of it, and Miss Humphreys was in far from a complacent mood when the first of her guests, the St. Johns, arrived.

They drove up in a Brainford "fly," feeling themselves, through Hilary, of much importance. The gentleman entered with his most ingratiating air—his wife in a very smart costume. Miss Humphreys eyed them both disfavouringly.

"I'm afraid," said she to Mr. St. John, when he had left off embracing his daughter, and was looking rather ruefully round the room, "you expected a large party. Only a few are coming. Mrs. St. John need not have—well, bought a new gown for this."

"Oh, don't mention it," said the gentleman, with a determined smile. "Dearest Hilary and yourself would have been enough for us—wouldn't they, Maria? Though I had—er—fancied——"

"Oh, don't fancy anything about me," said the old lady drily. "I'm like a kite: change about with currents that you people who stare up at me don't feel; and I'm afraid," with a malicious chuckle and another glance at the offending ruby-coloured robe, "the tail of my kite thereby gets confused."

"The—the tail, dear Miss Humphreys?"

"Yes, to be sure," sharply; "meaning all you who come sailing after me. You get in a muddle with my twists and turns; but, however, you must get out as well as you can."

"Meaning we must pay for that new gown without her help," thought Mr. St. John, walking off much snubbed; but he soothed himself by gazing from the window, and settling what alterations he should suggest to Hilary when this erratic high-flying kite had sunk to earth for good and all, and another—part, so to speak of himself—soared aloft in her stead.

The Dasents, people from the Heath at Mosswick, came next. Hilary had to leave her stepmother—who was unaffectedly afraid of Miss Humphreys, and had edged off to a remote corner—and be introduced to a singularly beautiful young woman, ten years, perhaps, her senior, and her tall husband—chief friend of Mr. Stafford in those parts. The curate followed, and was for joining the Dasents as soon as he had shaken hands, but Miss Humphreys stopped him.

"To be sure you've a compliment for Hilary's birthday, my good sir! Aren't you going to wish her happiness, and so forth?"

He halted a moment, embarrassed.

"Please don't try to extort good wishes for me, Aunt Phil," said Hilary, reddening.

Another expression swept over his features, not easily concealed, for he was close-shaven, and he bent towards her half-offended face—

"May all your years be as glad as I wish them for you," he said quietly; then passed on to Mr. Hugh Dasent.

Hilary's nerves vibrated curiously. Her defiant air melted away. Sylvia Dasent, who had learnt vivid sympathy through much sorrow, saw the swift change, and by intuition suspected suddenly a hitherto sealed chapter in their curate friend's life. She was sorry when her own relatives, the Cavenhams, appeared; and the young man pouring out a stream of ready compliments, Miss St. John responded gaily, her softer mood suffering total eclipse.

A wealthy rural clericus and his deaf wife followed; then the hostess's trusty friend and family lawyer, Mr. Milroy, a genial, grey-haired man, for whom all had a welcome. With him was the only stranger invited to this gathering, the son of a former partner in Mr. Milroy's firm, who, having finished his articles elsewhere, was now on probation at Brainford (and on inspection at Abbotswick), prior to possibly standing there professionally in his father's shoes. This Mr. Bevis, a carefully dressed young man, with observant light eyes, and an earnest desire to appear at ease in society to which he was scarcely accustomed, completed the party, and luncheon was duly announced.

But the banquet was not successful.

Mr. St. John was aggrieved at the onset. Instead of being waved with dignity to the foot of the table, which he considered his due, Miss Humphreys nodded

Mr. Milroy to that post, while he sat sulkily next the rich rector's wife, who did not even know he was Hilary's father.

Mrs. St. John was made miserable early in the meal by a salad capsizing down her dress. A few crystal drops, tribute to this calamity, had to be smuggled away before she could swallow a morsel. Then Captain Cavenham was too pronounced in his devotion to the hour's heroine, and between what he whispered and what he implied, kept calling up blushes such as exasperated another man opposite all the more because he knew himself such an egregious ass for noticing them at all. Mr. Milroy was cheery enough; Gertrude and Mary Cavenham were women of the world, who allowed no dulness near them; yet over all hung a sense of expectation, a waiting for some special reference to the day, and even Wilkins lingered with folded hands and benevolent expression by the plate-laden sideboard while the Abbotswick muscatels were being praised, expecting every minute that Mr. Milroy would order the old Burgundy round to a toast of "Miss Hilary the Heiress."

But Miss Humphreys was an unaccountable old lady. She gave the signal for withdrawing without a syllable on the subject, and bade her guests come out and see Bell's late asters, as though they were the uppermost interest of the occasion.

"I would rather hear you play than examine any flower in the world," said Captain Cavenham to Hilary as they passed by the drawing-room. "Gertrude," to his sister just behind them, "doesn't Miss St. John play Chopin? Isn't he the fellow I admire and you murder so?"

His sister laughed. George cared as much for music as for astronomy! But her brother was a second son who wanted providing for, so she answered amiably enough—

"How horribly uncomplimentary, sir!—Do gratify us, though, Miss St. John; I have noticed your music about when we have called, and long to hear you."

Then this obliging sister walked to the instrument, followed by her luncheon escort, Mr. Stafford, who, being dropped out of the conversation, walked to the window by himself. "This piece is charming," said Miss Cavenham. "Turn over the leaves, George;" and, with her back to the piano, she composed herself to listen.

With a touch as light as air, Hilary made the notes sing through the first quaint movement—one that was a simple foretaste of the passion in its later pages. Then, with some quick bass chords of questioning, she suddenly stopped.

"Charming! delightful!" murmured the Captain, rapturously.

"Delicious!" chimed in Miss Cavenham; "but surely that is not all?"

Hilary waited a few seconds. There was another person who had not said even, "Thank you." Certainly she had taken no notice of him since he had entered the room; but he was showing himself boorish, and should, therefore, not have another note. Having discovered that she somehow held the power to annoy this offender, Miss Hilary mischievously gloried in doing so.

"The rest is difficult," she cried, springing up, "and I always shirk difficult things, for I hate them. Let us go in the garden now;" and thither she led the way.

"Our performer maligns herself, does she not?" said Miss Cavenham condescendingly to Mr. Stafford as they went on.

"Likely as not," he answered; "Miss St. John is given to doing herself injustice."

Hilary heard him. She knew he meant rebuke. He was impertinent, and she would get away from him. But first chance offered the inexpressible pleasure of provoking him again. Mrs. Dasent met her on the lawn.

"I have been asking Miss Humphreys when she will spare you to us for a day, Miss St. John: a long, homely day with us and our children. We are leaving England before long, so will you come very soon?"

Hilary's eyes dilated with fun. Norris Stafford was close by, and she well knew he had a smile for every child who could toddle.

"With you, yes!" she cried. "With your children, oh no, no. As a rule, I quite abhor small boys and girls, and I'm invariably repellent to them. Please never ask me to the Heath till after their bedtime;" and shaking her head in pretended terror, she ran off to an arbour deep cut in thick yew, where sat Aunt Phil talking with Mr. Milroy. But the moment she had joined them was unpropitious to her fancy.

Miss Humphreys had chosen to unburden her mind of official grievances anent the curate. Every fault she could find with him she did, and Mr. Milroy was warmly defending the absent.

"If he would do as I order, I would give him double doles at Christmas to fritter away among his insatiable poor," said the old lady, who had been accused of caring more for her cattle than her cottagers; "but he won't, so I consider he robs his flock."

"Fifty times likelier to rob himself," retorted Mr. Milroy.

"And pray, what is your ground for such high opinion?"

"Why, simply everything I've ever seen of him. Our office, you know, had done the legal work of this living for forty years. We collect the income now, send Legh the share fixed on when he was allowed non-residence, and pass the rest on to Norris Stafford. That rest has not been up to his proper stipend for the last four quarters, but he won't have poor old Legh harassed about it. I don't think you half know what a thorough good fellow he is; asking your pardon, if he were more of a prig you'd think more of him. He may not make much hand at currying favour with you ladies, but the better I know him the better I like him, and upon my honour I'm sorry he seems bound to be poor all his life. I don't know a man alive who better deserves to be rich."

"Very—fine—indeed," said Miss Humphreys, nodding sagaciously. "There, Hilary! mind, after that, you treat the curate more respectfully."

"The less I have to treat him anyhow, the better I'm pleased," said the girl wilfully; "and, Aunt Phil, if you sit here longer you'll be catching cold."

XUM

"Ah! there's a sharpness in the wind that makes the sunshine dangerous, doesn't it, Miss Hilary?" said the lawyer, getting up.

"What put that in your head?" said Miss Humphreys crossly; then, without waiting for an answer, "See if coffee is ready, Hilary; I shall not move till I choose.—Well, Mr. Milroy, how do you and your partner that is to be get on?"

To this Mr. Milroy responded by limited praise of Mr. Bevis: he was "cautious, prudent, professional, made the most of his opportunities——"

"But you're not devoted to him, I can see," said the shrewd old woman; "neither am I, good sir; I don't like his eyes." And while they thus talked, the subject of their conversation was being marshalled about by Mr. St. John, who, with a stranger, and out of other folks' hearing, was in his element for the first time that day.

Abbotswick, its boundaries and its value, he dilated on importantly, sowing hints as to the cares which would devolve upon him "when his dear child yonder came in for the place." And attentive Mr. Bevis took time by the forelock, and strengthened his hold upon the agency by deferential politeness to the father of the coming owner. That charming young lady had vouchsafed him but scant notice to-day; when needed for business, he might have the pleasure of making her pay for this want of courtesy. Meanwhile her parent took the sensible young attorney's arm, and discoursed so confidentially with him that Mr. Bevis learnt what splendid schemes were born in Mr. St. John's fertile brain, wanting only capital to turn them into gold; and Mr. St. John found that this worthy young man had apparently so husbanded his own resources that he had a few hundreds open to eligible investment.

Talking of which, the cypress tree shadows grew longer on the lawn; chilliness rustled up on a western wind that scattered golden birch-leaves on the green, people gathered into the house, and adieux were being made.

The St. Johns rumbled off in their fly, the gentleman disgusted by not being pressed to stay to a family dinner. The Cavenhams' showy wagonette and greys, Mr. Milroy's tall dog-cart, and the Rector's brougham had rolled on their separate ways, and the Dasents were on the point of starting, their ponies fidgeting mightily while their master tucked rugs carefully round his wife, when Hilary hurried up, very rosy and rather shy, and perched herself on the low step by Sylvia Dasent.

"I want to speak only to you," she said, in a whisper that brought her face caressingly near her hearer. "Indeed, that was nothing but nonsense just now about—about your children. I was a goose, but I'm not quite so horrid as I said. You will let me come one day soon?"

"That you certainly shall," promised Madam Sylvia, her kind lips for an instant touching the warm young cheek; and as they drove off she told her husband, "Yonder pretty girl would be very fascinating if she were one shade less spoilt."

"George Cavenham won't mind that one shade, though," laughed Mr. Dasent; but his wife stopped him quite indignantly.

"George, indeed! Oh, you dear, stupid Hugh! Most positively *he* is not to have Hilary St. John!"

CHAPTER VI.

ALL guests departed, and Hilary went slowly back through the low-pillared hall towards the drawing-room; but at sound of voices within she halted by the half-open door. Aunt Phil had once more ensconced herself in the basket-chair which always seemed her domestic throne, and was thence haranguing Mr. Stafford on an offence lately discovered.

"Mr. Milroy let it out assuming that I knew it. You actually went to those wretched labourers' meeting! My good sir, do you understand what that commits you to? Do you want to be looked on as a demagogue—one of the mob? I never heard of such a thing in the whole course of my life; *my* parish clergyman to counsel rabble of that description; surely as one of US, Mr. Stafford—for you are a gentleman——"

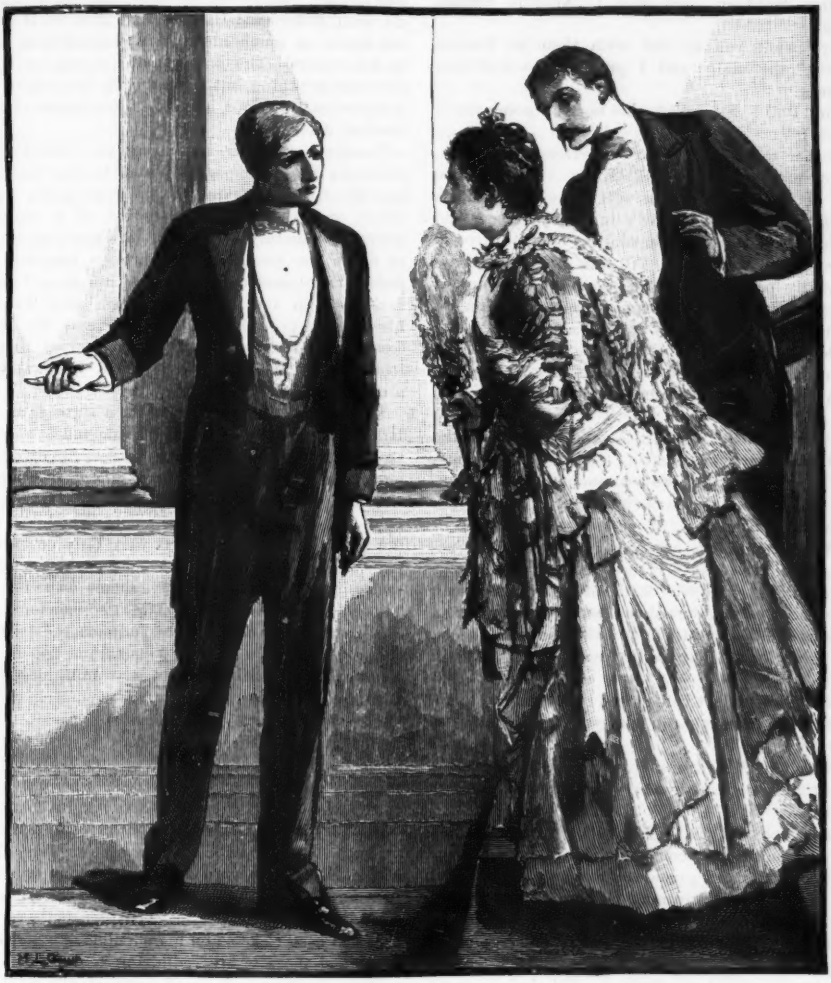
The curate, who was standing for this lecture, made a droll little bow.

"Surely you will relieve me by pledging yourself never to attend these tag-rag-and-bobtail gatherings again!"

Miss Humphreys finished quite out of breath. Hilary stood listening for the answer to this tirade. Keeping his temper admirably, but resolute, as usual, with his testy old squiress, the curate quietly responded.

"I'm afraid I cannot promise that, Miss Humphreys. I went among our men as a sort of peaceable make-weight; perhaps in that capacity you will allow I was not wrong in being there. We won't go into politics, please; they part the best of friends, you know; but it's only honest for me to give notice that I can't be called a party man either way; you must not grudge my keeping free on these questions if I think our people's interest——"

"A fig for our people's interest!" broke in the old lady crossly; beyond a not illiberal amount of beef, beer, flannel, and Christmas-boxes, she refused to recognise "the people's" right to any interests at all. Hilary stole off laughing to herself at the tussle within, conscious of a certain glow of satisfaction that, storm as Aunt Phil might, Norris Stafford would not budge one iota of his ground. If he felt in the right, neither threats nor bribes stirred that man, though he was poor. "Is that your spiritual past-awh?" Captain Cavenham had said to her half an hour before. "Curate, isn't he, on about a quart-ah of a quart-ah of a thousand per annum? Po-ah, begg-ah!" and just then her glance lighted on the "po-ah beggah's" overcoat on the hall stand. It was old, much worn, and a button was nearly off, hanging only by a thread. Hilary looked at it shyly; how too bad of his housekeeper servant to neglect him so! Then she seized the offending garment, bore it off to the morning-room, had much trouble to find a needle and silk stout enough for such unusual purpose, but at last stitched



"A servant brought an unexpected summons."—*p.* 131.

the button safely on, and returned the coat to its place. Then she slipped off into the garden, and only went back to Aunt Phil when quite sure that Mr. Stafford had departed.

All that evening through, Miss Humphreys seemed weary with the unwonted effort of the day's entertainment. Once or twice she complained of chill, but flatly refused to acknowledge she had stayed in the garden a minute too long. For some time she sat thoughtfully, with Hilary's hand in hers, finding a good deal of fault with the girl's fingers, which, though pink and dimpled at the knuckles, she pointed out had not the symmetry of her own. "Still," she mused aloud, "you're almost a Humphreys, one way and another. You were named Hilary, you know, to please me: that faded little Holbein on the gallery was a Hilary—one of a generation that nearly lost their all under King Hal because they could not run with the hare and hunt with the hounds cleverly enough for those times. But the story says she was a brave soul, and bore misfortune full as well as she did prosperity: very likely it did her good. Her name was Hilary, too. Go and play me something." Then, when a floating, dreamy *lied* was ended, "Child, what do you think of Captain Cavenham?"

"He ad—ad—mires him—self ex—tre—ee—me—ly," sang Hilary, striking into another melody with covert amusement.

"And you admire him too?"

"Not very particu—lar—ly: except his most lovely mousta—a—a—ches," quavered out the girl, rippling

over into laughter; and Miss Humphreys seemed satisfied.

"They want you to stay with them at Steeple Forncett," she said, "and I promised to send you this week."

"Aunt Phil! Send me! Are not you going too?"

"Not I."

"Neither shall I, then," very positively.

"You most certainly will, Hilary. I want to be alone. I intend you to ride over to-morrow. Maria and your luggage shall go over in the morning. And you shall come back on Tuesday."

This was extraordinary. Till now Miss Humphreys had hardly permitted Hilary one single day out of her sight. But on this incomprehensible occasion she cut short all expostulation, refused all remonstrance, accepted the girl's lingering good-night caress almost without return, and then relapsed into one of those brown studies in which she had been indulging so often of late.

This mood lasted with little intermission till the very hour Hilary was starting for the Cavenhams'. Then it relaxed, giving way to such alternate petulance and petting, that even at the last minute the visit was nigh discarded. When Hilary bade her good-bye, Miss Humphreys appeared absorbed in her accounts, and answered her most curtly, but as she mounted Daphne and was on the eve of starting, such a curiously anxious, left-alone face peered out from the short old-fashioned blinds of the morning-room, that Hilary sprang from her saddle and ran in again.

"Aunt Phil, I don't believe you really like me to go. I won't do it. Let me stop with you! You can't get on without me."

But though Miss Humphreys permitted herself a post-ultimate hug, she was not going to weakly alter her mind.

"Fudge! child, I shall be best without you. Go when you're bid, and come home when you're sent for," she said, her tone more gracious than her words, "and don't worry me with any more good-byes." Then, when the girl was really off, the last sound of Daphne's cantering quite lost, she finished a note interrupted by these farewells, sent it into Brainford by a groom, and retired to her favourite room and chair to await an answer.

When this arrived, Miss Humphreys was half-asleep. "As I haven't never seen her all these twenty years," said Wilkins to Joyce. "Either she's worritin' after Miss Hilary now she've sent her away, or else she's ill, mark me." The message brought in made her extremely angry.

"Mr. Milroy away to-night, and Mr. Bevis come instead!" she exclaimed fiercely, starting excitedly into wide wakefulness. "Impertinence of the young man! Of course I require my own solicitor for important business, not a boy of his description. Say, with my compliments, it's a pity he came. I hope I may see Mr. Milroy as early as convenient in the morning."

Wilkins trimmed this message into polite shape before delivery, but Mr. Bevis drove off affronted. He was not to be honoured by confidential communication, was not he? Very well, let them wait till he was the *Co.* with Milroy and Gibsone, and then see if he did not know as much about this cantankerous client as his seniors. The young man's sharp, small eyes glittered anything but agreeably as he turned from Abbotswick Hall door, and set off townward after his bootless drive.

Promptly, however, answering the second urgent summons Miss Humphreys posted to him that evening, Mr. Milroy appeared the following noon, and his client and he had an interview of a couple of hours, of a disturbing nature. Wilkins took on him to opine for going in to announce luncheon. He found "the mistress settin' as up as a Empress, drummin' on the table with them thin hands of hers like a prowoked old rabbit; and Mr. Milroy toasting hisself in front of the empty fireplace, lookin' about as pleased as if he'd just swallowed a dose of pi'sonous physic."

Safely away, however, from these signs of discord, Hilary was meanwhile being made much of at the Cavenhams', and found the process amusing and agreeable. General Cavenham, a not over-amiable old man usually, donned his mildest manners, and paid her innumerable compliments, which she could hardly be expected to know were only cover to an earnest desire for the settlement of his heretofore rather unruly son. The Cavenhams were not rich. This young heiress was a perfect godsend for George. His sisters sang his praises judiciously. "He was so popular in his regiment, so generous, and *so* affectionate. It was delightful to have him quartered at Brainford, whence he could often come to his home." He could be there pretty constantly while Hilary was a guest at Steeple Forncett, it appeared, and he made such excellent use of a long walk one day, properly accompanied by Gertrude, who was always in the rear collecting tinted leaves: and a longer ride with Mary in attendance, who never could quite keep up with the other two: and he went so well behaved beside Miss St. John to church on Sunday (where his presence was so uncommonly rare that the whole congregation understood its cause as distinctly as if the fact had been ticketed on his shoulders!): and was so more and more openly admiring and devoted, and withal as "proper" as if none of the wild tales anent him which Brainford whispered and was shocked at, were correct, that Hilary's instinct began to mistrust itself. Perhaps it had been foolish of her to prejudice Aunt Phil by laughing at this young man's moustaches! The dash of coquetry in her composition was flattered; her head just a trifle turned. As to the heart——!

Well, this visit, which she was enjoying immensely, loth though she had been to make it, was all too short for her to burden its moments by dissecting serious questions. These hours were for fun and frolic. Thinking would do for Abbotswick by-and-by. There was to be a reception at the Cavenhams' on Monday: first a dinner of unusual splendour and numbers, then a gathering of county neighbours, *crême de la crême* only! Hilary wrote to Aunt Phil a letter sparkling with anticipated pleasure; and the anticipations were more than realised.

The evening was charming. George Cavenham's pronounced attentions, the flattery of admiration from the men, the glamour of her first social success, mixed a deliciously intoxicating draught for Hilary. Her eyes were brilliant; her cheeks flushed with girlish triumph; her ears besieged by some soft speech of George Cavenham's, whispered as they sat together in a deep bay window, half curtained off from the throng of guests when a servant, threading his way to the couple, brought one of them an unexpected summons.

"If you please, could Mr. Stafford speak to Miss St. John immediately?"

"The parson!" ejaculated the young man; then, under his breath, "The nuisance!" He had been on the edge of proposal; it was an exasperating nuisance to have it deferred, even for half an hour. But Hilary quickly followed the servant. Her partner, making his way more slowly to the hall, found his prospects matrimonial—he would have given every penny he possessed if he had made them sure ten minutes ago—must assuredly be set aside some little while.

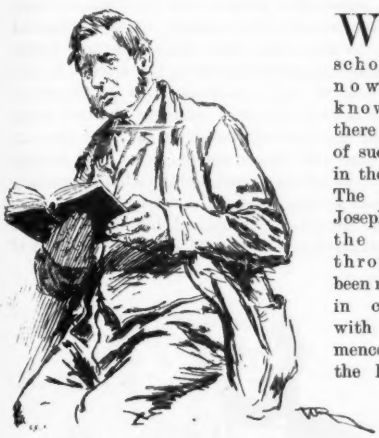
The Abbotswick carriage stood without. From Pullen on the box came startling tidings.

His mistress, Miss Humphreys, was dead, and the scared household had sent to fetch home Miss Hilary, the heiress!

(To be continued.)

OUR ADULT SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

BY A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.



THE "STOLID" SCHOLAR.

WHAT an "adult school" is, is now well known, for there are scores of such schools in the country. The name of Joseph Sturge, the philanthropist, has been mentioned in connection with the commencement of the largest of these schools, and a characteristic story is told of him. When a young man whom he could influence settled in Birmingham, he would ask him to "help to teach" in the adult school. Possibly the diffident youth would reply that he did not feel capable of teaching older men than himself. To that Sturge's reply was usually, "Canst thou make straight strokes?" and, on an affirmative answer, "Then thou canst teach some of our men who have not yet learnt how to do that." In the early days of the adult school movement, reading and writing were not as universally taught in this country as now they are, and the schools secured many scholars by being willing to teach upgrown men, who felt their deficiencies, the mysteries of reading and writing; and many a morning has seen long rows of old men painfully tracing at the desk "straight strokes, pot-hooks, and hangers." The knowledge furnished in the adult school did not terminate there: men who came to learn the rudiments of knowledge remained to read, to listen, to study, to benefit, and at times to pray. The schools are undenominational: men of many shades of belief are found therein; and one reason for their usefulness and acceptance has been the fact that the religious society which has largely fostered the movement "does not proselytise."

What have our adult schools done? Let us go north, and try to find an answer. It is a busy town: in the week, furnace and forge give a resonant sound; engineering works send out their hissing steam; and one of the textile trades gives employment to many men and girls. Sunday morning stillness shows itself in the closed shops, the idle works, and the quiet streets; but before the children begin to troop to morning Sunday-school, a number of men, from early manhood to old age, have quickly passed through the streets to their school. There are engine-drivers, iron-workers, labourers, gardeners, bricklayers—men



AN ELDER SCHOLAR.

of many trades, and some of none at all. Teachers—in this case, all Quakers—are there; and when half-past eight has arrived, the long and rather narrow

general assembly-room of the school has perhaps eight-score persons in it, added to by laggards as the time passes. An opening hymn is sung—some schools have their own hymn-book, but we prefer the familiar "Sankey," because it is better known—and then for



THE ARGUMENTATIVE SCHOLAR.

the bulk of the scholars there is writing at the desk. With us, each provides his copy-book, and the teacher, by himself or a deputy "writing-teacher," has previously set the text or other suitable copy-head; and it is an interesting sight to notice the few who write easily, the many who slowly trace their letters, and some of every age who are only learning the first strokes.

Meantime, there are secretaries of clubs and organisations busy at work. A librarian finds his task no light one, for most of the scholars take out books, and the work of exchange is effected in school hours, the books being of a religious, biographical, or similar character. A temperance society is worked in connection with the school, and it entails some labour; and a sick-club for the members demands more. These and other kindred inner organisations take up the time of the officials; and in due course the period for reading is arrived at. The classes, which have had loose lines of demarcation, now entirely separate—for one or two separate class-rooms are provided—and what may be called the special work of the adult school of to-day commences. There is no stereotyped order of lessons, but each teacher and class choose their own, and usually the chapters of a book in the Old or New Testament are taken on consecutive Sundays. After the reading of the verses, there is time for comment, discussion, criticism, the teacher leading with explanation; but the experienced teacher will guide rather than drag the conversation, for it should be such. Very interesting are the remarks of the adults, for their training, their work, their habits of thought, suggest remarks that in the ordinary Bible-class would not be made. Figurative expressions are taken literally, till explained. The "publican" of old is usually classed as a drink-seller; the good Samaritan has before to-day been described as "stingy," because of the smallness of the sum—judged by present pence—he left with the innkeeper; and on one occasion the grasp of the character of Solomon was unusually summed up—"He *had* a lot of wives," said a scholar. But allowing for these traits of directness of thought, there is a simplicity and straightforwardness of trust in the narrative: an attempt to picture the reality (though the colours on the mental palette are not always accurate) which gives pleasure to the beholder. Paul's life was once being read, and his famous description of "all the nations" as of "one blood" was aptly applied to a slave circular then much canvassed; whilst an additional remark from a cabinet-maker was "there was no *renver* on that man." The scholar is not so apt to seize on the outer husks—he tries to get to the kernel in his estimate.

Variation of position has been spoken of in regard to the scholar; it applies also to the teacher. In the northern school thus glanced at, the Parliamentary recess gives usually one member of the House of Commons to his class; and tradesmen and clerks, bankers and compositors, share in the work. It goes on from year to year; summer gives its excursion, winter its annual meeting; and the months bring with them the monthly meeting, whereat the attenders make the school appointments, the savings funds accounts are canvassed, and the whole machinery of the school is supervised. The school wins its way; it offers to the adult educational, biblical, and other advantages absolutely free; and the large numbers of



THE EARNEST SCHOLAR.

men who rise early in the morning—often after a long day's work—is noticeable. This teacher lives two miles from the school, and must walk thereto; this scholar was engaged engine-driving till past midnight, and had his own breakfast to prepare

before he came; but punctually both were there; and their cases are types of many others.

We are able to see some of the fruits of our labours in the adult school. We see the rudiments of learning acquired by some who were ignorant; we hear the acknowledgment that the sick-fund and the savings fund have been of use in enabling some of the members to "tide over" periods of illness or dull work; and we know that there are higher benefits. A "scampish" man has been made steady; a fuddler has become temperate; and at some of the meetings of religious bodies there have been acknowledgments that conviction and conversion have followed at times the Bible lessons given. In the early days of adult schools, the attenders were very often unable to read and write, and a not inconsiderable part of the time was taken up with the elementary education; now that ignorance is less common, more of the time is allotted to attempts — not intrusive, and never sectarian—to quicken the spiritual appreciation of the scholars, and to lead to the "Kindly Light."

There are diversities of character and discouragements in our adult school work. We have the stolid scholar; the argumentative, who persists in introducing doctrinal points, and who is usually logical, and often excitable; the political, who persists in leading up to party questions, and is in turn sat upon and encouraged by others; the diffident, who form a large portion of the score of members in our class; and the humble, teachable, happy soul, who brings quiet and content with him, and has the soft answer and the appropriate text to close the argument of the denominationalist. So the adult school work has mostly pleasant memories: of many an attempt to dig out the Truth by horny-handed men; of pleasant visits to their homes, after absence from school; of a death-bed where the teacher became the taught in the presence of the great shadow and the "lore," no longer "mystical," that that sunset of life brings to those who cherish hope humbly, and look for grace to find mercy. By the one religious body which may be said to have introduced the adult schools, more scholars are taught than there are members of that body of all ages. From these schools recruits to most Churches have been sent, and out from them many have gone, in the years, to "enter in through the gates into the City." Many denominations are now taking up that adult school work which offers so wide a field, and in the increased labourers therein, those of the past rejoice, and desire for their successors increased prosperity and deepened spirituality.

J. W. S.

THE THRONE AND THE TEAR.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.

"And He shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." *New Version:* "And He shall wipe away *every* tear from their eyes."—Rev. xxi. 4.

WE have here brought together, not in contrast, but in connection, something which all profess to make the most of, and something which, alas! so many make but little of — the "Throne of God" and "a human tear." From the Throne there proceeded a great voice—a *great* voice—a voice which could have shaken the universe itself: and its utterance had to do with a silent tear, and with what makes tears.

God himself—and mark that expression—God himself will be with them, and be their God, and He will wipe away every tear—mark that too—*all* tears, and *every* tear, from their eyes; and He will put an end to mourning and crying, and death and pain will be no more.

It was a great voice which St. John heard—not a still, small voice, such as the solitary prophet heard on Horeb, dispirited and crushed, and wishing only to die. To him there came such as *he* could bear—a still, small voice. But this was a *great* voice, and it comes direct from the Throne, with a *great* announcement of a decree and purpose of God, with great authority. It was a proclamation—not pleading with and comforting one despairing man, but offering healing and tear-staunching to hundreds, thousands, millions. The *great* voice was meant to *penetrate*, to echo through all the deepest, darkest caverns of human woe, to ring all down the ages, to roll from Patmos here, saying amongst us—amongst us to-day—God Himself shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Nor am I concerned as to whose this voice is—whether God Himself spake from the Throne, or Christ, as the Lamb slain, from out of the midst of the Throne, or an angel making proclamation by command. For our purpose it is all the same. What concerns us is not who speaks, but what is said and it is this, "God Himself shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." *He* shall wipe, not they shall be wiped; not, "an angel shall kiss them away, touching the scorching balls with lips light and cool as the falling dew"; not, a sunbeam shall cast his ray upon those swollen lids, and bring back the symmetry of their curves again; but, "God *Himself*" (as you see in the third verse) "shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Common as the word "wipe" is, it is a beautiful

word here. It makes the whole thing so homelike, as though God said, "Do not be afraid of Me. I am willing to stoop to the humblest of your necessities. My Son wiped the disciples' feet; I will wipe My children's eyes."

And now mark this: This could not be done except at a great price. And what was that price? The fact that Jesus' tears were not wiped. When He agonised in Gethsemane, bearing our sins, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that He "called on God with strong crying and tears." Those tears were never wiped away. They were doubtless, as the Psalmist says, "put into God's bottle;" but wiped away they were not. An angel from heaven was sent to strengthen him, but the angel did not wipe away His tears. He must die temporally, that we should not die eternally; He must suffer pain, that there may be no more pain; He must weep, with eyes undried, that God might be free to wipe away every tear; He must cry with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" that way should be made for that great voice to come out of the Throne and proclaim what we have heard to-day—"God Himself shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." A great voice of misery must ascend from the cross, from earth to heaven, before the great voice of mercy could come forth from the Throne, from heaven to earth.

"Every tear!" I like that translation better than "all tears." Just as when it says, "Now, Jesus loved Martha and Mary and Lazarus," it is far better than if it said, "Now, Jesus loved the family at Bethany," for it tells us how each one individually had a place in His heart. So here—*every* tear—each tear, as it were, one by one, is noted, and is to be wiped away. For when it says "every" tear—*i.e.*, "each" tear—does it not say that He Who reads the unwritten records of human woe (seeing often a volume in a tear) will enter into the particulars of human sorrow; into the people's sorrows one by one; into each one's grief as separate from all other people's grief; into the nerve-throbs of the heart or of the frame, which wrung the scalding, briny drops from—shall I say your eye, or rather from your very soul itself?

This is what I want. Coarse lumping of human woe, with the officialism of a workhouse, will not do for me. I know that nothing will do for my race, but that they should be treated one by one. I know that nothing will do for myself, my troubles, and my tears, but that they also should be treated one by one. The law of our individuality is strong upon us. We are one with all mankind, but we are also each man by himself. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not therewith."

There is a wealth of certainty for you, in that it is said "every tear" and "God himself"—God himself will wipe every one away. For though there are kind hearts who feel for us in many an earthly sorrow, and depression, and weeping time; and many kind hands to wipe away, and perhaps even loving lips to kiss away our tears, and say to us "Don't cry," —aye, and as they say it, so tender and sympathetic are our friends, that their own eyes fill as though they would reflect our tears and overflow into a weeping with them that weep—still there are many tears which we shed, or which we distil in our hearts but never shed, with which no friend can sympathise, because no friend can understand.

We are not meant in our individuality to be thoroughly understood by any fellow-creature, only by God.

> "Nor e'en the dearest heart, and next our own,
> Knows half the reasons why we smile or sigh."

It is of supreme importance to me that it says "God *Himself*," and "*every* tear," otherwise I must be left alone with some sorrow; and forasmuch as this great voice speaks for eternity, how could I dwell in eternity with an abiding sorrow? The leaving of one tear unwiped would savour not of heaven but of hell, where there is weeping—"weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

The sorrows which have headed themselves up in tears, and said to tears, "Relieve me, express me, give me vent from the scorching prison of my heart," will be known no more. God will have ended them; the night will have passed, and day-dawn will have come. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." God will not say to tears, "Begone, dry up;" but He will wipe them away, and the ugly stain-marks of our suffering humanity will be gone, and our face will be like the flesh of a little child. It will not be in this case as in the first creation, when waters were divided from waters; or as in the crossing of the Jordan, when for a season that rushing river stood up as in a heap; but it shall be a drying up of those bitter waters for ever. As in the new creation there shall be no more sea, so for those who dwell therein shall there be no more tears.

But now, what about our present tears? I am poor, I am sorry, I am hurt, I am low, I am weary, unsettled, unsatisfied; I am yearning after it may be I know not what; is there nothing for me in hand? will not God do anything for me *now?* Yes! something, but not all. Now for the present it needs be that we are often in heaviness by reason of manifold temptations; this is earth and not heaven, and in earth's conditions we must needs live.

And here there are many tears, and many kinds of tears; but God knows them all, and according to the present dispensation in which we live, and for as long as we live in it, will He be merciful to us in our tears.

Some have soul tears, and some heart tears, and some body tears, if I may describe all those tears by the sources whence they come. And some of these tears are dry tears like internal hemorrhages; they are like those bleedings which no one sees—the sheet is white, with neither spot nor stain, but the one it covers is bleeding, bleeding fast to death. And these cry to me and say, "Prophesy not to us of the future alone, but tell us what will help us now; is the God who

will do all this hereafter, unwilling to do anything for us now; must we weep on alone?"

Here is one who has soul tears of remorse, like Esau weeping after his birthright; here is one who has heart tears, like David weeping after the babe whose tiny life had fleeted from him—or the strong man, the beautiful young man Absalom, whose life was rent from him. Here is one who has lost the presence of the Lord; like her to whom He said "Woman, why weepest thou?" Here is one who mourns because he thinks all must remain dark, like this same John, who wept much because no one was found worthy to open the book; or one like his brother apostle Peter, who was faithless in the hour of trial, and received an unutterable look from Christ, and went out and wept bitterly. Here is the lone widow, here the orphan child; here is one looking dreamily into the fire seeing a face which it would have been well for her heart's peace if she had never seen—a place, which for her heart's peace it would have been well if she had never been at; here is a poor man with scarce a fire to look into, the cold, black, irresponsive bars lending no help to fancy, but grimly and glumly witnessing to his misery; here are those to whom sympathy is life, to whom no one cares to offer sympathy. Has this "God *Himself*" nothing for them, and for all such *now?* He has: but it is only the earnest of the inheritance. He tells you that He puts your tears into His bottle; He says, "You do not weep, you are not sad, unknown to Me. The time for all tear-drying is yet to come;" weep out your sorrows ON the bosom, and INTO the bosom of your God.

What God has for you now is sympathy—the bringing of the future as a mighty power into the present; so that as one of old endured, seeing Him that is invisible, we too, in the power of what is to come, are comforted in what we have to bear now—comforted, mind, not of man, or by man, but by this "God himself." The portion of God's people in trial is this—God himself is with them. You must not try to force the hand of God; you must not antedate His dispensations; you must not seek to project yourself out of the dispensation which now is, into one which is to come. He is spoken of as "The God of all comfort." He himself says, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." I take in the simile—I understand it, for long even after my own hairs were grey, and I have cried with pain, I would have laid my head on the old mother's lap, before all others, if I could only have had her back again. The wife is good, the child is good, the friend is good, but the mother at such a time seems somehow to be the best of all. Understand, then, what you are to have now—the sympathy, the comfort, the upholding of God Himself. You, if you be Christ's, are to have it as the world has it not, and cannot have it. You shall find Him, even here, wipe away *many* a tear, but not *every* tear. Some must dry upon your cheeks, and leave there their blurring marks. Some must often start afresh—it may be at the remembrance of sin, or loss; but the tear-marking God, who saw poor Hagar weeping, and said, "What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not," and showed her a fountain of water; and who listened to Hannah when, in the bitterness of her soul, she prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore, sees and listens to you. Unquestionably, many a sorrow will He remove, many a tear will He dry, but not all yet; but for the tear which cannot yet be dried, there will be the same comfort as for the thorn which could not yet be removed: "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Have strong assurance of a good time coming. Be positively certain of it, and have the sustaining power of it. We can bear poverty, if we know that we shall soon come in for a fortune; and pain, if we know that we shall soon have relief; and thirst, if we know that we shall soon have drink; and absence, if we know that there will soon come presence. Smile through your tears. Look up to heaven, and your tearful eye will reflect a sun. Look away through the shower, and you shall see a bow.

Believe in the sympathy of the Throne—in its sympathy *now*. Have your thoughts of God, not frightful, but beautiful. I know that out of the Throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices—awful thought for you who are not in Christ!—but I know, also, that from that same Throne there came forth a *great* voice, saying, "God himself shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." Your God is not kind to you because of weakness of sentiment, for the lightnings and thunderings and voices are there still (but not for you); for you in Christ it is a great voice, saying, "God himself shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Remember that tears with God in them are different from tears without God in them—those tears of human petulance and passion here, the weeping, and the wailing, and the gnashing of teeth hereafter. Honour your God by taking Him into your confidence, and let Him be the God of your tears as well as of your smiles; not only of your sunshine, but your cloud; not only of your hallelujahs, but of your sighs.

Never weep alone—always before God. When your eyes are full of tears, let the Spirit of God move over the face of those waters. Say with the Psalmist, "Hear the voice of my weeping." For Him, to hear will be to help. Ask Him not to hold His peace at your tears. Lone weeping is sore weeping—yea, very sore indeed.

Let the voice of the Throne be with you—a great voice. Hear it above the murmurings of discontent, the cries of despair, the whirlwinds of passion, the carpings of the infidel, and the gibes of the scoffer, and the honest sobs of your own pain or woe. It is meant to be louder than them all, and to comfort you here, and now.

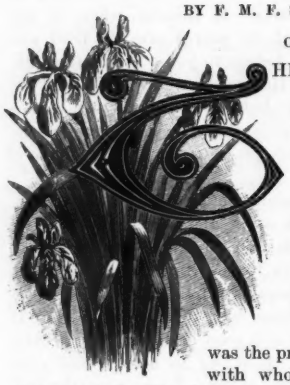
It is with a great voice that God binds together the Throne and the tear, and says, "God himself shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

IN THE VALLEY OF ACHOR.

A COMPLETE STORY IN THREE CHAPTERS.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER I.



THE Valley of Achor is said in Scripture to be first "a place of trouble," and then "a door of hope," and such, in the experience of Arnold Lyle, was the wild, remote valley in the North of England which had been his home from infancy. It was the property of his father, with whom he lived in the substantial dwelling-house which belonged to the estate; but it was not a family inheritance. It had been bequeathed to Mr. Lyle when a young man, struggling to make his way in the world, by Mr. Penrhyn, the last proprietor, who had no near relations of his own. Mr. Lyle had married immediately on coming into possession of the place, but his young wife died soon after the birth of Arnold, their only child, and he himself gradually fell into bad health, and became finally a confirmed invalid. The father and son were devotedly attached to each other, and had never been separated, although Arnold had received an excellent education by means of tutors resident in the house so long as they were required. He was a thoughtful, high-principled young man, whose great wish had been to become a clergyman, but he felt that he could not adopt a profession which would have necessitated his leaving his father, to whom he was absolutely necessary. Mr. Lyle, a refined, intellectual man, was subject to fits of great depression of spirits, during which he could not endure to be left alone, though he shrank from all society save that of his son. Arnold had long been aware that there was some secret trouble of a serious nature which weighed upon his father's mind, and rendered him reserved and misanthropical; but he had failed utterly to gain any clue to the mystery. Some attempts which he had made in former years to induce Mr. Lyle to confide in him on that point, had so excited and irritated his father that he had been obliged to desist altogether from any allusion to the subject.

It was on a certain sunshiny morning in the early summer that the beautiful valley first became to Arnold Lyle in truth a place of trouble, more bitter and cruel than any pain he had ever known in his life before, though in one respect it had always been a source of anxiety and regret to him, inasmuch as it possessed no church or place of worship of any kind for its very considerable population. As Mr. Lyle was the sole proprietor of the land, Arnold felt that it was incumbent on them to make some provision for the spiritual wants of the people; but his father had always told him curtly that he had not means to do anything of the kind, since the income he derived from the valley only sufficed for their own maintenance. He affirmed that the most he could do was to give permission to missionary preachers to come from time to time, and hold open-air services on the hill-side.

Arnold always welcomed these rare opportunities of public worship with great delight, and on the morning of the day which was to witness the sudden destruction of all the peace and happiness of his former life, he told his father that he understood a new and eminent preacher was coming to the valley that day, and he was looking forward with much pleasure to hearing him.

"A new man?" said Mr. Lyle, who never attended these services himself. "Do you mean that you are not to have the same clergyman who has come once a year for a long time past?"

"No; he is ill, I believe. I hear that he is to be replaced to-day by an elderly man of some celebrity, who has been a missionary in various parts of the world."

"What is his name?" said Mr. Lyle quickly.

"I do not know—I forgot to ask; but I shall be sure to make his acquaintance this afternoon."

Mr. Lyle was silent for a moment; then he said, with a certain uneasiness visible in his manner, "Must you go to this meeting, Arnold?"

"Why, father, I would not miss it for the world! We really live here in a state of religious starvation, and I am too glad to seize any opportunity of being present at a service. It is more than a year since we have had a preacher in the valley. I mean to go early, too; for I hope to see Evelyn for a little while before the people assemble. She told me she would be there in very good time."

"Ah! that is an attraction I can better understand," said Mr. Lyle, with a smile. "When are you and she going to come to an understanding, Arnold? It is very evident that she fully returns your attachment."

"I think we understand each other perfectly well as it is," said Arnold, while his face brightened with a glow of happiness. "My Evelyn is too frank and noble a girl to wish even to leave me in ignorance of her feelings; but she always playfully keeps me back when I want to bring matters to a point, saying we can hardly be happier than we are, and we had better enjoy these golden days a little longer. Really, however, I know that it is because her feeble old aunt requires all her time and care for the present."

"Ah, well, she will not long be an obstacle in your way. Our doctor had been with her when he came here yesterday, and he told me the poor old lady could not last long. You are a fortunate fellow, Arnold, to win such a treasure as Evelyn Orme; and I can look forward to your marriage with perfect

satisfaction, for she has let me see that she means to be a true daughter to me, and will never wish to separate us."

"There is no one like her in the whole world!" exclaimed Arnold enthusiastically. "She has but one fault in my eyes, and that is that she is richer than I am, with her fine estate and her grand old castle. I should like her to have nothing at all of her own, that I might give her all I possess. Better still, I should like to work for her, and earn her bread and mine."

"Nonsense, Arnold; you are talking senselessly," said Mr. Lyle angrily. "I have known what it is to work for my bread, and it is misery and wretchedness if those you love are dependent on you. I idolised your dear mother, as you know, but I could never have asked her to marry me if I had not had this good home to offer her, with a suitable provision for her comfort."

CHAPTER II.

A few hours later Arnold Lyle was walking with a quick, elastic step up the valley towards a wide grassy slope on the hill-side, where the people were already assembling to meet the preacher, many of them coming from a considerable distance. The young man was a pleasant picture to look upon, with his tall, well-knit form, and handsome features brightened at that moment by the light of joy which shone in his dark eyes as they fell on the fair face of Evelyn Orme. And it seemed, in truth, to himself as if he then had reached the very height of happiness and prosperity. He knew of no trouble, present or prospective, to mar his contentment, and the one love of his life was there by his side, blushing and smiling under his ardent gaze.

Miss Orme had driven to the spot in her low open carriage, drawn by a pair of fiery ponies, whom her little hands could scarce have held in, if a groom had



"Mr. Moore looked at him with deep compassion."—*p.* 139.

not stood at their heads. She was still seated in it, talking to the preacher, who had just accepted her invitation to stay at her house till the following day; and as Arnold came up to greet her, she introduced him to the missionary, whom she had known before, saying, "I want you to come and meet Mr. Moore at dinner at my house this evening. You will do so, will you not?"

"Most gladly," he answered. "We might walk there together, after service; if that will suit you," he added, turning to Mr. Moore. "It will be a great pleasure to me to have such an opportunity of making acquaintance with you." He was somewhat surprised, as he spoke, to find the missionary's eyes fixed on him with a rather peculiar expression.

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. Moore; "did I hear right that your name is Lyle? Are you not the son of the"—he paused, then went on—"the proprietor of this valley?"

"Yes," replied Arnold. "I am sorry that my father is too great an invalid to be present with us this afternoon."

Mr. Moore said no more, but moved away to take his place on a moss-clad rock, from whence he was to address the people, and there was no time for any conversation to pass between Arnold and Evelyn before the service began—yet he was supremely happy as he stood by her side, for her sweet blue eyes had met his in a look which told him what he had known for some time, that all the love of her true, pure heart was his unchangeably. It was in truth the first strong affection of her life—for she had lost both her parents at an early age, and as the heiress of Castle Orme and the large estates surrounding it, she had been delivered over to the care of guardians and governesses, who had been in no sense calculated to draw out the strong feelings of which her ardent nature was capable. From the time—two years before—that her majority had made her independent, she had lived in her own home, with only an aged aunt to keep her company, already fast sinking into second childhood, but the attachment which had sprung up between herself and Arnold Lyle, who was some years her senior, had shed a golden light of promise over all her future, which filled her already with a happiness greater than any she had ever imagined in her brightest dreams.

Mr. Moore's address to the people, founded on the solemn question as to "what it shall profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul," was a most powerful and heart-stirring appeal, and no one present was more deeply impressed by it than Arnold Lyle. It touched him in some ways very closely, for the preacher spoke in strong terms of the reprehensible state of religious destitution in which the valley was left, and his words seemed to imply that some great wrong had been done to the widespread population who were thus neglected. The valley, after Mr. Lyle's death, would be Arnold's own inheritance, and he resolved to ask Mr. Moore's advice as to any possible plan in the future which might enable him to benefit the people, for he knew that while his father lived he had nothing in his power.

When the service was over, Arnold only waited to see Miss Orme drive away in her little carriage towards her home, after bidding him follow with Mr. Moore as quickly as he could, and then he eagerly joined the preacher for the five-mile walk which would bring them to her castle. He began at once to speak on the subject which had so long been a source of distress to him, and asked Mr. Moore if he could suggest any expedient for supplying the people of the valley with more frequent means of religious worship and instruction than they had hitherto possessed.

"It seems incumbent on my father to make some effort to remedy the evil, as he is the sole proprietor of the valley," he said; "but he is really powerless to do so, for he possesses nothing but the very moderate income which he derives from this land, along with the house in which we live, and these just suffice for our own wants, modest as they are."

Mr. Moore turned round and looked fixedly at Arnold, maintaining perfect silence for a few minutes while he scanned the young man's frank, noble countenance with searching eyes; then he placed his hand firmly on his shoulder.

"Arnold Lyle," he said, "I exonerate you from all blame in the cruel wrong which has desolated this valley, and starved the souls of the people for well nigh thirty years; I see that you are in complete ignorance of it."

"Of what wrong do you speak?" exclaimed Arnold, greatly startled by his solemn words.

"Of a deliberate robbery from God! Can there be a greater? I did not know that John Lyle had a son to whom an appeal could be made, as I have been for years absent in Africa; but now that Providence has brought you to my side, I feel that it is my plain duty to tell you all the truth. Are you willing to hear it—though it will cause you bitter pain?"

"Yes," said Arnold faintly, for his heart seemed to contract under a sudden terror of some dark evil impending over him. Mr. Moore passed his arm through that of the young man, and then spoke in slow, measured words, which smote on his ear like the strokes of a passing bell.

"Thirty years ago I came to hold a service in this valley, as I have done to-day, and spoke then as now with grief of the religious destitution of the people. Mr. Penrhyn, the last proprietor, was present, and was deeply moved. He knew that he had a fatal malady which would soon terminate his earthly existence. He took me home with him after the service was over, and told me that as he was childless, and had no near relation with any claim upon him, he had resolved to bequeath the whole of his property to the service of God; the land should be sold, and with the proceeds a church should be built and endowed, while his dwelling-house should be separately bequeathed to be the parsonage of a resident clergyman. He hoped that I would see these dispositions of his property duly carried out, and that I would either myself fill the incumbency, or appoint a proper person to do so. I highly applauded Mr. Penrhyn's resolution, and often thought afterwards with great satisfaction of the inestimable benefit which I hoped had been secured to the valley. It happened, however, that immediately after my interview with Mr. Penrhyn I

had a sudden call to a mission in Africa, and I was absent for three years in a remote part of the Dark Continent, where I could have no communication at all with England. On my return at the end of that time, I found a letter awaiting me from Mr. Penryhn, written on his death-bed more than two years before. It stated that in my absence he had made over his property in trust to a young man to whom he had fully explained his purpose with regard to it, and who had undertaken to carry out his wishes to the letter. He was to sell the land, see the church built, and instal a suitable clergyman in the house destined for him. Mr. Penrhyn added that he had given to the young man in question, whose name was John Lyle, a paper of distinct directions, and a small sum of money for himself in compensation for any trouble which might be involved in the arrangements."

Mr. Moore paused and glanced at Arnold, who was walking with his head bent down, so that his face could not be seen.

"Go on!" he said, in a choked voice; and the preacher resumed, with great sadness in his tone—

"Immediately on the receipt of this letter from the good man who had already lain in his grave for two years and a half, I came to this valley. I found no church, no clergyman, but John Lyle, as sole proprietor, was living in the house which should have been the parsonage, with his beautiful young wife, who was then just expecting the birth of her firstborn child, and no one had the least suspicion that he had not rightly inherited the property from Mr. Penrhyn. I will not harrow your feelings by describing the scene which took place between your father and myself; he, a penniless young man, devotedly attached to the lovely girl whom he could not otherwise hope to marry, had succumbed to the temptation which offered him a home and a maintenance for her. He took possession of the valley and the house as his own, destroyed the paper of directions Mr. Penrhyn had given him, and remained the undisputed owner of the place, for no one save myself had known the purpose to which it was destined. I showed Mr. Lyle the letter I had received; I spoke to him in the strongest terms of the guilt he was binding on his soul by such a fraud; but all was in vain; he snatched the letter from my hands and flung it into the fire, declaring that in any case it constituted no legal proof. He asked me if I supposed that any power on earth could drive him to cast his young wife and her child from their home and give them up to destitution. He bade me go and leave him in peace. I went, shaking the dust from my feet on his threshold, and feeling——"

Mr. Moore stopped without finishing his sentence, but Arnold suddenly turning to him a face white as death, and contracted with agony, flung up his arms and exclaimed, "Feeling that the curse of God must rest on that house—a curse," he added hoarsely, "which can only be removed by an act of restitution that would bring ruin and anguish and humiliation on the father I love and revere; an act surely impossible for him—for me—while he lives."

Then staggering like a man who had been almost knocked down by a sudden blow, Arnold turned aside and leant against a tree which stood near the path, with his face buried in his hands.

Mr. Moore looked at him with deep compassion, but remained by his side without speaking. After a time, the young man lifted his head, and turned to the preacher with quivering lips, and eyes full of a wild distress and perplexity.

"My brain is in a whirl," he said; "the terrible revelation you have made to me seems to have cast all the conditions of my existence, past and present, in ruins round me. I cannot analyse my position. I cannot think—I can only suffer. I must be alone to look the truth in the face. You must leave me, Mr. Moore, and go without me to Castle Orme. Tell Evelyn—Miss Orme—that a cruel, strange calamity has befallen me, and I have not courage to go to her house to-night."

"Mr. Lyle, I feel for you most deeply," said the preacher; "I know that I have been compelled to deal you an overwhelming blow; but I see that the only kindness I can show you now is to leave you to take counsel with the Divine Guide, who will not fail you in this dark hour."

"Dark indeed!" he said; "I know not from whence any light can come to me; but remember, Mr. Moore, I pledge myself to nothing—not even that I will tell my father I know his secret, much less that I will force him to restitution, which would make him a pauper. It might kill him in his present weak state. He may not have long to live."

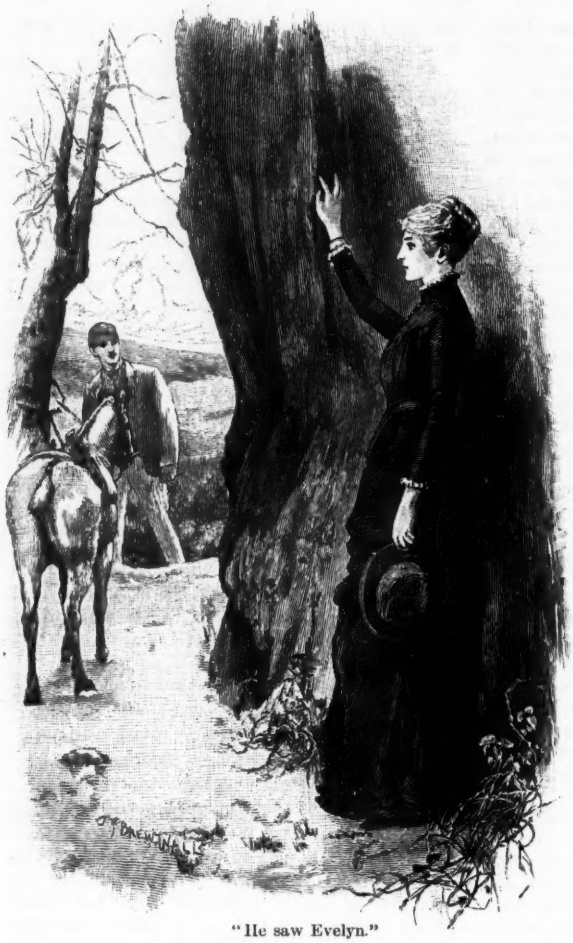
Mr. Moore made no reply; then he moved away, saying gravely, "I will give your message to Miss Orme." And so they parted.

CHAPTER III.

Arnold Lyle was left alone in the valley, which had now in truth become to him a place of grievous trouble. Upright and honourable as he was, his conscience told him that there could be only one right way of dealing with that which had indeed been a robbery from God, as the preacher had said. He ought at once to insist on the restitution of the house and property to the sacred purpose for which they had alone been entrusted to his father, and refuse himself to remain any longer under that misappropriated roof, unless the surrender were made at once.

But from such a course he utterly shrank. He loved his father with a passionate affection — till Evelyn had roused an even deeper feeling, he had been his dearest upon earth. Could he first humiliate him to the very dust by telling him that his own son knew of his fraud, and then drag him out from his home to a condition of beggary and destitution, under which his feeble frame would surely sink very speedily? Arnold might try to support him, but he had no profession. He could but work as a day-labourer; and, for himself, the deepest anguish his broken life could ever know would be involved in such a cruel measure; for it would cost him Evelyn, the darling of his heart! He could never ask her to be the wife of a disgraced pauper.

For hours Arnold paced to and fro in the chill night air, torn by conflicting feelings; and then, lest his



"He saw Evelyn."

father should be alarmed at his absence, he went home to startle Mr. Lyle by his white face and wild, despairing eyes, merely saying he felt fatigued and unwell, and would go at once to bed. He shut himself into his room, there to pass a night of perfectly sleepless misery.

Arnold had come to no decision when he went down soon after sunrise next morning, and walked out on the lawn to let the fresh air cool his burning temples. He had not long been there when he was surprised at seeing a groom from Castle Orme galloping up the avenue at that early hour. He was the bearer of a note which he gave him at once, and quickly trotted away again. It was from Evelyn, and contained only these words—

"I must see you before Mr. Moore leaves my house. Come, as soon as you receive this, to the preacher's rock on the hill-side. I will meet you there."

Arnold did not lose a moment in obeying this summons. The rapid walk of two miles to the spot indicated, seemed to give temporary relief to his distracting thoughts, and as he drew near the rock he saw Evelyn leaning against it, while the pony on which she had ridden from her house was tied to a tree at a little distance. She had taken off her hat, and the morning breeze had swept back the soft brown hair from her charming face, so that she stood there in the sunlight as fair a sight as could well have been seen. Arnold's whole soul went out towards her in boundless love, but she gave him no time to do more than clasp her hands in his, before she said—looking straight into his face with her clear blue eyes—

"Arnold, I know all; the preacher has told me the whole truth, as he told it to you."

He let her hands drop, while a flush of intense shame dyed his face.

"He had no right to betray my father," he said bitterly.

"He thought I had a right to share your troubles," she said, with a vivid blush; "and I compelled him to speak. When he told me you were in too great grief to come to me, I could not bear it. I told him I must know the cause, and when I heard it I could not rest till I had seen you, because of the cruel doubts Mr. Moore cast on what your course of action might be. Arnold, tell me what you are going to do. Surely, it is not possible, as the preacher seems to fear, that you hesitate to make this righteous—this needful restitution! It is for you to decide; you know your father will not resist your will."

"Evelyn, think of all it involves," he said, in a tone of anguish. "My father ruined, disgraced, a homeless beggar, and I—I——"

He looked into her face, as he spoke, with eyes eloquent of the despair it would be to him to lose herself, the love and treasure of his life. She understood him, but she did not flinch from her high purpose in sustaining his tottering steps on the one straight path of duty. Her clear voice rang out almost sternly, as she said—

"My friend, remember the old Latin proverb—*Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*—let justice be done though the heavens fall! What path of light exists for us in this twilight world but to do the will of God, cost what it may, and leave the results to Him? Can you not trust your Redeemer?" she added more softly. 'Has He not said, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you?"

An hour later, Evelyn Orme returned home the

bearer of a message from Arnold to Mr. Moore, to beg that he would remain in the valley till arrangements could be made for the full restitution of the entire property to the service of God, according to Mr. Penrhyn's righteous bequest; and Arnold, ashamed of his first hesitation, went boldly to lay the entire matter openly before his father.

The momentous interview was at first intensely painful, because of Mr. Lyle's bitter shame and grief at being thus disgraced before his son, by the revelation of his dishonesty; but in the end, to Arnold's thankful surprise, it appeared that it was a great relief to him that the truth should be known, and the property given up which he had so fraudulently acquired. He owned that he had for years been tortured by remorse, but he had not moral courage to make the avowal which must impoverish his only child as well as himself. Within a very short time all the necessary steps were concluded. The building of the church was commenced, and Mr. Moore was installed in the Lyles' former dwelling as the permanent clergyman of the valley. Arnold and his father were not, however, homeless, though their social position was greatly lowered. The post of land-agent on the Castle Orme estate had become vacant a short time previously, and Evelyn half-deprecatingly offered it to Arnold, who could only thankfully accept it as a means of supporting his father, and providing him with a very modest home in the land-agent's little cottage. There Mr. Lyle passed the last year of his life in deep and humble penitence for the sin which had so long burdened his conscience. He died peacefully, blessing the good son who had enabled him at last to leave this troubled world with the hope which shines through the shades of death on all true repentance.

Left alone, Arnold came to a great resolution which caused him infinite pain. Thankful as he had been to act as Miss Orme's agent for his father's sake, he had felt with exceeding bitterness that it had totally altered his position with regard to her. He had practically become her servant, and during the year when she was thus his employer and superior, he had taken care to show her that he well understood he could nevermore dare aspire to the dear tie he once hoped might unite them. He had treated her simply with a distant respect, and, indeed, avoided her presence as much as possible. What pain he suffered in this manly course of action cannot be described, but it became at last unendurable; and, since his father's death had left him free, he determined to go quite away from all possibility of seeing the beautiful face which never failed to arouse in him an agony of passionate regret. He would sail for the colonies and seek his fortunes there, caring very little what became of him.

Having resigned his post as land-agent, he went to see Miss Orme, that he might tell her of his intended departure, and take a final leave of her. The habitual reserve of his manner with her had reacted on herself, and produced a certain constraint and embarrassment which kept her very silent while he spoke. It was evident, however, that she was painfully affected by the announcement of his intention to leave England for ever, which he made without alluding at all to their former relations, as there had never been any recognised engagement between them. When he rose to go, at last, and in a voice choked with emotion bade her farewell, she became extremely pale, but seemed unable to utter a word. He had reached the door, and turned to give one last look on her who had been his first and only love; but as she met his despairing eyes, her lips parted in a sudden cry—

"Arnold! Arnold! come back to me!"

He started, and retraced his steps a few paces, then stopped, bewildered and silent. She turned her face from him, crimsoning to the temples, while she said breathlessly—

"You drive me to do that to which no woman should ever be forced, but I cannot let the happiness of both our lives be sacrificed for a scruple. What does a fancied difference in our position signify, when we have been all the world to each other for this long time past?" Then, half-laughing, though tears stood in her eyes, she whispered—"If you will go over the seas, you must take me with you!"

A few weeks later, their marriage ceremony was performed in the newly built church by Mr. Moore himself, and thenceforward the valley became to Arnold Lyle not only a "door of hope," but an entrance into fulness of contentment, and enduring happiness.

YEA OR NAY?

IN trembling doubt a maiden stands,
Scarce knowing what to say;
Longing to speak as speaks her heart,
Yet fearing lest Life's nobler part
She thus may cast away.

Can she trust all her life to him
Who pleads so for her love?
Can they be one in heart and soul,
Striving through all to reach the goal—
The Heavenly Home above?

She feels that he is good and true,
Faithful in God's behest;
And in one faith, one hope allied,
The Holy Book their daily guide,
They surely must be blest.

What then does Duty bid reply?
Shall it be Yea or Nay?
Trustful she lifts her blushing face,
And, clasped at length in his embrace,
She needs no word to say.

GEORGE WEATHERLY.

MASTERS' WORRIES.

BY THE REV. FRED. HASTINGS.

"I WISH you would write an article on Masters' Worries," said the wife of an employer of labour to me. "I read your article on 'Workmen's Worries,' and I can tell you that only one side of the question has been given. Workmen's worries, indeed! they are nothing to those of the master."

"Or of the master's wife," said another lady. "Just think of the worry when you get a bad servant; a nurse that frightens your children, or neglects them, or lets them lie in a perambulator in the full sun-blaze; or a cook that wastes good food, who pretends to cook and can't, or who sells 'her perquisites' to the rag-shop, or who gets up late, and is always unpunctual with the meals. Nobody knows how a mistress gets vexed, and her husband soured, by a bad cook. Then think of the worry of having them go off in a tiff, and leaving you to do all the work yourself. You may do it very well for half a day; but you soon tire of washing dishes after dinner, and lighting fires, and brushing carpets, and cleaning the linoleum."

"Bad mistresses make bad servants, sometimes," was here interjected.



"It is not so with mine," continued the latter speaker. "I do all I can to make them comfortable. I have no sympathy with those who would crush them; and yet they do not always appreciate my efforts to make them happy. There was a mistress whose servant wished to leave. She had no reason to give for her wish other than that she 'did not feel happy.' Her mistress said to her, 'Happy! A servant want to be happy! Why, it is hard for a lady to be happy, and how can servants expect it?' That woman ought not to have had a servant; I don't wonder that she was worried. I am not like her."

Said the former speaker, "There is too much fault-finding with servants. Coaxing is better than crossing."

"Yes," said the latter: "but coaxing is no use when they are so inefficient that they cannot do the work properly. Oh, it is a shame that they mislead you so! You go to an agency or a registry office, and secure a girl. She brings a written character, or gives you references. You write, and get very equivocal replies. You are in a hurry. You know mistresses don't care to write severely, even if they speak harshly. Then, if you advertise for a cook, your advertisement will possibly be seen by one who will come over and promise to take your situation, and then ask you for the fare from some little distance, as she has run short of money, and must pay up lodgings before she can leave with her box."

There was a laugh at this among several in the room who were listening to the conversation. I here ventured the remark, "You spoke of masters' worries, and it seems to me that I have heard thus far only of those of the mistress."

Now spoke up the first: "My husband can get plenty of work, but he cannot get the men to do it. There are "hands" enough, but if they are put on and sent to a job, they make a bungling affair of it, and often have to be discharged. Then, if they know their business, directly the master's back is turned they don't go on with it."

"Ah!" said another, "if they come to colour your ceilings, they will bring trestles, pail, and brushes, make a muddling mess, then go away, and you don't see them again for hours."

"My husband had," said another, "to go and discharge five men the other day. He had sent them to a job, and when he went to see how they were getting on, found all five at the public-house, and they had been there for a couple of hours. There's worry!"

I knew much of what was said had real foundation of complaint. The drink is the great nuisance. Customers are often so unwise, too. They will give drink to men, or money to get it. They think they will by this means have their work done more speedily, but they mistake. When once a working-man has entered the public-house, he finds it hard to get away from the tap and his companions. Then men are often very "uppish." They will say sometimes to the

employer, if a word of disapproval is uttered, "Well, give me the ha'pence and I'll go; somebody else can finish the job." I have seen men fling down tools or spade, and speak in that fashion. Even a man whose wife and six children were dependent on him, and at a time of slackness of employment, acted in that foolish way. He would not hear a single suggestion.



Another, who had been long out of employment, for whom I obtained a situation, had not been in the place over a fortnight when he went off with more than belonged to him, and I had the worry of having the employer come to complain of my recommendation.

Talking with various employers, I find that they have to put up with considerable annoyances. Here is one who sends a messenger to the other side of London. He is anxious to have a reply to some question, and thinks it better to send a man to bring the reply, and the article wanted. His man goes home to change his working-day clothes for Sunday garb, delivers the message from his employer, but does not take back the reply until the next morning. As he had to pass the Crystal Palace *en route*, he "thought he might as well have a good time there," although his master should have to wait and be worried.

Another employer whom I had persuaded to give work to a man in my district had to come and tell me of the dreadful swearing habits of the man, and of his violence to some boys whose work he had to superintend. That man was discharged. He had a wife and children half-starved, and yet he could not control his temper. He was incessantly worrying his employer, and then he worried me to find him another.

Often a man goes and "views" a job and takes only part of his tools. He has to go back for them, or for some little thing he knew he would want, but did not choose to take. Plumbers' men are *very apt* to forget something that will be needed. A half-day or more will slip away before the work is resumed. Gas is escaping or water overflowing. The householder writes, and is angry at the delay. Thus the master gets worried.

"I don't let the heads of my firm know half my worries with men," said a foreman to me. "When we are busy we have to put up with such men as we can get. If they are inefficient we cannot help it, but when we are slack we soon discharge them. It would pay the efficient to pension off the inefficient. Union men are not so dependable as they were at one time. If a man pays his subscription, and can get someone to propose and endorse him he can get into some unions. There is no test of efficiency. This does not apply to all trades. Plumbers who work a couple of years without having been apprenticed, it is said, can become full members. It would be well if the apprenticeship system were restored."

Some employers do not carefully investigate the character and antecedents of some of those whom they appoint as foremen. They ought to know that they have served an apprenticeship. Much worry is caused because they do not know their work fully. The men in charge of different works are called "cods." They have to keep the time of the men, make out the time-sheet, and superintend the work. Each "cod" may have under him ten or eleven men, and it pays, or should pay, an employer to have one man to look after the rest. He is not expected to do

any work beyond sending for material or tools, and seeing that everything is at hand. For this they receive extra pay. "These men," said an informant, "often get corrupted, and lower themselves by accepting drinks from the men. They then fail to discharge or report to the head man the lazy and inefficient." This is a great worry to the employer. It is most painful not to have men whom one can trust. I have known a contractor lose greatly on an undertaking through the carelessness and untrustworthiness of the "cods."

Fear of strikes is another worry at times. If a man has a contract he may be ruined by a strike. One man said, "When I had a strike on I have known men to haunt the precincts of my house from six in the morning to ten at night, to see that I did not employ outsiders. If I had a number of outsiders taken on, and left them for a time, when I returned I have found that all were gone. The others would cajole, intimidate, or 'square' them somehow." The trades councils have fortunately scowled down this intimidating process, but still the dread of a strike is a nightmare to an employer.

Moreover, the wish of customers to have estimates is a worry. When they get it they often want more done than is in the estimate; or there are alterations of plan. These involve expense, and then when settling time comes there is disputing over the extras. Further, some are so *slow* in paying. If a customer does not pay up, how can an employer give the men their wages or meet his bills for timber and other things? Then the percentages which an employer has to pay and the fees he has to give are a worry. For instance, if the house of one of the upper class is redecorated or cleaned, the butler and the housekeeper must, it is said, have fees or gifts, to compensate for the "trouble they are put to by having workmen about." If they don't get a satisfactory fee they can so easily complain of the work to the owner. Thus great annoyance will be caused. A housekeeper will say, "I have spoilt my dress against the paint." The contractor knows what that means: "he must hand out the coin for a new one."

Then *some* architects—going right against the known wish of the Institute—will require commission not only from the one for whom an edifice is built, but from the contractor as well. The one who gives in an estimate has to add the architect's percentage to the amount for which he could carry out an undertaking. He knows that may risk for him the loss of the work, but he must do it, as the architect can give him endless trouble over details in a building. "We have to close our eyes to a good many things, or we might close our shops," was the remark to me in this respect of one worried employer.

But, said another, "Think how the big men—the men with large capital—monopolise everything, and cut down prices, so that you cannot compete with them. It becomes then a worry even to make ends meet."

Another was telling me of his worry. He had finished a large job, paid great amounts for material and wages, and then found that the buildings he had erected were in the lawyers' hands, and the one for whom he had built was in the Bankruptcy Court. "Over ten thousand pounds loss! Ah, that's the sort of slap in the face that a poor employer gets!"



Perhaps owners of ships find as much to worry them as any class of men. Their captains have so much power put into their hands, and necessarily go away from under the owners' sight. They can delay a ship, linger in port, waste provisions, incur demurrages, run into dangers, and do damage to other vessels by carelessness. They can let ropes and canvas get rotten and mildewed by oversight, and the owner, when he overhauls his ship after a voyage, finds that he is a great loser. Perhaps freights are low, and the time spent over voyages long. Insurance goes on, and the captain may have been whistling for fine weather. While he was whistling his owner was worrying. Ah! in every calling there is enough to trouble men. Workmen or masters, shopkeepers and ship-owners, all have something to try them. This world is a worrying world, but it is, after all, the place that God intended should be a school of discipline to us. We must, in every sphere, "let patience have her perfect work." We must learn not to worry and fret, especially if surrounded by "evil-doers."

THE TWO COATS.

BY THE REV. HUGH MACMILLAN, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E., ETC.

"He made him a coat of many colours."—GEN. xxxvii. 3.

"Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice."—1 SAM. ii. 19.

A FAMOUS author wrote a book upon the philosophy of clothes. Each rank and office has its own appropriate dress. We know the profession, or trade, or position, of a man from his garb. There is a great deal of meaning in clothes, and the Bible shows this from the frequent spiritual use it makes of them. It assumes that clothes express character, and hence it speaks of the pure linen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of saints; of the garment of praise given to those who mourn in Zion; and of the white robes which represent the character and state of the redeemed in glory. It significantly shows to us how healing virtue flowed from the hem of Christ's garment; how His very raiment on the mount was transfigured with His glory; how from the body of St. Paul were brought unto the sick at Ephesus handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

Nature distinguishes with some special adornment or colour the most significant parts of plants and animals where special vitality and use are concentrated. In human life it is equally true that new garments belong to all initiations. The raw recruit puts on the uniform of his regiment in token that he is to become a soldier; the ignorant pupil dons the academic gown in token that he is to become a scholar; and the best robe is put upon the repentant prodigal in token that he is to become worthy of his father's confidence and love. Clean clothes give a dignity, and impose a responsibility of dignified behaviour, which do not belong to sordid clothes. Our garments smell of the ivory palaces; and grace—like the rare perfume of an Oriental phial, which makes itself strongly felt through all its wrappings—imparts its sanctifying power to our very raiment. Our very clothes can be washed in the blood of redemption. The purity of our spirit will issue in the modesty and propriety of our dress; and through our meek and quiet garments, the salvation of our souls will flow with healing virtue to others, winning them by our example from the besetting sins of pride, ostentation, and vanity.

JOSEPH'S COAT OF MANY COLOURS.

SUCH being the profound meaning of dress, let me proceed, in illustration of the general truth, to show the significance of the coat that was made by Jacob for his son Joseph, and of the coat which Hannah made for her son Samuel. Let us look first at Joseph's coat. We can understand in some measure the grounds of his father's special love for Joseph. He had personal qualities of a peculiarly engaging kind; he was the child of the dearly loved Rachel whose untimely death Jacob never ceased to mourn; he was the second-youngest child in the family, whom it behoved him, therefore, to guard with special tenderness and care. In token that he was to be saved from the toilsome work which his brothers had to perform as shepherds among the hills, Jacob made him a long, loose garment of white linen, embroidered on the edge of the skirt and sleeves with a broad border of crimson hues—the special dress worn only by persons of fortune and distinction who had not to earn their living by the sweat of their face. Esau, we are told, had the same kind of garment as the mark of the dignified place which he occupied in his father's household; and Rebekah took this goodly raiment of her son Esau, which she had with her in the house—Esau having put it off when he went out to hunt for game in his working-clothes—and she put it upon her younger son Jacob, when she wished him to take his brother's place and get the blessing of the eldest son from his father. In putting upon Joseph a similar robe — probably on some great occasion, such as his coming of age—Jacob showed that he meant to bestow upon him the family inheritance. Jacob did not seem to have learned any lesson from the sad effects of favouritism in his father's house, for the very same thing which Isaac and Rebekah did was done by himself; and the results were, as they could not fail to be, precisely the same—a sense of injustice and alienation, a household divided against itself, elder brothers bitterly resenting the father's preference for the younger, and brooding over wild schemes of revenge.

It is not difficult to see how injurious was the effect of this partiality upon Joseph himself. It is not good for any child to be taken out of its own place in the family and made more of than its brothers and sisters. It inevitably spoils the child. It would have been better for Joseph if he had been made to bear the yoke in his youth; and, when he was old enough, sent out to do the work of the fields with his brethren, instead of being pampered at home in idleness. For in that case he would not have needed the sore trials that came upon him afterwards to take the conceit out of him and make him strong and brave and thoughtful for others. We all know the effect which fine clothes have upon a vain person. He is fond

of displaying them, and imagines that every eye is looking on with admiration and envy. The goodly robe of Joseph excited in him such feelings. Whatever weakness of character he had formerly displayed was now intensified. He formed ambitious thoughts regarding himself and the great things he was to do in the world. His magnificent coat inspired magnificent dreams that not only his brethren, but even his father—the prince of God—were to bow down before him and to do him honour! His head was turned by the new dignity conferred upon him.

It is evident that had Joseph continued to wear his long robe his life would have been ruined, and we should never have heard of him. But God had purposes of love towards him, and would not suffer his life to be spoiled in this way. Through the wearing of that robe, and all that it meant and led to, the envy and hatred of his brethren were stirred up; and they first put him in a pit and then sold him to the Ishmaelite merchants, who carried him down to Egypt as a slave; while his beautiful white robe was stained with the blood of the kid into which his brethren had dipped it in order to conceal their crime, and make their aged father suppose that his son had met with a violent death. Jacob had deceived his father Isaac by putting around his neck and hands the skin of a kid; he is himself now deceived by Joseph's coat dipped in the blood of a kid. Because he had foolishly made a coat of many colours for his son, and unjustly raised him above his brethren, he himself had to rend his clothes and put sackcloth on his loins, and to pass through a terrible agony of sorrow.

Thus the coat of many colours disappears after having wrought such dreadful mischief. Stripped of the fatal robe, and clothed with the mean dress of the slave and the prisoner in Egypt, Joseph became a far nobler character. It is very remarkable how his fortunes should always be intimately connected with his dress; for his garment which he left behind in the hands of the temptress rather than relinquish a good conscience was again used for deceiving others, and preparing the way, through the prison-house, for his freedom and exaltation. His adversity corrected the faults of his foolish upbringing; and he was fitted by the hardships and trials through which he passed to wear, with becoming dignity and greatness of soul, the royal robe and the golden chain of Pharaoh's prime minister. He was qualified to rule the land of Egypt because he had first learned to rule his own spirit. Under the gorgeous robe of his exalted rank, made perfect through suffering—wise and thoughtful for others, through much wrong and evil done to himself—we see none of the weaknesses that disfigured his youthful character when he wore the coat of many colours. And so his ambitious dreams were fulfilled to the letter; not, indeed, in the easy way he expected, but by the hard and thorny way of suffering; not by wearing a long, loose robe of idleness and vanity, but by being clothed with humility, and girding himself for the stern task of enduring wrong and overcoming his native faults and besetting sins.

There is a lesson in all this for us. We have seen what a dreadful evil was caused by Joseph's coat of many colours. And such evil is still done by it; for though the actual coat has perished thousands of years ago, it has left behind something that represents it, and reappears anew in every generation. Every young spirit puts on such a robe as Joseph wore—a robe of pride and self-indulgence and vanity, and dreams the same dreams of worldly greatness in it. This robe is so long and loose that it hampers one's movements, and trips one at every step. When a young man has it on he cannot do any work. He sees a lion — an insurmountable difficulty in the way of every duty. A lazy mood will find many excuses for its idleness, many reasons why it cannot work. And it is a curious thing that the more idle we are the more we dream dreams of the greatness and happiness that are to be ours some day. And this robe has the same evil effect upon the character which the coat of many colours produced in Joseph's case, and works mischief as great. Dejanira, the wife of Hercules, the mythical hero of the old Greek story, on one occasion imagining that her husband loved another woman more than herself, sent him a dress which she was told had the virtue of reclaiming anyone who wore it from unlawful affections. But the tunic of Nessus was poisoned, and was meant by an enemy to be an instrument of revenge. No sooner, therefore, did Hercules put it on than he fell into a dreadful disease. He tried to pull off the fatal dress, but it clung tightly to him, and it was now too late; the poison that was in it had entered his blood, and he speedily died in great agony. Now the robe of false pride, of idleness or vanity, will cling to us in the same way, and will infuse its virulent poison through our whole being. It will produce pains and penalties of its own. The sins that it incites to will be punished in kind. The coat of many colours will be defiled with the mud of the pit, and stained with the blood of passion and sin. The high hopes we cherished in it will be disappointed; the dreams of future greatness or happiness we dreamed in it will vanish like morning mist. We shall find instead the bare, hard realities of life, and the stern imprisonment of circumstances.

SAMUEL'S LITTLE COAT.

IT is a great relief to turn from the coat which Jacob made for his son to the little coat which Hannah made for her son. Samuel's mother was a woman of exceptional gifts and goodness. She was worthy of a high place in the household of faith. She dedicated her child to the Lord before he was born, and made him from his earliest infancy a Nazarite. When he was old enough to enter

upon some child-like service in the tabernacle, she brought him to Shiloh. She gave to God the gift she had received from God. The priests, who took a deep interest in the little boy entrusted to their charge, gave him a garment called an ephod ; a close-fitting coat made of white linen, like that which the high priest wore ; and thus he became an acolyte, and his special duty was to put out the sacred light of the golden candlestick that had burned all night, and to open the doors of the tabernacle at sunrise. But in addition to the ephod, his mother made him a little coat and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up to Shiloh with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

This garment was very different from the coat of many colours which Jacob made for Joseph. That was a long, loose robe, such as was worn by the sons of kings and noblemen, and marked out Joseph for a life of ease and indulgence. But Samuel's little coat, on the other hand, was a miniature of the priestly robe which the high priest wore when he was performing his sacred duties. A priest is one who first of all sacrifices himself, denies the self-will that is in him, crucifies the selfish passions of his nature ; and thus self-sacrificed he offers to God the sacrifices of worship. We are told how Jesus put off His garment and girded Himself with a linen towel and washed the disciples' feet. He acted in this service as a priest. He humbled Himself, sacrificed His own self-will ; and the linen towel was the priestly dress of service and sacrifice—the righteousness of true obedience to God. It was like the dress which Samuel wore when he manifested in the service of the tabernacle the spirit of humility and self-sacrifice which Jesus displayed. He was a candidate for the priesthood ; and the word candidate comes from a Latin word which signifies *white*. It reminds us of the custom of the early Christians, when young communicants were clothed in white garments and were therefore called candidates for the membership of the Church. Their dress was meant to be a parable to them, impressing upon them the necessity of being white within as well as without, having pure hearts as well as clean hands. And Samuel's little white linen coat marked him out as a candidate for the service of the Lord, and preached to him the necessity of being pure in heart and in life.

What could be more touching and beautiful than the fact that Samuel's little coat was made by his mother ! How full of meaning it is ! The Waldensian mother carries in her bosom the flask of water which she gives to the officiating clergyman on the occasion of the baptism of her child. She thus warms the ice-cold glacier water of her native valleys with the vital heat of her own heart before it touches the face of her child ; and the ceremony is thereby invested with a new and most beautiful significance. Equally significant was the provision of the little Hebrew priest's robe by his mother. We can picture the pious Hannah at home preparing the little coat. She could not buy the linen of which it was made. Each Israelite had to grow on his own farm what he needed for himself and his family, food and clothing and fuel. And doubtless Hannah's husband, in his field around Mount Ephraim, sowed and reaped the flax which she spun and wove and bleached into the linen web, out of which she shaped and sewed the little garment which she presented to her son. Year after year, a part of the produce of the flax harvest was consecrated to this pious use. In "The Light of Asia" it is mentioned that the mother of the great founder of Buddhism, in gratitude for the birth of her noble boy, made an offering to her god in a silver dish, of rice grown from picked seed, each grain like a pearl, sown in new-broken ground, boiled with sandal and fine spice in the milk of the six best cows of the herd, who were fed with the milk of twelve, who had previously been fed with the milk of twenty-five, who had in their turn been nursed on the milk of fifty white cows, who had been nursed on the milk of a hundred mothers newly calved.

The thread which the modern Jews use for some specially pious purpose, such as forming the wick of candles offered in sacrifice, or sewing a prayer-mantle, has acquired a sacred value from having previously been employed to measure the burial-ground of the family in the cemetery. On the anniversary of the death of a person, his two nearest relatives measure the borders of the ground in which he is laid. Each carries in his hand a separate reel, on each of which the same continuous thread is rolled. They begin the ceremony by holding the two reels closely together, singing in unison a mournful anthem appropriate to the occasion. One then marches round the enclosure, while the other stands still ; and chanting as he goes, with slow, grave footsteps, rolls round his own reel the thread which is unwound from his companion's till it comes near the end. Standing still, the other in turn proceeds to march round the enclosure, singing as he goes, and filling his empty reel by unwinding his friend's. This ceremony is performed three times, and a mysterious efficacy is supposed to be imparted to the thread by the powers of the unseen world.

A more legitimate sacredness, we may suppose, was communicated to the little robe which Hannah made with equally scrupulous care. Her husband would ask the blessing of God upon the sowing and the reaping of the flax ; and many a pious thought and prayer would Hannah form as she spun and wove the linen web, and shaped out of it the pure white linen coat for her son. We can think of her sewing the little priestly robe that was to be employed in the service of God, cherishing fond thoughts of her little boy, far away beyond the hills, and dreaming as she sowed, as mothers always will, bright dreams of his future. And many a wish did she frame, and many a prayer did she utter, that her boy might be honoured of God to serve his generation nobly, for the times were sadly out of joint, and those who loved the Lord were indeed few and faint.

A MOTHER'S OFFERING.

IT is good when a mother makes the tiny garments that cover the bodies of her little ones. No more appropriate hands can shape them; and it is a happy task, for many a bright hope and loving thought are sewed up with every stitch. But it is better still when she makes, as she alone can make, the clothes of the immortal young souls committed to her care. The first clothes of the soul, whatever may be said regarding the first clothes of the body, are made by her. The first influence that comes to the ductile character of the child is from the mother; and whatever great and good things have been done in the world may be traced to the impulses and the teachings received from a mother's lips and a mother's heart. It is her character that is most deeply impressed upon her child; and it has been often observed that the great majority of the human family "take after the mother."

The biographies of those who have been most distinguished for talent and virtue reveal the fact that they have been the children of remarkable mothers. To the mother's hand in infancy they have owed the sowing of the good seed whose growth and fruiting have been a blessing to themselves and to the world. Eithne, the mother of the great St. Columba, who was among the first to bring the Gospel to our country when it was in heathen darkness, like Hannah, dedicated her little Samuel to the Lord from his birth. Before he was born, she dreamed one night that an angel presented to her a garment of the most beautiful texture and varied hues. This gift, however, he afterwards took away; and as it flew through the sky it continued to unfold and extend itself over mountains and plains, until at length it covered a space which her eye could not measure. Finding what she had once possessed thus gone out of her reach, she was grieved exceedingly at her loss; but the angel comforted her by saying that the expanding garment was a symbol of the teaching of the child that should be born to her, which would spread over all Ireland and Scotland, and clothe an innumerable company of souls with the garment of salvation. Blessed are those who, like Samuel and St. Columba, are early taught the piety which has its root in mother's love; who are not only wrapped in the mantle of maternal affection, which, better than all others, protects the young from the evils of the world, but who are also clothed by a mother's hand, by her teaching and example, under the blessing of Heaven, with the robe of Christ's righteousness—that robe which from the very beginning makes them kings and priests unto God and the Father!

The coat of Samuel lasted all his life. I do not mean the same identical coat; for we read that every year, we do not know for how long, while Samuel ministered in the tabernacle, his mother prepared and brought up for him a new coat. The old one was worn out each year by the work of the year, and required to be replaced by a fresh garment, which was made larger to suit his growing size. All the time that he acted as priest in the tabernacle at Shiloh he wore nothing but the robe that was spun and woven and made for him by his mother's hands. And when the prophet's call came to him, and the tabernacle of Shiloh was destroyed, and he had to go out and carry on the solemn work of a seer in Israel, he still wore a coat like that of his early years.

We do not know whether his mother lived to see her son exalted to the highest position in Israel, or whether she continued to make his robe when he became a judge. But this we do know, that all the rest of his life he wore a garment made of the same stuff, and fashioned after the same pattern as the little coat which his mother used to make for him when he was at Shiloh. It is the same peculiar Hebrew word *me-il*—differing from all the other words descriptive of dress—that is persistently used for Samuel's coat throughout the Scripture narrative. That coat was invested with too many hallowed memories and associations to be ever abandoned. It was the symbol to him of his mother's love and care. It was the robe of religious consecration, to be kept ever sacred. Everywhere we see him dressed in it. It was always appropriate; for while he was a prophet and a judge, he had never ceased to be a priest.

We see him offering sacrifice on public occasions for the people; we hear his loud cries and prayers to God on behalf of Israel in times of danger and distress. In his own house at Ramah he built an altar to the Lord; and whatever he did, whether ministering at the altar as a priest, or sitting in the chair of justice as a judge, or denouncing doom against the evils of the people as a prophet, he wore the same mantle, and the people looked upon him with the same profound reverence with which their fathers had regarded Moses. He was known by his peculiar mantle wherever he appeared. Saul laid hold of its skirt when he finally parted from Samuel at Gilgal; and as it rent in the unhappy monarch's hand, the awful words of doom were pronounced, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine that is better than thee." By the peculiar appearance of his mantle, Saul recognised him in the vision of Endor, when he exclaimed, "I see a god ascending out of the earth." Thus we find that the little coat which his mother gave him—enlarging its size to suit his advancing years—marked him out as a consecrated person from his childhood to his latest days. He was true all his life to the purpose for which that robe set him apart. The service of God, to which his mother dedicated him from his infancy, was the service in which his whole life, from the beginning to the end, was spent. He identified himself so completely with his mother's coat, that it became

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in all after ages the mantle of the prophet—the peculiar distinguishing dress of every seer and teacher among men.



THE CHILD THE FATHER TO THE MAN.

AND what an encouragement is there in all this to parents to train up their children in the way that they should go, assured that when they are old they will not depart from it! We have in the Bible examples of persons who, in their earlier years, went to great excesses in wickedness, and who were restored by sudden and violent conversions; but the examples upon which it loves most to dwell are those of persons, like Samuel and Timothy, whose goodness was devoted and continuous; whose days were bound each to each by the same piety, without any abrupt transition. And observation teaches us that the religion that has passed through critical experiences is usually destitute of that calmness and well-balanced moderation and wisdom which belong especially to the religion that has grown up uninterruptedly from early beginnings of purity and goodness.

If parents were only faithful, this continuous goodness, free from the memories and associations of evil which sadden even the renewed life of those who have been converted from a wicked course, would be the normal, instead of the exceptional, experience of their children. In the matters of the soul, the child would be father to the man. Should not parents, then, seek above all things to make for their children in their infancy, with their own prayers and instructions and examples—as the solan-goose plucks the down from its own breast to line the nest of its young ones—those spiritual garments which will grow with the growth of the soul, and increase with the years of those who wear them; which, like the miraculous clothes of the Israelites, wax not old in all the passing years, and which will fit life's latest days as they fitted its earliest hours.

How delightful to walk with Christ in white all through life; to keep that white robe unstained by the world and unspotted by the flesh; to wear the same priestly dress of love to God and service to humanity through the varied duties and experiences of life from the beginning to the end! This was the reward that Hannah had for her pious labour; this is the reward which every Christian parent will have who, instead of giving his child the fatal Joseph's coat of worldly pride and vanity, which must soon be stripped off and exchanged for the degrading dress of the world's slave and prisoner, gives him Samuel's priestly coat of devotion to the service of God, which will last throughout life, and which will become the white robe with which the redeemed will serve God day and night in His Temple.



FALSE SHAME OF YOUNG MEN.

YOUNG men who come from the country to the town, and who get on in the world, are often ashamed of their parents, of the rustic dress they once wore, and of the simple but honest and kindly ways of their childhood. And too often when they assume the fashionable clothes and adopt the fashionable ways of their new friends, they leave behind them the religion of their childhood and forget the piety which they learned at a mother's knee. They have outgrown the priestly dress in which their mothers dedicated them to God, and think her religion old-fashioned and worn-out. This is false shame. It is a sin against the dearest and most sacred instincts of our nature. So far from being manly, it is mean and dastardly. Depend upon it, the man who will have most of the esteem of his fellow-creatures and of the favour of Heaven, will be he who keeps unchanged all through life the mantle of heavenly devotion with which his mother clothed him. He who makes the religion of his youth the habit of his life—his garment and way of acting all through—will come to honour, and will enjoy the proud blessing of consistency. His life will be a gracious verity, like that of Samuel; it will have one steadfast purpose running through it all. The outer life will be of one piece with the inner; one part will not reproach the other; and what he seems, that he ever is.

"Be clothed with humility," says the Apostle Peter; and he uses a word for "clothed" in the original which reminds us of our Lord's girding of Himself with the linen towel when He washed the disciples' feet, and is a striking proof how deeply the action and consequent words of our Lord had sunk into the disciples' hearts. The word implies, moreover, such a clothing of ourselves with this grace that we cannot easily divest ourselves of it; that it will adhere to us wherever and however we are engaged. Let this garment be our favourite dress, for which we would not take in exchange the fabled magnificence of Chosroe's robe with all its gold and jewels. Better far be among the number of those who wandered in sheepskins and goatskins, or left their garments with the pursuer and fled away naked, if so they could honour good principles and lead noble lives, than go clothed in purple and fine linen and live without honour in selfish ease and indulgence! There is no robe like that which the father put upon the prodigal son when he returned home confessing his sin and throwing himself upon his father's love—the robe of penitence, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. That dress will pass through the fire of the troubles of the world like

the garments of the three Hebrew children, and the smell of the fire will not pass upon it; not a thread of it will be singed. The virtue of our Saviour will go out of its hem to the poor and needy; and in it we shall oftentimes wash the disciples' feet. Not only shall we dream great dreams in our lowly dress, but we shall carry them out in works of faith and labours of love. This dress will last when all other garments of earthly glory and beauty shall be consumed by the moth and the worm. We shall be exalted in it to a higher rank than ever Joseph attained. Clothed in fine linen, white and clean, we shall follow in the train of Him who is clothed in vesture dipped in blood, and Who has on His vesture and on His thigh a Name written—King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

A NEW BOOK OF MARTYRS.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E.

I.—SUCCESSORS OF JOHN HUSS AND JEROME OF PRAGUE.

GOOD old John Foxe, in his "Book of Martyrs," tells the story of Huss and Jerome, their noble testimony, and their glorious victory over all the terrors of a most terrible death. It was on his birthday, the 4th of July, 1415, that Huss suffered—a day which has since become illustrious as a birthday of freedom in a continent of which Huss had never dreamt. Neither he nor Jerome died in his native country, but on the banks of a Swiss lake, in a land which had already conquered for itself political freedom, and which was destined, in the following century, to contribute many noble witnesses for the faith of the Gospel. Not even the ashes of Huss were allowed to be carried back to his native Bohemia; they were cast into the Rhine and borne away northwards in the opposite direction, lest they should carry infection to his countrymen, and, by some strange virtue, turn them into heretics! Little did his murderers count on the ways in which infection travels! All Bohemia was filled with indignation; indignation bred sympathy, and sympathy was followed in a multitude of cases by conversion. One would have said Bohemia was a happy country, getting the Gospel a century before Luther. But no country has had more of struggle and bloodshed in connection with religion for well-nigh five centuries. If Huss and Jerome have had many successors in Bohemia as witnesses for the truth, they have had an exceeding great number as martyrs too. We pass over a period of two hundred and six years from the martyrdom of Huss; and on the morning of the 21st of June, 1621, we find a tragedy enacted in the Grosse Ring, or public square of Prague, the capital of Bohemia, which shows how the people of Huss had caught his spirit, and how the same Gospel that had given strength and courage to him at the stake, ministered the like virtues on that occasion to more than two dozen of his martyred countrymen.

Bohemian history shows a rather painful mixture of spiritual struggles and political conflicts, inevitable, probably, in the circumstances, but somewhat complicating the position of those who were called to suffer as Protestants. The martyr scene we are now to describe arose out of a contest about the throne of Bohemia. The Roman Catholic party were for Ferdinand of Austria, the Protestants were for Frederic, Elector Palatine. Frederic had shortly before married the Princess Elizabeth, "first lady of Scotland," the only daughter of James VI. (I. of England), who was born at Falkland Palace in 1596, and married to the Elector amid great splendour in London in 1613. In 1619 they accepted the Bohemian crown; in 1620, at the battle of the Weisse Berg, or White Hill, near Prague, their forces were utterly defeated, and they had to fly in terror from the country where they had expected to enjoy a royal career.

This was really a religious war. Frederic being the champion of the Protestant party, and attracting to his standard all the earnest and influential Protestants. And when the Protestant army was defeated, Ferdinand determined to make an end of the whole generation of Protestants. The Jesuits reigned with unmitigated rigour; nobles were executed, pastors banished, Bibles and all Protestant books burned, extreme penalties inflicted, and the most rigorous measures adopted to stamp out the cause. Protestants were excluded from the guilds, and even from lawful marriage; no man was obliged to pay his debts if his creditor was a Protestant; their dead remained unburied, their children were Romanised, their poor ejected from the hospitals, and their wills declared invalid. To conceal a Protestant was a capital crime. Protestants were shut up in stalls and cages, and tormented with lewd jests; mothers were bound to posts with their babes at their feet that they might see them die of hunger unless they should renounce their faith. The exodus from the country was like the exodus from France at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, sixty-four years after, and the country was reduced to a corresponding condition of emptiness and desolation.

Special means were taken immediately after the collapse of the party to secure the ringleaders who had been most active in the war. For this purpose the wiles of Jesuitry were brought into play. As Amos Comenius, the Protestant historian of Bohemia, says, quaintly: "The pipe maketh sweet music while

the fowler catcheth the birds; for more than three months, nothing is heard but fair promises of favour, and hope of impunity for all bygone offences; insomuch that some came out of their lurking-holes, and some that had been sentenced to exile returned." But the hopes raised by this show of clemency were short-lived. "Suddenly, and in one hour, which was the first hour of the night (about supper-time on 20 Feb., 1621), they laid hold of and took prisoners as many as they could; for all being in their houses, they received visits from the Captain of the City of Prague and the Emperor's officers, and were ordered to mount a waggon, in which some were carried to the castle of Prague, and others to the prætor's lodgings."

It was not till May that the trial took place of the noblemen and other gentlemen of whose persons they had so easily but so unfairly got possession. The sentences passed against them in most cases condemned them to death, with added accompaniments of great barbarity. These sentences were reviewed by the Emperor at Vienna, and to produce an impression of clemency the barbarous accompaniments were in some cases remitted. Count Schlikio, who had been sentenced to have his right hand cut off and his body quartered, was, as a special favour, allowed to be simply beheaded, and thereafter to have his hands and his head affixed to the tower of the bridge over the river. Caspar Kaplirz, an old man of about ninety, who had become very obnoxious, "had the favour" (as Comenius puts it) "to have his head cut off, and to stand with the rest for a spectacle." A physician named Jessenius, who had been sentenced to have his tongue cut out while he was alive, then to be quartered alive, and the quarters and head to be exposed at several places where two ways met, was, through the Emperor's clemency, killed first; his tongue was then cut out, and his body quartered. Nicolas Dionysius, a senator, was sentenced "to be burnt, his tongue being first cut out, yet his punishment was so mitigated that he was only to be nailed to a gallows for the space of an hour, and to depart from that place."

The judicial proceedings being over, the nobles were confined in the inner prison of the castle, and the citizens in the prætors' houses. Three days in advance they were informed that the execution was to take place on the morning of the 21st of June. They were allowed to choose their spiritual advisers, either a Jesuit, or a Capuchin, or a Lutheran minister, but not any of the United Brethren, which was a great disappointment, for most of them belonged to that order. With one consent they rejected the Catholic clergy, and spent the Sunday and Monday with the ministers in singing hymns, conversing on God's Word, and celebrating the Communion. On the night before their execution, while singing the 86th Psalm, the last verse of which contains the prayer, "Show me a token for good," one of them broke out into a petition, "Show therefore unto us, O God, some token of Thy goodness, whereby we, Thy unworthy servants, may be strengthened, and our enemies confounded." On this one of them remarked, "Be of good cheer; we shall have a token that we are suffering for God's cause." The Protestant minister who was present assured them that it would be token enough that death, which was always bitter to the wicked, would be made sweet to them.

Early in the morning, having washed and dressed, and, as the historian says, cut their collars, that the executioner might not have that to do, they were struck by observing, as they looked out, a rainbow of unusual colour round the sun, though no rain had fallen for two days. In their *sancta simplicitas* they looked on this as the answer to their prayer—as the token for good which God had given for their encouragement. Some fell on their knees, some clapped their hands, some shouted for joy; one bade them think of Noah's rainbow, another of the rainbow round the throne in the Apocalypse, a glorious evidence that Christ was King, and, notwithstanding the injustice and cruelty of men, would deal righteously and faithfully with His servants. One might fancy the feelings of relatives and friends drawn to the spot by a ghastly fascination, and the excitement of the crowd prevented by drums and trumpets from hearing anything, and restrained by the soldiers from interfering with a tragedy that tore their very hearts. The only circumstance in the square that had any affinity to the brightness of the midsummer morning and the iris that surrounded the sun, was the noble bearing of the victims and their spirit of calm resignation and holy hope.

The signal for the commencement of the execution was the firing of a gun. As soon as it was heard the victims saluted one another, exhorting and encouraging one another to suffer manfully, remembering Him who had borne death for them. One after another their names were called out—twenty-seven in all—and each in turn responded cheerfully, as if he were going to a banquet or some other place of enjoyment. As they marched out they addressed their brethren in words like these: "Most loving friends, farewell! God give you the comfort of His Spirit, with patience and courage, that what you have already testified with heart and mouth and hands, you may now testify by a glorious death. Behold, I am going before to see the glory of my Lord Jesus Christ; and you will follow me, that we may together behold the face of our Father." The others responded, "God in Heaven, to whom you are going, prosper your journey, and grant you a happy passage from this vale of misery to that heavenly country! And may the Lord Jesus send His angels to meet thee. Go, dear brother, to the Father's House, your Father and ours. We shall soon be after you; we have this confidence through Him in Whom we have believed."

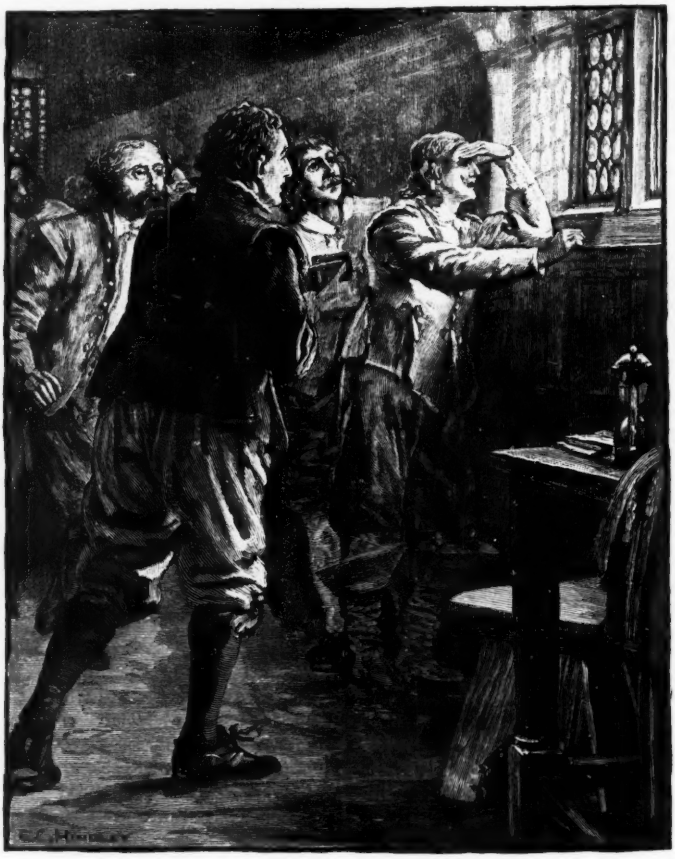
After the execution the ministers told how valiantly and fearlessly the martyrs had encountered death, much to the joy of their fellow-Protestants, who needed themselves to be strengthened for what they had soon to endure.

Charged, as most of them were with political offences, it is instructive to see from their last words how strong the faith of Christ was in their hearts, and how vehemently they protested that it was solely to protect the liberty of religion that they had taken up arms.

When Count Schlik, of Holeytsche, heard that

he was to be quartered, he remarked, "The loss of a sepulchre is but slight." Going on the scaffold, and observing how brightly the sun was shining, he prayed, "Christ, Thou Sun of righteousness, grant that through the darkness of death I may pass into Thy eternal light."

Baron Wenceslaus, a great traveller, and eminent



"They looked on this as the answer to their prayer."—*p.* 151.

for his high honours in the State—"the glory of his country, and the bright shining star of his Church"—being asked in prison by an officer of State why he had taken such a course, said it was due to religion and conscience. Referring to what might be his fate, he said, "I am here, my God; dispose of me, Thy servant, as seemeth good in Thine eyes. I am full of years; take from me my life, that I may not see those evils that are coming on my country." Another time, being told a report that he had died from very vexation, "What, me?" he said. "I have never known such happiness as I have now; behold my paradise [holding up his Bible]. It never yielded me so much nectar and ambrosia as now." One night he had a dream, and thought he was walking in a pleasant field, and thinking, with a heavy heart, of what was going on. Someone came and presented him with a book. When he opened it he found it consisted of white silk leaves, on which nothing was written but the fifth verse of the 37th Psalm, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also to Him, and He will bring it to pass." Then another person came to him with a white robe which he cast upon him. As he went to the scaffold he said to his servant, "Now I go covered with the robe of righteousness to appear before God, in whom I trust." On the scaffold, two Jesuits came to him saying they would fain save his soul. "Save my soul?" said he; "would you were as sure of your salvation as I am of mine! The Lord be praised, who by His Holy Spirit has assured me of my salvation by the blood of the Lamb." They represented to him that it was against Scripture for a man to feel assured of salvation. He challenged

them to show the passage. They thought it was in the Epistle to Timothy. "Fools," said the Baron, "to pretend to teach me the way of salvation, when you know so little of the Word of God." As he walked to the block, he stroked his long white beard and said, "Grey hairs, what an honour it is for you to be crowned with the crown of martyrdom!"

Lord Otto de Losse, when he received his sentence, remarked that he had seen barbarous nations, but he never saw or heard of such cruelty as this, that his head should be sent one way, his hands another, and the other parts of his body to various places. "But send one part of me to Rome, another to Spain, another to Turkey, the rest beyond the seas where you please; I do believe that my Saviour will gather them again, and will clothe them with my skin, that I may see Him with these eyes, hear Him with these ears, praise Him with this mouth, and rejoice with this heart for ever." In prison he had a great desire for the presence of his minister, and thinking how much he would enjoy his services, he fell asleep; "and behold," he said, "my Saviour appeared unto me, and said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for thee, for I purify thee with My blood,' and then He infused a drop of His blood into my heart, on which I awoke and leapt for joy." And then he added, with his hands lifted up, "I give Thee thanks, most merciful Saviour, Who hast been pleased to fill me with so much comfort, and to assure me so much of Thy grace! Now I fear death no longer; I will die with joy."

There were many more testimonies of the same kind on that scaffold. The number executed was twenty-seven. Others were sentenced to lifelong imprisonment, or banishment from the country with confiscation of goods. The heads of those executed were carried to the neighbouring bridge, the Carlsbrücke, and continued for ten years to be exhibited there.

It is an interesting circumstance that two hundred and fifty-seven years afterwards some Bohemian students residing at Edinburgh purchased at a public auction what purported to be an "Executioner's Sword." They found engraved on the blade in German characters the names of twenty-four victims, and on the hilt of the sword the initials of the executioner, with a statement in Bohemian, "The sad deed was done on the 21st of June, 1621."

The hundred and sixty years, from 1621 to 1781, was an unbroken period of deadly persecutions in Bohemia. All outward memorials of the Protestant faith were swept from the country, and the severest punishment was inflicted on any who were suspected of Protestant leanings. It was not till 1781 that an edict of toleration was granted by the Emperor Joseph II., son of the famous Maria Theresa. Five generations of deadly persecutions had not destroyed the cause. The Protestants seemed to rise out of their very graves. Since then the Protestant cause has subsisted in Bohemia and Moravia with varied fortunes; in our days the prayers of the martyrs have been answered anew, and though the Protestants are still but a handful, many of the pastors are devoted, earnest men, and the cause of the Gospel is reviving in their hands.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

13. What does the prophet Ezekiel mean when he speaks of himself as destroying the city Jerusalem?—"I came to destroy the city"?

14. Who were the three companions of Daniel in his early life at Babylon?

15. What judgments of God came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar for his pride?

16. What king caused Daniel to be cast into the den of lions?

17. What angels are mentioned by name in the Book of Daniel?

18. To what churches were the words of the Revelation of St. John especially addressed?

19. In what words does St. John set forth the value of the Revelation made to him?

20. What was the first occasion on which Daniel displayed the wonderful wisdom with which God had endowed him?

21. What are we told concerning the prayerful habits of Daniel?

22. What martyr is mentioned in the Book of the Revelation of St. John?

23. What song is mentioned as being sung by the saints in heaven?

24. In what way did Daniel as a boy show his faith in and devotion to God?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 72.

1. The family of the Rechabites. (Jer. xxxv. 6, 7.)
2. The prophet Ezekiel. (Ezek. i. 3.)
3. The tenth day of the fifth month. (Num. xiv. 29, Jer. lii. 12, 13, Ezek. xx. 1.)
4. Haggai ii. 9.
5. By drawing a picture of the city as besieged. (Ezek. iv. 1—3.)
6. Zech. ix. 9.
7. Lam. iii. 22, 23.
8. Hab. ii. 14.
9. Jehoiakim. (Jer. xxxvi. 23, 32.)
10. Jer. xxix. 7.
11. Zeph. i. 1.
12. Mal. iv. 5, 6; St. Luke i. 17.

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.



CHRISTMAS SUNSHINE.

WASHINGTON IRVING remarked that it is a great thing to have one day in the year, at least, when one can be sure of a welcome everywhere, and find, as it were, "the world all thrown open." Certain it is, however some people may sigh, or affect to sigh, when Christmas Day comes round, and talk about the infliction of Christmas holidays, annuals, and bills, and declare Christmas is a good time for nobody but the children, the world cannot but be happier and better for the fact that at this festival of thanksgiving hearts grow gentler, hands are opened, memory seeks the absent, and many who were severed through the working-days come homeward now. After all, it is no small matter that it is a good time for the children, rich and poor, and that the little faces are glad and expectant around us. The effort will not go unblest, if we awaken smiles among the little children, for the sake of Him Who came to earth as a child. As we grow older, it is only natural that the excitement and rapture should fade somewhat; but our faith in the Incarnate Lord has deepened, and, even as our gaze wanders to the empty chair amid the feast, we own our loved one is safer with Him, and we look forward to an eternal meeting in the tearless land. Some are bewildered, hedged in, troubled even at Christmas-time; but they need all the more its sunshine and comfort. Did not God Himself become a pilgrim upon earth's wayside, was He not once a Man of Sorrows, and does He not understand their whole life-story, across which, even now, He is writing the angels' message, "Glory to God"? The recipe for a happy Christmas is a very simple one—Make somebody happy, forget self, and bless another; fill up the cup of a neighbour with joy, leaving personal needs to the Almighty. Let us be very sure that He Who in the fulness of His love gave up His own Son to be our Saviour, will with Him freely give us *all* things.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS.

We have cheering news of our Waifs to give our readers. The little girl whom we adopted from Miss Rye's Home last year has been sent, by the generosity of our readers, to Canada, that land of promise for strong young folk, and has found a new home there. Of little Willie, Dr. Barnardo writes:—"I am delighted and encouraged to think that your readers maintain their active interest in their rescued *protégé*. Our lady visitor (who, I may say, is a qualified doctor) last visited Willie Rush on 29th September. She then reported him as 'properly cared for and very happy,' and his behaviour was stated by his foster-parents to have been 'very good.' On October 9th, too, I have a report from the Vicar, in which he says:—'I never saw a child more improved than this boy.' Nothing, I am sure, could be more satisfactory than these statements, and they ought to deepen your satisfaction at having undertaken the maintenance of such a hopeful little fellow." Miss Sharman writes to thank our readers for the promised help in the maintenance of our other Waif, little Winnie. Thus two little mites are secured comfortable homes, good food, and protecting friends for another year. But we are anxious to extend the work of this fund, and to offer shelter to more of these homeless little ones. Who among our readers—among our younger readers especially—will help us to carry on this work and to broaden its sphere, that others of Christ's little ones may be protected, fed, and taught aright? On page 160 will be found a list of further subscriptions to THE QUIVER Waifs Fund, and the Editor will be glad to receive and acknowledge others, even the smallest.

"WILL A MAN ROB GOD?"

"I never feel the need of religion," said a young man blessed with health and prosperity; "I never feel that I want to pray—I get on very well without." We heard a speaker tell how he once called on a man for his vote, and his wife settled the matter thus: "He don't mean to vote one way or the other; he don't see as he'll gain anything if he *does* vote." The speaker remarked that our own personal "getting on" is an ignoble motive indeed for action or inaction; we must not forget what we owe to others—still less must we forget what we owe to *God*. That young man, who carelessly remarked he got on all right without prayer, was the son of praying parents; he will surely yet awaken to the comprehension that years of irreligion have been robbing his Saviour of love, thanksgiving, talent, and service consecrated to Himself, and that, though *he* thought he needed no God, the Lord had need of *him*, and was day by day grieved by his coldness and selfish hardness of heart. We would not measure God's pity even at the eleventh hour: we know of a case even now in which a poor suicide, in drowning extremities, cried out to Him for pardon, and asserted that she felt His forgiveness even as she sank. That life was restored, and from that time was completely changed; she has lived ever since as a trophy of pardoning grace, evidencing that the prayer she believed her dying one was accepted by her Saviour. But let none presume on a case like this, or on the record of the dying thief. We owe our Master our full and early consecration—not a death-bed appeal alone, but the vigour of our lives. A contemporary lately related a story of a minister, who, conversing with a man, elicited that he gave nothing to God's cause and attended no

place of worship. "The dying thief never went to church, nor did anything of the sort," said he, "and he was saved." And the outspoken minister remarked, "The only difference I can see between you is, that he was a dying thief and you are a living one." Are we robbing God of time, of service, of public confession of His Name, of full and entire consecration? Many are the claims upon our hearts and lives, but there is no claim like our Saviour's. Let us no longer delay in making this our life-motto—"All for Jesus."

A NEW DEPARTURE.

We have sometimes drawn attention in these columns to the enjoyable seasons spent by the girls from "Working Girls' Homes" when invited by kind friends to tea and a musical evening, but the report of Garfield House, Brixton Road, now chronicles a new departure, for the inmates decided they could brighten the lives of some poorer sisters, and they resolved to endeavour to help girls between eleven and fifteen, hundreds of whom sell flowers and toys, clean steps, or earn a precarious living, and return to needy homes. Cards of invitation were distributed among these children; thirty-four arrived the first evening, and not only listened to helpful, kindly words and joined in hymn-singing, but partook of a substantial tea, and entered with spirit into several games. Ere they left, their hostesses invited them twice a week, from 8 to 9.30, and twenty-two appeared on the following Monday, to spend a social, recreative evening in the spirit of true charity and religion. We note that other girls entertained aged women, and little orphan children; it is thus evident that the love that has been caring for them is bearing holy fruitage, and inspiring them to feel for others, and to share God's kindnesses.



"Brighten the lives of some poorer sisters."

> "For all are brethren, far and wide,
> Since Thou, O Lord, for all hast died;
> Then teach us, whatsoe'er betide,
> To love them all in Thee."

LAYING HOLD OF THE MASSES.

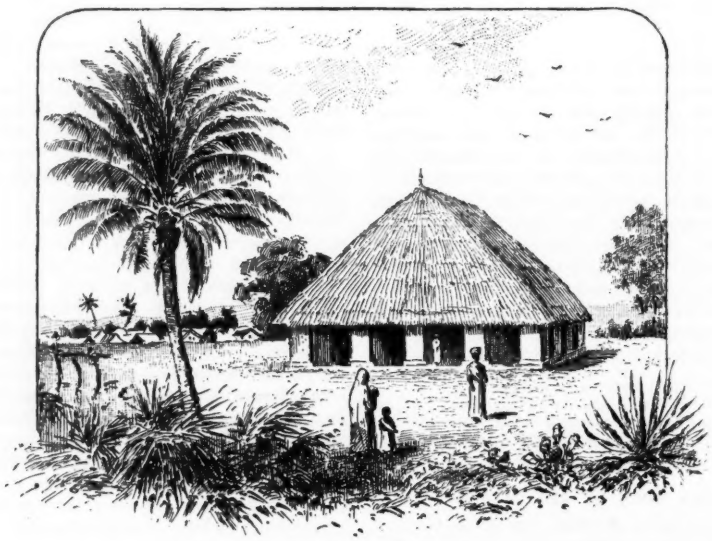
In our consideration of "Christian life and work," it is impossible to ignore the progress of the Salvation Army, which God has owned to the uplifting of so many, and which may teach each one of us lessons of prayerfulness, devotion, self-denial, and persevering work. The Salvation Army results from the fact that General Booth, while living in the East of London, was dismayed by the carelessness of the masses concerning religion, and he resolved to devote his life and energies "to making these millions hear and know God." Out-door meetings are held, prisons, houses, and taverns are visited, services are held in theatres, music-halls, and factories; and it is sought to make every true convert a witness and worker for Christ. In the height of their enthusiasm some of the leaders may at times have been injudicious, but we believe it is universally understood that sick people are not to be disturbed by noise, and, as a rule, the various processions now take their way in good order and unmolested. Rescue work has been specially blessed; more than eight hundred girls have been placed in rescue homes, and the "Slum Brigade officers" are well known amid the lowest neighbourhoods, where, indeed, they have chosen to live. Mission work is now carried on, not only in our own land, but in France, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Canada, the United States, India; nor does the mention of these places exhaust the list of Salvation Army stations. Many clergymen, ministers, and leading philanthropists have come forward to wish the Salvationists "God speed." "Our great business," say the latter, "is to make men holy;" and in the track of their Christian life will come improvement socially and morally. Cordially do we echo "God speed" to every movement that has for its aim the glory of God and the uplifting of mankind. Minds and constitutions vary, and the methods suited to certain minds would not commend themselves to others, or prove helpful just now in their present state. There is, therefore, room for all who love God to labour in the cause of salvation, and, while we may not see eye to eye with our friends of the Army in *all* respects, we can but thank God for the work they have done in opening doors of brightness and hope to hundreds who once lay low in shadow.

"HEROES OF EVERY-DAY LIFE."

This is the title of a most interesting little volume, by Laura M. Lane (Cassell), in which are gathered the records of the brave deeds done in peace during Her Majesty's reign. We are glad to see that the list is headed by Alfred Collins, of Looe, one of THE QUIVER Heroes, but we are somewhat surprised that no mention is made of THE QUIVER Medal, although it is shown in the excellent portrait of the fisher-hero. — Two pretty stories for children, from the same publishers, are "Bunty and the Boys," by the author of "Doddlekins," and "School Girls," by the late Annie Carey, who unfortunately passed away before her work was ready for publication. Sunday-school librarians should make a point of securing both these volumes, which are sure to be popular.—The same may be said of "The Child of the Sea," by Kathleen M. Smith (Hodder and Stoughton), and of Dr. Thain Davidson's, "Sure to Succeed." This latter work is a collection of the preacher's well-known sermons to young men, and should be very useful in this form to leaders and members of young men's Bible-classes.—Another work issued by the same firm, and addressed to young men, is the first part of "Tempted London," in which will be found words of timely warning on the dangers of London life, and of advice as to the best paths to pursue. — A somewhat similar though not so comprehensive work is "Notes for Boys (and their Fathers), on Morals, Mind, and Manners" (Elliot Stock).— It would be hard to speak too highly of "The Good Shepherd," which is the title of an exquisite book of verses, by our contributor Mr. F. E. Weatherly, illustrated by Alice Reeve, and published by Messrs. Hildesheimer and Faulkner. But this work is only one of many beautiful ones issued this season by this firm. Among the others we have only space to notice "The Harvest Moon" and another, and larger, work of Mr. F. E. Weatherly's, entitled "Sunbeam." Two very tiny booklets, "The Light of Yule" and "The Bells of Yule," would form charming souvenirs at this season for distant friends. The latter is really composed of illustrations to three well-known Christmas hymns, and is all the more welcome on that account. Among the cards which are issued by Messrs. Hildesheimer and Faulkner, the photographic opal designs certainly claim first place; but many people will prefer the tasteful little groups of children's heads, accompanied by most appropriate verse. An exquisite series of text-cards is that designed by Mr. Henry J. Stock, R.I., and published by the same firm.—Mr. J. Bass Mullinger's "History of the University of Cambridge, in Messrs. Longmans' "Epochs of Church History," is a worthy companion to the history of the sister-University which preceded it in the same series. Englishmen of all classes owe Cambridge a great debt for the part she has taken in University extension; they see for her a future full of hope, and recognise a present that can only fully be understood in a study of her past.

"GIVE TO GOD THY BEST."

"When I first came to the district," says Pastor A. Haegert, Bethel, *viâ* Jamtara, Bengal, "there was not a single Christian here, and to-day we have eighteen churches, and Christians in forty villages." Among the first converts were people who six months before had been sacrificing to demons, and the priest who presided at the sacrifice became a Christian preacher: often the missionary was in loneliness and difficulty—"the nearest European twenty miles off, and I did not see bread or butter for eight months out of the twelve;"



THE CHURCH OF THE SANTHALS.



THE FOREST HILL DAY NURSERY.

(From a Photograph by Mr. Hallier, High Street, Sydenham.)

but he bears record that his happiest days have been spent among the Santhal hills, healing the sick, preaching the Gospel, and teaching the children of Jesus. Twelve men, trained by Mr. Haegert, are now helping him in medical work, labouring in nine dispensaries for the well-being of patients who have been accustomed to seek recovery by offering goats, sheep, and cocks to idols. People have come for medical aid a distance of ten and even twenty miles—Hindoos, Santhals, Mohammedans come bowing at the Christian hospital: "Oh, that they may bow to Christ!" is the yearning of those who dwell among them as His ambassadors. There is a training-school for boys connected with the mission, where teachers are trained, and the scholars are exercised in agricultural work; another school exists for girls, and educational work is carried on in seventeen villages. "When I was a young man," said a patriarch of eighty to the missionary, "there was no Jesus in our country—we never heard His name," but the old man, his son, and his daughter-in-law have heard of the Saviour now, and become His followers. One of the first converts has lately died, and his dying words were these: "*I find Him good!*" Well may Mr. Haegert bear witness that God has done marvellous things among the Santhal race, and express his conviction that the whole district at last will confess the Lord.' It is a privilege to help in carrying on a work like this; may many an alabaster box be broken, that the fragrance of thank-offerings may arise round the mission-field, and practical sympathy, cheerfully rendered, may come to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

BEGINNING WITH THE INFANTS.

In London poverty and wealth frequently lie on each other's borders, and though the Forest Hill Day Nursery is situated, so to speak, within a stone's throw of the Crystal Palace, it serves the wants of a very poor neighbourhood. It was opened in April, 1882, at 13, Rojack Road, within three minutes' walk of Forest Hill station. It was intended to relieve poor working women of the neighbourhood from the care of their children during the day. The first week only 13 children were left at the nursery; within three weeks the number had increased to 30, and during 1883 an average of 16 children a day, 3,438 altogether, were taken care of. The first committee were Mr. A. Chaplin, Miss Sack, and Mrs. Turner, who continue to take a keen interest in what has proved an exceptionally successful work. Babies just over a month old are taken in and tenderly cared for, and all the while the self-respect of the mothers is preserved by stated payments of fourpence a day for each child—such payments, however, being modified or made more nominal when the circumstances seem really to require it. Older children also are taken care, of, provided that due arrangements are made for their attendance at school. And in many cases this has been found a great boon to poor but careful parents, who have thus been able to leave their humble homes all the day for work at a distance, feeling secure that the child or children they had left at the Day Nursery would not only be duly sent to school, but would be preserved from the contaminating influences of the streets. The children playing together in the nursery present a happy picture, and the influence exerted upon the parents has been most beneficial. The Committee and the Matron insist on the most scrupulous cleanliness and tidiness of the children while in the nursery. Seeing their little ones so well tended, the mothers have been led to take care of themselves, and they, as well as in many cases the fathers, have been inspired with new

heart and hope. Visitors are welcomed on any weekday at any hour from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and contributions in money or in suitable children's clothing, toys, etc., will be welcomed by the Matron at 13 and 14, Rojack Road, Forest Hill, S.E.

WHEN THE DAYS ARE SHORTEST.

When the days are shortest and the nights are longest is the time when we most appreciate new books, and it is the season at which the largest number are issued in view of Christmas and the New Year. Of books intended purely for gifts, one of the prettiest we have seen for a long time is a charming volume issued by Messrs. Nisbet, containing "Threefold Praise," and other of Frances Ridley Havergal's beautiful verses, brightly illustrated in colours.—From the same publishers comes Mr. R. M. Ballantyne's "Blue Lights; or, Hot Work in the Soudan," which tells the story of one of Miss Sarah Robinson's "Portsmouth Blue Lights." The work is interesting to all who know Miss Robinson's labours (and who does not?), and to all boys who love to hear what soldiers have been doing.—"Houses on Wheels" (Nisbet), by Emma Marshall, is admittedly suggested by the published results of the work Mr. George Smith of Coalville has been carrying on so long amongst gipsy children. The story is a pretty one, and is sure to please children whose lives are spent under happier conditions, and if it lead them to take some sort of interest in the work among their neglected little compeers it will not have been written in vain.—The frontispiece to the winter number of *Little Folks* (Cassell) is a coloured plate entitled, "A Friend in Need." The magazine loses none of its interest, though many of those who were little folks when the magazine was first published have other little folks of their own now.—We have two volumes by our contributor the Rev. Frederick Langbridge before us. The first is, "Sent Back by the Angels" (Cassell), a collection of ballads of home and homely life, in which, perhaps, the prettiest and most touching is "How the Light came to Jim." The second volume, "The Happiest Half-Hour" (Religious Tract Society), contains a series of Sunday talks with children. Both verse and prose are represented, and the work is abundantly illustrated.—Messrs. Cassell have just issued another new edition of Dr. Landels' charming work on the "True Glory of Woman." A better companion work to his "Marriage Ring," which we noticed a month or two back, could not well be imagined.

THE JAILOR OF PHILIPPI: WHO WAS HE?

Dr. R. F. Hutchinson has forwarded to us the following communication on this interesting subject:—"The New Testament, I think, gives us sufficient evidence for identifying and naming this most interesting official. Let us examine what is recorded of him, and then see if we are justified in naming him. He first appears in Acts xvi. 23, as 'the jailor' (δεσμοφύλαξ) of the prison at Philippi, a Roman colony in Macedonia, and that he discharged his duties rigorously is, I think, evident from his thrusting Paul and Silas into the inner prison, and making their feet fast in the stocks (Acts xvi. 24), and this for no offence against the State. The same night the earthquake occurs, and, appalled by its horrors, he seeks the side of those strangers whose recent mastery of the 'damsel possessed with the spirit of Python' had placed them under his rigid care. If they could pluck her from the grasp of Python, they could save him from Seismos. 'Sirs' (literally, lords), 'what must I do to be saved?' *Personal* security was all he then sought, and his soul's welfare was not then his consideration. The reply, under the circumstances, of the Apostles, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' must have puzzled the stern jailor, and it was not until Paul and Silas had spoken unto him 'the Word of the Lord,' that faith, showing itself in work, saved the affrighted official. 'He took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptised, he and all his straightway' (αὐτὸς, καὶ ὁι αὐτοῦ πάντες). As the jailor now belonged to the 'sect . . . everywhere . . . spoken against,' it is not likely that he would be allowed to retain his appointment, or would voluntarily do so; therefore we may now consider him a member at large of the Christian Church, and, perhaps, moved from Philippi. These events happened probably in A.D. 53. Six years after, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, from Philippi, we find St. Paul deprecating the contentions which had arisen among them, and showing convincingly that his mission was more to preach than to baptise; and taxing his memory, he could only recall two of their number, Crispus and Gaius, whom he had admitted into the Church; and, in addition, he recalled 'the household of Stephanas' (τὸν Στεφανᾶ οἶκον), 1 Cor. i. 16; and this household is further (1 Cor. xvi. 15) alluded to as 'the first-fruits of Achaia.' Now, who was this Stephanas but the jailor of Philippi? The two phrases are so like one another as to admit of no other solution; 'the household' and 'the house of Stephanas,' contrasted with the 'he and all his' of Acts xvi. 33. Leaving Philippi, in Macedonia, and entering the southern province of Achaia, he would be the last fruits of the former, and the first fruits of the latter. All that we know about this saint is that he was with the Apostle when he wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians from Philippi, where he had been scourged and imprisoned, and that he was actually one of the scribes who assisted in writing, to the dictation of the Apostle, the glorious and comforting truths of the Resurrection, his fellow-scribes being Fortunatus, Achaiacus, and Timothy."

IN A GARDEN OF ROSES.

One deeply interested in the work of the Bible Society sends to its report a description of how a garden of roses was pressed into its service. "Let us utilise our gardens," says he; and we may add, "Let us utilise our music-rooms, and drawing-rooms, and the apartments we have filled with artistic beauties," for happy meetings now and then that will prove rich supplements to the "annual sermons," whereby our neighbours are made acquainted with various channels of Christ-like work. Even among children

XUM

we find that definite information as to good works increases zeal in subscribing: "The money may get lost going over," said a juvenile pessimist, shaking his head, when reminded of the missionary-box; but tell such a child of "something attempted, something done," some life won to Jesus, some church raised up for Him where the people used to be idolaters, and his ardour and interest are aroused far more than if only asked to give to "the missionaries." Just so adults need to be informed concerning the Bible Society and kindred good works, and the kindly owner of a certain rose-garden has for many years thrown it open to his neighbours when the roses are at their best, that by a sort of "Bible Garden Party" interest and zeal in the Bible Society may be roused throughout the country. A gathering like this—whether in garden or drawing-room—may easily become a dead failure; we do not want to increase subscription-lists at the expense of freezing people by formality—many of those present, being comparative strangers, need the kindly thought and remembrance that thaws the ice, and greets them as fellow-sympathisers in the spread of Christ's Kingdom. But "the heart at leisure from itself," mindful of the courtesy prompted by Christian love, will make the whole place bright as summer even in wintry weather; and what scene can be fairer or more inspiring than a happy, sociable circle of neighbours, drawn together by interest in religious work, listening to recitals of what the Lord has done, and not only giving thereto with goodwill, but in many cases making personal resolves of helpfulness that will prove "twice blessed," enriching worker and society alike.



THE DUBLIN SOLDIERS' HOME.

THE DUBLIN SOLDIERS' HOME.

The Irish Exhibition in London has deepened our interest of late in our neighbours of the Emerald Isle. Evidences of art, skill, and industry have shown the powers of Ireland, and what sunshine of increased prosperity the future may yet awaken. But Erin's chief hope, as that of every other land, must be the work of God in her midst, and, among other branches of Christian and helpful activity, the Soldiers' Home, Dublin, is proving a blessing to many, having now carried on its good work for about twelve years. There are reading and coffee-rooms, a lecture-hall, dormitories, and a library. A notice of the Home is distributed throughout most of the regiments in Ireland; and the workers earnestly seek to provide a counteracting element against evil and temptation, and to set forth to the soldiers the messages of God's love. In one year the number of daily visits (including the boys from the Military School) was over 53,000. Many religious and temperance meetings are carried on; friends have also helped by giving texts, books, flowers, and papers; and the military choir of the Institute has made the Home more widely known by giving services of song in the neighbourhood of Dublin. Better even than the encouraging statistics of attendance is the testimony as to spiritual blessing, to which end the work has been established and maintained.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

Professor Finlay's commentary on this Epistle in the "Expositor's Bible" (Hodder and Stoughton) more than maintains the unusually high standard of this most excellent series. In his chapter on "Sowing

and Reaping' the Professor gives us this beautiful thought which we quote at length for our readers: "Each act of faith, of worship, of duty and integrity, is a compact between the soul and God. We *commit our souls* in well-doing unto a faithful creator (1 Peter iv. 19). By every such volition the heart is yielding itself to the direction of the Divine Spirit. It 'sows unto the Spirit,' whenever in thought or deed His prompting is obeyed and His will made the law of life. And as in the soil, by the Divine chemistry of nature, the tiny germ is nursed and fostered out of sight, till it lifts itself from the sod a lovely flower, a perfect fruit, so in the order of grace it will prove that from the smallest seeds of goodness in human hearts, from the feeblest beginnings of the life of faith, from the lowliest acts of love and service, God in due season will raise up a glorious harvest for which heaven itself will be the richer." Those who would learn more of the Professor's treatment of his grand subject should turn to the volume, which will amply repay careful study.—Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton have also sent us a delightfully suggestive volume by the author of "The Gospel in Nature," on "The Women Friends of Jesus," which we commend most heartily to all who are in any way working among women.—"Vermont Hall" (same publishers) is a strong temperance story by M. A. Paull, very suitable for a Band of Hope prize.

THE CHILDREN'S HAVEN.

For seventeen years the Crèche, Stepney Causeway, has been helping mothers to go out daily and earn the children's bread, satisfied that their little ones are in safe and tender keeping; and we are told that the applications for admission to Mrs. Hilton's Home are now more numerous than in the past. Little children are brought to this haven from many causes; the parents perhaps are out of work, or the father is left a widower and has none to care for the infant, or perhaps a widowed mother has to go into the hospital, and is anxious to know that her baby is "all right" before her case is attended to. "We have our times of rejoicing," says Mrs. Hilton, "when the mother comes back for her baby, refreshed and strengthened, or the struggling widow succeeds in making a home, and gathers her children about her." A widowed mother was trained as a nurse while her child was kept in the Home, and in course of time she could thus earn enough to support herself and her little one. "My children are continually speaking of the kindness with which they were treated at your Home; God bless you and your noble-hearted work!" writes one whose children were kept till she was in a position to give them a home. The little ones in the school-room have come in for some treats, such as an invitation from a lady to visit her garden and row on her lake, on which occasion nobody cried except a little girl who could eat no more cake. Santa Claus comes every New Year laden with gifts, and one of the children remarked concerning him, "He must be a kind old gentleman!" Mrs. Hilton remarks she would like to be able to translate the prattling sounds that issue from the lips of her infant family. "Doubtless," says she, "they are songs of thanksgiving which are borne upwards, and will descend in blessing on those who help to provide their home of brightness."

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

List of contributions received from August 23rd, 1888, up to and including October 24th, 1888. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month:—

A Reader of THE QUIVER, Evesham, 5s.; U. T. K., London, W., 10s.; J. J. E., Govan, eleventh donation, 5s.; J. H., Nottingham, 2s. 6d.; J. J. E, Govan, twelfth donation, 5s.; Chelt, 5s.; Miss R., Hampstead, £2.

BLIND AND HELPLESS.

We have received the following additional subscriptions since August 23rd, 1888:—

A Friend, Shrewsbury, 10s.; M. S. C., Brighton, 5s.; Mrs. D., Glasgow, £1; M. Moore, East Dulwich, 5s.; Never too late to mend, 5s.; Mrs. J. P., Hyde Park, £5; Mrs. E. Whylock, Folkestone, 10s. 8d.

The list is now closed, and the balance has been handed to the treasurer of the fund.

The Editor begs to acknowledge, on behalf of Dr. Barnardo, the receipt of 8s. from "Jerseyman," and 5s. from "Chelt."

"THE QUIVER" LIFEBOAT FUND.

The Editor begs to acknowledge the receipt of £5 from Miss Marston, of Bareilly, India, towards this fund.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE-READING SOCIETY.

SELECTED PASSAGES FOR DECEMBER.

DAY.	MORNING.	EVENING.
1.	Ezekiel xxxvi., to ver. 12.	Rev. i., to ver. 11.
2.	Ezekiel xxxvi., from ver. 25—36.	Rev. i., from ver. 12.
3.	Ezekiel xxxvii., to ver. 14.	Rev. ii., to ver. 10.
4.	Ezekiel xliii., to ver. 12.	Rev. ii., 12—19.
5.	Ezekiel xlvii., to ver. 12.	Rev. ii., from ver. 20.
6.	Daniel i., 3—16.	Rev. iii., to ver. 8.
7.	Daniel ii., to ver. 13.	Rev. iii., 9—16.
8.	Daniel ii., 14—25.	Rev. iii., from ver. 17.
9.	Daniel ii., 15—38.	Rev. iv.
10.	Daniel ii., from ver. 39.	Rev. v., to ver. 8.
11.	Daniel iii., to ver. 12.	Rev. v., from ver. 9.
12.	Daniel iii., ver. 13—25.	Rev. vi., to ver. 10.
13.	Daniel iii., from ver. 26; iv., to ver. 7.	Rev. vi., from ver. 11.
14.	Daniel iv., 8—18.	Rev. vii., to ver. 10.
15.	Daniel iv., 19—27.	Rev. vii., from ver. 11.
16.	Daniel iv., from ver. 28.	Rev. viii.
17.	Daniel v., to ver. 16.	Rev. ix., to ver. 4; x.
18.	Daniel v. from ver. 17.	Rev. xi., from ver. 11.
19.	Daniel vi., to ver. 16.	Rev. xii., from ver. 7.
20.	Daniel vi., from ver. 17.	Rev. xiii., 4—8; xiv., to ver. 5.
21.	Daniel vii., to ver. 14.	Rev. xiv., from ver. 12.
22.	Daniel vii., from ver. 15.	Rev. xv.; xvi., ver. 1, 15—18.
23.	Daniel viii., ver. 1, 2, and from ver. 15.	Rev. xvii., to ver. 14.
24.	Daniel ix., to ver. 10.	Rev. xviii., to ver. 5, and from ver. 19.
25.	Daniel ix., from ver. 16.	Luke i., 68—79.
26.	Daniel x., to ver. 12.	Rev. xix., to ver. 10.
27.	Daniel x., from ver. 13.	Rev. xix., from ver. 11.
28.	Daniel xi., to ver. 12.	Rev. xx.
29.	Daniel xi., from ver. 32.	Rev. xxi., to ver. 14.
30.	Daniel xii.	Rev. xxi., from ver. 15.
31.	Psalm ciii., to ver. 13.	Rev. xxii.



UNIV. OF MICH.



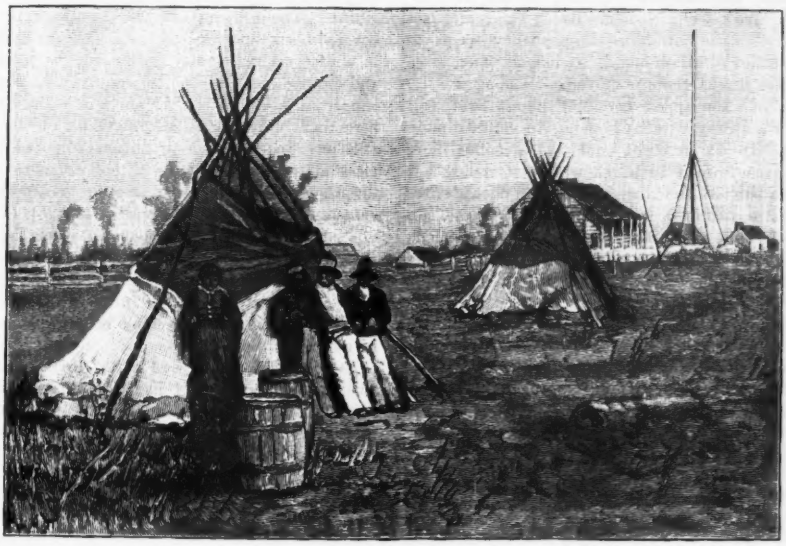
(*Drawn by* ALICE HAVERS.)

WHITE BERRIES.

See p. 217.

CHRISTIAN WORK AMONG THE CREE INDIANS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JOHN HORDEN, D.D., BISHOP OF MOOSONEE.



BISHOP'S COURT, SCHOOL-HOUSE, AND TENT.

AROUND the great Hudson's Bay lies a region of vast extent very little known to the civilised world, cut off as it is from contact with the outer world, and holding communication with it but seldom. My experience there dates from the year 1851, when, early in the month of June, and just married, I sailed in the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company's ship *Prince Albert* from Gravesend. After touching at Stromness to complete our cargo, we made our way across the Western Ocean, meeting with no interruption until we came to the Hudson's Straits. Here we became enveloped in a thick fog, which caused the captain much anxiety, for we were among ice. Suddenly the atmosphere cleared, and a grand and brilliant sight met our view. The land on either side was high, bold, and picturesque; the water, as smooth as a mill-pond, was of a deep blue, whilst its surface was covered with blocks of ice of every conceivable size and shape, and of most brilliant colours. The captain, having got rid of a load of anxiety, was perhaps the happiest person among us. But it was not long before a change took place; the ice became thicker, and the fog once more gathered around us. An ice-deck, which is some ten feet above the ordinary deck of the vessel, was erected, and this was always occupied by one or two of the ship's officers, generally including the captain. Many a heavy blow we received, notwithstanding all the care exercised, causing the good ship to shake from stem to stern; but she was prepared for the encounter, being built expressly for such work as that in which she was engaged. Ice now surrounds us on all sides, no water is visible, and we lie quietly for many hours. The ice, acted on by the tides, again opens, and we once more slowly pursue our way. Here we meet a mighty iceberg which overtops the topmast of our ship, and we greet its appearance with pleasure, for from it we are able to draw a supply of fresh water.

The Straits are now left behind; we are in clear water, and may be at our destination in a week, says the captain. But presently something looms on the



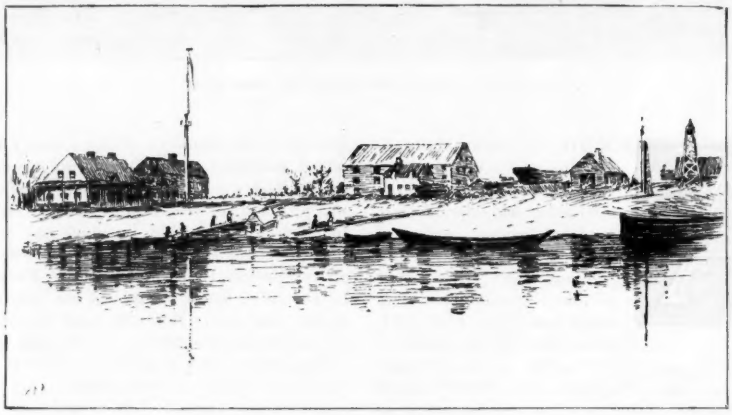
THE CATHEDRAL, MOOSONEE.

horizon—a cold grey streak; the temperature falls, ice is once more ahead. We sail east and west, trying to round it, but it cannot be done. We force our way into the pack, and make a little progress, and again all is still. Day succeeds day, and we are still imprisoned. We get chilled to the bone; hands and feet are covered with chilblains—despondency seems to take possession of all on board. At length, when three weeks have passed, there is movement among the ice, and lanes of water appear here and there. Every sail is set, for a strong wind is blowing; a venture must be made. In six or eight hours we are once more bounding southward in a sea wild and rough, but without a particle of ice on its bosom. Within three days we are anchored in the Moose Roads, and can see a little land in the far distance. It did not look inviting, but it was the land I had chosen, and here I determined to remain as long as I could be of any service to the inhabitants thereof.

A boat soon came for us, and after being taken a few miles up the Moose River we were landed at Moose Fort, where we received unbounded hospitality. I was in a new world. I found a few gentlemen and labouring men who could speak my own language, but the mass of the people spoke in a tongue unknown to me. It was the Cree language, with which I must become acquainted before I could expect to carry out my desire of bringing them into the Christian fold.

Moose Fort, or Moose Factory, is the depôt of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company for South Moosonee, whence are distributed all the supplies and trading goods needed in the various districts. Here, too, are brought all the furs and oil collected throughout this vast extent of country. This makes it a place of great importance, and more people are congregated here than are to be found at any other station in the country. The staff consists of a chief factor, a doctor, an accountant, and two or three clerks. The servants used to be mostly Orkney men and Highlanders, but *now* principally half-castes are employed as coopers, blacksmiths, carpenters, boat-builders, and labourers; and during the summer season, when every Indian trading at the post is likewise employed (and that at fairly remunerative wages), the place is as busy as if it were situated in the midst of the civilised world. The Indians live in birch-bark or canvas-covered tents, which can be rendered very comfortable in winter when the snow is dug out, the poles erected and covered, and the bottom strewn with a plentiful supply of pine-brush. A few now reside in houses permanently at Moose, but the bulk of the Indians still have the tent as their only winter dwelling, and necessarily so; for being continually engaged in hunting, they move from place to place according to circumstances. The animals hunted for their fur are the black bear, the lynx, the beaver, the otter, the marten, the fox, the mink, and the fisher. The Indian hunters, if at all successful, make a very good livelihood; and as the price of furs has of late greatly increased, some of them may be said to be almost in affluent circumstances.

At Moose I found myself called upon to labour to two different peoples. I had come primarily for the benefit of the Indians; but the Europeans and half-castes who spoke the English language must not be neglected. For those I at once opened school and conducted the usual English services, but the Indians received my principal attention. I assembled them, and through an interpreter told them the object of my mission. They were overjoyed, and promised to attend on my ministrations. But I was not long in discovering that an interpreter is a poor substitute in conveying the truth of revelation. He but imperfectly understands your meaning, and to the Indian often conveys but a parody on what you had intended. I therefore determined that as soon as possible I would be my own interpreter by mastering the language. The language, which is polysyllabic in its character, is difficult of acquisition from the great length of its words and the peculiarities of its verb.



MOOSE FACTORY.



AGED CREE MAN.

It is, however, very regular in its formation, and its study not only gave me deep pleasure, but likewise filled me with wonder that a people without literature should possess a language as philosophical as if it had been the united work of a band of sages. I made progress rapidly, and in six months was able to converse freely with the Indians, and to deliver my addresses, which I carefully committed to writing, correcting my manuscript with the aid of an interpreter.

The instruction of the Indians in reading and writing was my next employment; in this I was greatly aided by the use of a system invented by the late Mr. Evans, a Wesleyan Minister, who had been many years in the North-West Territories. By this system the difficulty of spelling was entirely obviated, each character standing—not for a separate letter, as in English—but for a whole syllable; thus the Indian word for God is KICHEMUNETO, which is represented by five characters—one for each syllable. And the system is so easy that a person of ordinary intelligence would learn its principles in an hour, and be able to read, although not fluently, in the course of a single day. Reading soon became pretty general, and the providing of books, all written by hand, became a heavy tax upon me. As soon as I found myself capable of doing the work satisfactorily, I prepared a translation of a portion of our English Prayer-Book, and sent it home to my friends of the Church Missionary Society, requesting that a thousand copies might be printed and sent out to me by the next ship.

The word "ship" recalls many reminiscences, some of a painful character. Our ship is looked for with deep interest, and should it not arrive at its accustomed time, our minds become filled with anxious forebodings. But in the year when the books were looked for the ship arrived somewhat early.

Large cases were consigned to me which I had hoped would be filled with books; but what was my amazement, on opening the first, to find reams of unsullied paper, a fount of type in the syllabic character, a printer's roller, a drum of ink; while in the second case were what appeared to me the parts of a printing-press, and many other things, of the use of which I had not the slightest conception. It then dawned upon me that my friends had sent me out everything necessary to set up a first-class printing and bookbinding establishment, but had entirely forgotten to send out the printer and the bookbinder. What was to be done? It would never do to allow these things to remain idle, so I set to at once to see what I could do with them. I selected a smart little boy from my school, and we at once began our work. We were first carpenters, and made the frames to support our fount of type; and then we looked at the parts of the printing-press, and the sight seemed to fill us with dismay. But we were not to be easily beaten, and after many trials the completed press stood before us an accomplished fact. I now took my composing-stick in hand, and stood before my frame dropping in type after type. It was at first slow work, but became more rapid as I proceeded, and I felt extremely proud when I saw my first page tied up and put aside. But I had to set up sixteen pages before I could be assured of success, such being the number required for a single sheet, and this occupied me many days.

All this time the Indians were watching me, and they noticed that I was extremely silent, and that my look was anxious. Thoughts soon arose in their minds, and those they soon expressed in words: "The minister has troubled himself so much about his books he has gone quite mad." I made no reply, but kept steadily on at my novel employment. At length all was ready, and I had the satisfaction of seeing the result of my work in a proof in which the characters were as clear and bright as in any book I had ever seen. With my sleeves turned up, I took the printed sheet in both hands and rushed out of doors, among a body of Indians assembled outside, crying out, "PACHE KUNAWAPATUMOK OMA, PACHE KUNAWAPATUMOK OMA!" ("Come and look at this, come and look at this!") They came, they looked, they stared; I was no longer a madman, but the greatest conjurer they had ever seen. And now sheet succeeded sheet, until the work was completed. I next had to undertake bookbinding.

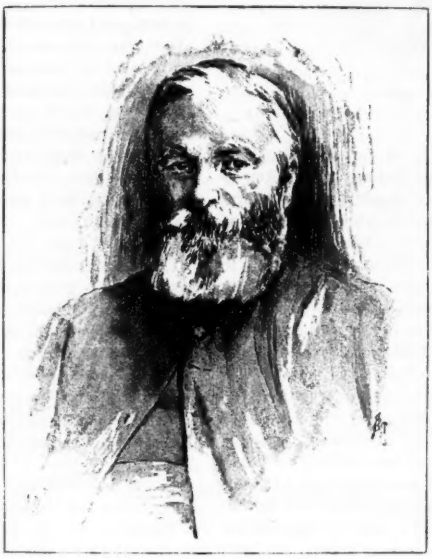


AGED CREE WOMAN.

In this I was equally successful, and by the end of May, when my Indians returned from their hunting-grounds, I was able to present each of them with a well-bound Book of Common Prayer, after which our services gradually assumed the form of the usual church service. A Hymn Book followed, and that again was followed by a Bible History in the form of a Catechism; after which the four Gospels, which made a volume of considerable size, passed through the missionary press.

Books in the Ojibbeway language then occupied my attention, and afterwards a service book in the Eskimo; for by this time both Ojibbeway and Eskimo had sent their first-fruits into the Christian Church. But my readers may inquire, What effect had all this on the spiritual condition of the people? Did a changed life follow? Did heathenism become replaced by the Christian faith? Yes, and that very decidedly. Now our own holy religion is that likewise of Cree, Ojibbeway, Chipewyan, and Eskimo, who rejoice in the Fatherhood of God, as made known to us by His Son, Christ Jesus. Of the Crees, there is scarcely one unbaptised; a large number are communicants, marriages are duly celebrated, and the marriage tie is as highly respected as in any part of the world; while when the missionary attached to any post is absent on a journey, the church services are conducted with regularity by the Indians themselves. The Mission has become reproductive; some of the sons of the soil are now numbered among the clergy, and among my own pupils (all natives of Moosonee) I can number two archdeacons, two clergymen in full orders, besides teachers and catechists. In my work I have been nobly assisted by the clergymen sent out to me by the Church Missionary Society. The Crees were the first to receive the light; then came the Ojibbeways, who for a long time resisted the truth, many being quite content to follow the superstitions of their forefathers. But when one of their number had been ordained, then a change took place; the handle of the axe had been cut from the native tree, and soon the trees of ignorance and superstition were levelled to the ground, and trees of the Lord's own planting took their place.

In the instruction of the Ojibbeways I found of very great use a translation of "Peep of Day," made by the Rev. John Sanders, one of the missionaries above referred to. The book is highly prized, and has conferred a lasting benefit on the whole of the Ojibbeway tribes in Moosonee. Mr. Sanders' district, in which there are no Indians but Ojibbeways, is of large extent, and through this he travels twice every year—in the winter on snow-shoes, in the summer by birch-bark canoe. Besides the Ojibbeways in Mr. Sanders' district, we have three large tribes in the Albany district, which is under the charge of Archdeacon Vincent, who has to make very considerable journeys to come into contact with them, travelling up the Albany River to Martin's Falls, and thence to Osnaburgh. His success, too, has been very great; all the Indians of Osnaburgh are baptised, many are communicants, and all contribute towards the support of the Mission; for I make it a point of bringing our converts to feel that great responsibilities attach to the privileges of Christianity. The archdeacon's journeys are attended with great danger, and two years since he nearly lost his life in descending the Albany River. It will not be long, I think, before civilisation will overtake Osnaburgh, the most western station in Moosonee; and then the shores of the large and beautiful lake on which it stands will become covered with the homes of a busy multitude, where now silence and solitude reign supreme.



THE RIGHT REV. JOHN HORDEN, D.D., BISHOP OF MOOSONEE.
(From a sketch made by A. Dickson Patterson, R.C.A.)

The Crees occupy the whole country around Hudson's Bay, but their dialects vary very considerably, and when the different tribes come into contact they have at first much difficulty in understanding each other. At Moose the pronoun "I" is represented by NELA; at Rupert's House, a hundred miles east, by NEYA; at Albany, a hundred miles north, by NENA; while at Churchill, in North Moosonee, it is NETHA.

Many of the Indians attain to a great age, and I have buried several who must have lived at least a century. Those whose portraits form two of our illustrations are very fair types of aged Cree Indians; the man represented was the best shot in the country, and bore the euphonious name of Richard Butterfly.

It is a source of great joy to us to see our cathedral in its present condition. We have lately added to it a chancel, gaining thereby nearly a hundred seats, and

even now there is no unoccupied space when our Indians are all here in the summer. The building is all I could desire. It cannot, of course, vie with the cathedrals of England; it was never intended to do so; yet comparatively it is as good as any of them, and as well adapted for every part of Christian worship. We have not to do with thousands; a few hundreds are all who can ever enter within its walls, and there all find everything done decently and in order; a bright, happy service, and such as is calculated to draw the hearts of the worshippers towards the God of their salvation. I have to thank several English friends for the assistance they gave me in supplying the necessary furniture, as well as some beautifully written texts in the English and the Indian languages for the embellishment of the walls.

Perhaps at some future time I may be able to give some account of our work among the Eskimo, and take my readers to North Moosonee, where we have stations as deeply interesting as those of which I have here written; we shall see men as keenly alive to the Master's interests as their brethren who live in a comparatively milder clime, and enduring great hardships as uncomplainingly as any in the whole missionary field. This is my joy and crown of rejoicing—that I am so thoroughly well supported by those who labour with me in the Lord. Were it otherwise I could never have remained so long amid the dreary solitudes of Moosonee; but when I have felt that every labourer in the vast vineyard was, trusting in God, doing his very best in the work committed to his charge, I have gone on from year to year, joyfully and thankfully assured that the Lord had made good His promise of companionship to me, and had given me the grace and strength necessary to support me in every day's trials and anxieties.

JOHN MOOSONEE.

A SERMON ON SALT.

BY THE REV. MICHAEL EASTWOOD, NEW BROMPTON, CHATHAM.

"Let your speech be seasoned with salt."—COL. iv. 6.

THESE words are homely as the kitchen and mystical as heaven.

Those two elements, indeed, make up our religion—heavenliness and homeliness; so that, at the risk of an improper introduction to my sermon, I am tempted to pause and address you, my sister, who may be borne down with the cares of the household. Don't feel vexed and ashamed if you are too weary to remember the sermon: remember the homely text. Let it remind you of Him who is not too great to use the words of the kitchen itself, and who, even in His resurrection glory, bent over the fire, preparing a fish-breakfast for His tired hungry "boys," as He called the Apostles. Think of that, and let it season your dull daily life with its own sweet influence.

But while one is struck with the homely voice of the text, who can fail to detect something else? The words are simple as St. John's; they are also mystical as St. John's; and they contain the word *Logos*—now familiar to most sermon-hearers. It means the WORD; it means Christ. In the text, however, it is applied to ourselves; to our *self* rather than to our talk. And the Apostle Paul means: "To be like Christ, to have your life as a holy discourse, it must have been touched through and through with saving grace."

We did not make a mistake, then, in allowing our text to lead us straight to Christ. Christ is salvation, and "salvation" is, both literally and figuratively, the state of having been salted. The Christian life, then, is one that has been seasoned and interpenetrated with something independent of itself—the saving power of Christ.

1. This being so, our life, our "speech" is COMPLEX. Like salt itself, which is not a simple substance (salt is a metal and a gas: sodium and chlorine blended together; a solid foundation and a subtle element upon and within it), it is a mysterious union. It is the work of God. As *the Logos*, the Word, equals humanity and divinity, distinct yet blended, so our "speech," our life, must have Christ within it, really, truly, mystically.

Let it be clearly understood, then, the text does not primarily mean our talk, but ourselves. Our self is to be united to Christ. Then our speech, our talk, will be reformed, as a matter of course; and of us it may truly be said, "The style is the man."

2. But do not forget the idea with which we started: that our discourse is to be HOMELY. Again like salt, for common every-day use and by common every-day people. This glorious mysticism is not monopolised by the great or the learned; into its secrets the lowliest persons may be initiated, and such are in the majority. Some of the most charming speech in this country is to be heard amongst our working people, as we call them—bright, picturesque, vigorous, solid, and subtle. The novelist himself feels that his book is a failure without such an instance, and I have heard both great preacher and learned professor acknowledging with tears their indebtedness to our working men—men who can talk like John Bunyan. May God multiply them! May He give us grace to imitate them!

Oh! for more Saxon speech—pure, mighty, and homely as our forefathers' in the German forests ages ago! How often we forget that one of the first canons of art is that the grander the thought the simpler the speech!

We should laugh at anybody who (outside a laboratory) talked of sodic chloride instead of salt. It is accurate—but it's silly. And yet we are often equally silly in the pulpit and elsewhere with our stilted phrases. Oh! for more salt—more of the spirit of Him whom the common people heard gladly.

3. As already hinted, if our speech is homely it will be PURE. Home, sweet home!—there is purity. And not, indeed, until a language has become saturated with the saving salt of Divine grace does it contain a word for "home." We may have "houses," but not homes, without Christ.

The dazzling whiteness of salt should ever tell us that our life is not only to be pure, but purifying. It has been already stated that salt contains chlorine—a pungent gas, most aggressive in its silent methods, killing disease-germs and bleaching all it touches. Does not this remind us of the odour of sanctity that invests the humblest Christian, even when he does not say a word? In such an atmosphere, iniquity pales its purple face, and moral disease-germs shrivel up. This is in the pungent odour of sanctity—not the odour of cant, in which iniquity grows rampant.

So we are reminded at every step that mere outward salvation is a farce. The assumption of a new attitude, the adoption of a new kind of talk, ever tells its own story. Religion is to begin at the heart and work its way through the whole man. Then the right speech follows as a matter of course.

From salt and purity the mind instinctively turns to the thought of corruption: a word that preaches a very solemn sermon, for it tells, not of mere loathsomeness, but of *breaking up*—dissolution. Thus grains of salt are diamond links that bind together the elements they preserve. Without these our life is rapidly breaking up—a mere heap of carrion on the sands of time, on which the black vultures of God ever swoop down; nay, not of God, but of our own retributive imagination.

4. But, again, salt SPARKLES; and so should our Christian speech. It does. A thorough Christian is glad. Every word of his you will find like a grain of salt—a diamond—going about its office with a conscious flash of joy. The speech of Christ's most devoted servants has never been dull and insipid; it has always been full of humour, flavour, and attractiveness. Such words are treasured in books. Such men are interviewed by the press, and their words—bright and beautiful—are sown broadcast over the land. And when such men die, their sayings are preserved in little volumes called "table-talk;" and everybody is eager for a pinch to flavour his dish.

5. Nor is this inconsistent with TEARS. Tears are salt. The true Christian cannot talk long without some word of simple, mighty pathos. For the flavour of Christian speech is got from the deep salt sea that moans with tearful emphasis by day and by night; it is got from the Eternal Rock, whose grave sweet face is baptised with the same baptism; it is got from the caverns of sorrow, where the tears trickle down, unseen by man, but stored by God Himself, who pours them out, sweet and *sal*utary, for the good of the world.

Ah! those tears: coming down from heaven, they clash together, and make our sweetest music; they catch the sevenfold light of the sun, and make our noblest pictures; they shine from our hymns, and sparkle from our humorists; they patter gently upon our mightiest sermons when the thunder has rolled away; and yet in every drop lingers lightning enough to leap out and scathe the tents of wickedness. "Jesus wept!"

Friend, when once you have been baptised with those tears, you are a new creation, a new creature, a new man, a new child; and your life, be you the most silent man that ever lived, is a "speech seasoned with salt."

BIRTHDAY HYMN:

FOR ONE BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

MY star is the star of Jesus,
I was born 'neath its glorious ray;
My hope is the hope of Jesus,
Which leads to the endless day.

My path is the path of Jesus,
I'll walk by the way He trod;
I'll follow the lead of Jesus—
He leads to the throne of God.

I'll think of my Saviour Jesus,
If the way be rough and drear;
I know if I look to Jesus,
He will make it smooth and clear.

I'll lean on the breast of Jesus,
Till my time on earth is o'er,
Then, borne in the arms of Jesus,
Through the azure sky I'll soar.

When, washed in the blood of Jesus,
I stand before the Throne,
I'll know that the love of Jesus
Has brought me there alone. M. H. B.

MISS HILARY'S SUITORS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WILFUL YOUNG WOMAN," ETC. ETC.



"'Let me go home directly, please,' was the answer, as Hilary laid her arms on the table."—*p.* 170.

CHAPTER VII.

HILARY hastened to the library, where Mr. Stafford had been ushered, bright, expectant—truth to tell, rather inclined to be rebellious.

Nothing more serious occurred to her than the possibility of being suddenly called home before her stay at Steeple Forncett was completed. She was quite accustomed to free rein one hour and a sharp taste of the curb the next. Aunt Phil had thoroughly trained her *protégée* to receive metaphorically a sound cuff one moment, to be promptly atoned for by unlimited indulgence. Likely enough, therefore, she was to be snatched away from her first triumph, Cinderella fashion, by some freak of her beneficent old fairy, and then perchance her obedience would be rewarded by a ten times grander function at Abbotswick; which was all very well, but she did want to stop where she was a little longer—her steps were hovering about such wondrous regions; it was hard to be plucked thence, and planted again within the prosaic boundaries of

the spinster-ruled home yonder. Hilary's expressive mouth was drawn into wilful protest when, looking her most attractive in a soft dress of lace shrouding some shimmering stuff that matched Aunt Phil's amethyst ring, she appeared before Norris Stafford, expostulation in her first words.

"What an untimely hour for a call!" she exclaimed. "I have the greatest mind not to shake hands with you till I hear what you have to say. If it is that I am to go back to-night, I shall be inclined never to speak to you again, Mr. Stafford." Then she lifted her soft rounded arms, linking her fingers behind her head. "Now, please, why have you come?" she demanded. "I must hear before I know how to behave."

Mr. Stafford felt as though set wantonly to crush some winged creature, happy, harmless, and so fair that any but a callous brute must be fond of it. From the bottom of his heart he wished those frightened servants had sent any but himself on this errand; and yet thankful was he that no one rougher than himself had the task of making her acquainted with sorrow. The child—resolutely he kept her removed from him by age as well as by other differences fate had cast between them—the poor child had never known a single care in all her young days. She must be gently dealt with now. He met her imperative question evasively, drawing a chair forward for her as he said—

"I am afraid I must get into disgrace with you, then, for you *are* wanted back at Abbotswick."

"Oh! too bad," cried Hilary impetuously, retreating from the unwelcome message as though inclined to hie away whither the sound of music invited her. "Whatever does Aunt Phil——?"

"Hush!" said Norris Stafford kindly, but very gravely.

A something in his voice quenched Hilary's protest; an instinct of terror warned her what was coming. She had been forgetting, in the whirl of these last few days, the curious reluctance with which Aunt Phil had parted from her—the shadows on those firm features, which always scorned to show signs of ailment or age. Now she remembered all too vividly. Coupled with this midnight recall, it meant——

"Does Aunt Phil want me?" she questioned, coming eagerly forward. "Shall I go to her now, directly?"

"They will be glad of you—home," said the curate; "but——"

The silence of those next seconds told her all. He could see how she trembled, and stretched his arm out towards her. She caught his strong ready hand in both hers.

"Oh, Aunt Phil! Aunt Phil!" she cried. "She was so good to me, and I was away from her." The colour swept from her cheeks, and, absolutely unthinking of aught save this strange new desolation, she bowed her head upon his arm with a great sob.

Some men might have made capital out of the moment; but not such a one as Norris Stafford. Her sorrow fenced the girl about with reverence. And, more than that, she had come into her dominion now; and all those Abbotswick acres and thousands put a great gulf between him and her, that never had seemed so deep and so unbridgeable as in this hour, when a passion, hitherto repressed as madness, would keep surging up in his breast, and he scarcely dared comfort her lest he should betray his unspeakable folly.

Poor Hilary's foibles, her rough-shod riding over his tastes—wilful or careless, be it which it might—her fits of ill-judged generosity and girlish domineering, were all condoned, as her brown head lay—now so sadly bowed—close to his heart. He had had some schooling in self-restraint, and needed it to the full, when the mere mannish impulse in him was to gather her to him and soothe her pain with true love's tenderness. If he was not to say and do now what commonsense told him sternly he would repent all his life long, he must hold fast to mere official ground, and remember he had come to this heiress as parish curate, nothing more.

"I will do anything I can for you; what will you wish?" he asked, guiding her to a seat; the warm clasp of her fingers was more than he could bear.

"Let me go home directly, please," was the answer as Hilary laid her arms on the table, her face hid within them, not weeping—tears were very rare with her—but stunned, self-reproachful, and bewildered.

Mr. Stafford freed himself with a sensation as of a narrow escape, rang for Miss St. John's maid, and left the room to arrange for the homeward drive.

The Cavenhams met him in the hall, knowing already what had brought him over. Music was silenced now—the party preparing to depart out of deferential civility to their rich bereaved young neighbour.

"Horridly sudden, wasn't it?" said the General curtly, button-holing the curate with quite an affronted air. Miss Humphreys was slightly his junior. Any acquaintance who quitted the world under fourscore, the old officer considered cut off untimely, a discredit to their class—the Cavenhams having as a family a keen appreciation of this world's enjoyments, and a most mortal aversion to renouncing the same. "What the goodness did she die of? Bronchitis? Caught cold at her luncheon the other day?"—keeping up a running commentary on Mr. Stafford's brief account. "Oh, h'm—heart too. Syncope. Nasty complication, I suppose. Should have thought a Humphreys had more stay in her, though. She's the last of a tough stock. Miss Hilary yonder founds a new dynasty, eh? Send us notice of the funeral. I shall—er—shall—er—send George over to it. Daresay Miss Hilary won't care to see me before she goes. My daughters can make my condolences. Bother those fellows! why don't they keep the door shut? Draughts play the mischief with my gout. Good-night to you, Mr. Stafford." And off limped the old man, with as juvenile a step as he could assume, solacing himself with the reflection that his own grandfather and father had been octogenarians, and he was not a whit behind them in vigour. "Though I question," he meditated in his own sanctum, "if George will make as good a record, if he doesn't pull up. Dreadfully unlucky, this happening. Another day and he might have squared matters with the

heiress. Astonishingly awkward! The girls must contrive to keep about her, though, and play George's cards for him, before other fellows cut in after her money. I'll give them a hint presently."

The young ladies, however, were plying Hilary with affectionate attentions. Gertrude was anxiously offering refreshments to fortify her for her hasty drive. Mary, with her arm about her young guest's waist, was solemnly repeating such disjointed scraps of pious consolation as she could rake out of her memory on the spur of the moment. Grateful for their proffered remedies of all kinds Hilary knew she ought to be; but, faint and sore-spirited, their ceaseless buzz of consolation half distracted her.

"Oh, by-and-by I can talk, but not yet," she pleaded wearily. "Isn't Pullen ready? I do so want to get away now;" which was really not at all grateful of her, as the ladies commented later on, though at the present moment they only said—

"Dear girl, she must do exactly as she chose." And one ran up-stairs to fetch a down-lined cloak in which to enfold the young mourner, whispering, "You will let somebody come for it one day very soon;" and the other—saying, "Poor George is waiting to take you to your carriage; he is so distressed for you, dear"—beckoned her brother to the library door, and with farewell embraces gave Hilary to his keeping thence to the hall steps.

"I know you must be awfully down, and in fact—er—so—er—am I," said Captain George, piloting her with elaborate care. "I shan't be easy till I know how you get on. I must just ride round and hear to-morrow. You won't object—er—Hilary?" dropping his voice, and venturing to press her hand expressively as she sank back among the soft wraps which Maria had ready for her.

Hilary made no answer, but she did not forbid his call, and the young man saw her depart in a state of comparative elation. He had no rival in the field as yet. Before he retired to rest that night this confident suitor was calculating how many hunters could be accommodated at Abbotswick, and which apartment in the old mansion would be best fitted for a billiard-table.

So plunged in sadness and thought was Hilary that they were half-way home before they spoke. Then remembering who had come for her, "Where is Mr. Stafford?" she said; and Maria answered—

"He is on the box, 'sides of Pullen, miss—ma'am—Miss Hilary," uncertain how to address her new mistress.

And outside in the chill fog and darkness of night, simply caretaker of her within the carriage, as he kept telling himself grimly, Mr. Stafford drove up to Abbotswick. Even there he let Wilkins and Joyce come forth to receive their young lady with tearful ceremony, without himself appearing to the fore.

All tended Miss St. John assiduously. Mrs. Wilkins had a fire lighted for her in the room where she last saw Miss Humphreys.

"We knew you'd sure come back shivery, miss," said this thoughtful housekeeper.

The Netley doctor was waiting to explain deferentially how none could have foreseen, nothing possibly averted, this fatal event. His own call on that very day had merely been by accident, to speak about some cottagers on the estate. Miss Humphreys, poor lady, had quite resented his hint that she was not looking in her usual health, and had totally declined any advice.

"Same as she wouldn't have us send for you, miss, in the afternoon," put in Joyce, with a curtsey. "I spoke of it more than once—I did indeed; but poor mistress seemed so put out and flustered like. She'd been wonderful uneasy sin' Saturday, miss, and wouldn't take a word from no one; so I do hope you won't lay not seeing her to me."

Then the doctor took respectful leave. He knew little of Hilary, save by sight. Possibly he might keep his foot in Abbotswick, though under her rule; so he was profuse in offers of any possible assistance. Wilkins came in, asking apologetically if he might trouble Miss St. John to say "Whether she would like a carriage sent for her papa in the morning? A groom was stopping up for orders."

All recognised her now as their head. All looked for direction to Hilary; and to herself even it seemed perfectly natural they should do so.

It was an hour before, very white and tired, attended obsequiously by housekeeper and maid, she went through the hall on her way up-stairs. Then her forgetfulness struck her a second time. "Mr. Stafford is gone?" she said, looking wistfully round, as if half expecting he might emerge from one of the dark oak chairs.

"Yes, miss; as you were busy, and did not seem to want him particular, Mr. Stafford would not have you interrupted," Joyce answered.

She was utterly fagged and overwrought, for his so going actually gave her an extra pang; though in simple propriety he could hardly remain. Many a time she had evaded his good-bye. Why was it that now, among all the kind words that people had been showering on her, she so missed a few from him, and went to her troubled rest the sadder for that want?

CHAPTER VIII.

Tidings of what had occurred at Abbotswick reached Mr. St. John the following day, and threw him into a mixed state of mourning and elation, the one difficult to maintain, the other more so to conceal.

"Bless me, what news!" he hastily exclaimed, scanning Hilary's brief note. "How sudden! How—dear me, yes—how very lamentable! Maria," to his wife, "be calm; we have lost our dear relative: Miss Humphreys is taken from us. I must go at once to my poor child. She will want me immediately, at once, though she doesn't say so.—Jane," to an extremely slatternly domestic, "draw the front blinds down. Is that"—glancing out of the window—"the postman? Oh, no—butcher."

"Come about his bill, I expect, sir," said Jane bluntly; "he was here again last night, only I said you was out."

"Ah! poor fellow; wants his money sharp to the quarter perhaps," said her master carelessly. "Tell him I'll attend to it as soon as I am released from

Abbotswick. Mention what has happened, and say I am off there at once. And—er—h'm—tell—yes, Miss St. John's groom to walk the horse up and down till I'm ready; I shall return with him. And, Jane, Mrs. St. John is much upset, as you see"— the lady, looking rather more helpless than usual, was weeping according to custom—"of course, she sees no callers. If anyone comes, explain our bereavement; and relieve your mistress of housekeeping as much as possible."

"Yes, sir," said Jane, with becoming gravity. As a matter of fact, the housekeeping generally resolved itself into whatever joint Mr. Perkins chose to send, and whatever pudding the children plagued her for. But to-day a solemn grandeur had fallen on the family, and she was quite equal to donning her share of it. The old lady who used occasionally to drive up for Miss Hilary in the fine carriage with what the maid's unheraldic tongue dubbed "a sort of bear a-showing of his teeth" on the door-panels, had not manifested particular affection for the household—never, indeed, having once entered the villa walls; still, it was a fine thing to be connected with the demise of an individual who had sat behind such a fine pair of prancing steeds. So Jane went off and repeated her orders with due importance, prompt'y feeling herself afflicted to the degree of expecting a black dress for Sundays, with bonnet to match.

Mr. St. John continued his directions while, upstairs, he made a carefully hurried toilet, his wife shedding salt tears over his garments as she handed them to him.

"I daresay, when the news spreads, people will come up out of curiosity to hear what Hilary is worth now. Don't see more than one or two, Maria. We won't be uncivil to anyone—the St. Johns are above that—but we shall have to drop the town people now. My daughter Hilary will prefer our associating exclusively with the county set. Don't cry on my necktie, my love; satin marks so. The little girls need not go to school. Send word what has taken place to Miss Fish, and say that Frances and Philippa" (the small maiden had been named, without leave, after Miss Humphreys, who had resented the liberty by never taking the slightest notice of the child) "may have to come with you to their sister's, at Abbotswick.—Black coat, my love. It's shabby, but I shall order another suit for the—end of the week—as I go by Bond's. Tell Bertie to be punctual at the office this morning for once." (This was the eldest lad, edged, on the strength of the Abbotswick connection, into Mr. Milroy's office; sorely against his will, though, for he longed to be a miller, or somehow employed among farm produce!) "Now ring for the dog-cart to draw up. If my dear girl desires it, I shall order the brougham over for you presently; so be prepared."

Then Mr. St. John descended, tying a scarf round his neck with an appearance of agitated speed, to impress inquisitive neighbours; stepped up beside the groom, drove all down London Street with folded arms and gloomy importance on his countenance, returned with abstracted air the salutations of a few acquaintances, explained at the club, lest anyone should want him there to-day (which was not in the least likely), the mournful reason of his absence, and drove rapidly towards Abbotswick, feeling under his lengthened visage in such tremendously high spirits he had much ado to keep himself from chuckling.

Once at the house, actually in deputy possession, Mr. St. John was in his element. "My poor child, my dear Hilary, leave everything to me," he begged. "Suggest your wishes; your father will see them carried out. I will be by you through this melancholy week; it is my duty, and, without the faintest disrespect to the generous, noble-minded relative we have lost, it is my pleasure too. Never have I dwelt on what it cost me to be separated from you, Hilary; but there are moments when a father's feelings cannot be suppressed, and I dare say now, without giving offence to anyone, how often I have longed that you and I could live together more as father and daughter. Trouble and joy are strangely mixed in this world; even in the midst of this grief I cannot help rejoicing that you and I can now be more with each other, and to each other, than heretofore."

Hilary, unrested from broken sleep, and missing Aunt Phil most acutely this cheery autumn morning, took her father's help unhesitatingly. Unused to any form of trouble, business was positively repugnant to her now. Uneasy, moreover, under her father's frequent embraces, for which she felt somehow less grateful than she ought, she willingly passed her power into his hands, desirous only of being left silently to nurse the grief which was assuredly Aunt Phil's due.

So Mr. St. John took the reins from the young *châtelaine;* and sent for his wife to superintend clothing the establishment suitably. "Joyce knows everything, I should think; but mamma can come if you like," Hilary had said, caring nothing about it either way. And under their joint directions telegrams flashed up to London, and lavish orders flowed into Brainford.

The important parent sat in the half-shuttered library and interviewed tradesmen, housekeeper, butler, and bailiff. He was condescending to all, but distinctly masterful—feeling himself, as more than one remarked, "somebody now, and no mistake;" and this delightful mood was in full swing when Mr. Milroy was announced in the afternoon.

"Very glad to see you," he said languidly, putting forth a hand without rising, as if worn out with his labours. "Sad, isn't it? Extremely. How little we know what a day may bring forth! Won't you take a glass of wine? No? Well, sit down—sit down. I don't think we've left much for you to trouble about. My dear child and I have made all arrangements."

Mr. Milroy put his grey head on one side and reflected some half-minute. Then he said, "May I ask what your arrangements are?"

And Mr. St. John with pompous relish recapitulated all preparations for the last rite to be performed on the Thursday following.

The lawyer listened, gravely stroking his chin at each item, rather elevating his eyebrows when he heard of Mrs. St. John and the twins being already quartered at Abbotswick. "Miss St. John desired that very much?" he questioned.

XUM

"Naturally, my dear sir—naturally," was the reply. And Mr. Milroy nodded, as if reassuring himself on that score, which somewhat provoked Mr. St. John, who concluded loftily, "So till Thursday I may say we shall not have to trespass on your time any more. I presume you will attend then, and we shall hear from you the last injunctions of our honoured relative."

Mr. Milroy got up slowly.

"Yes," he said—"yes, I shall be here. One o'clock, you tell me? No doubt you've consulted Mr. Stafford?"

"Consulted Mr. Stafford!" repeated Hilary's father, entirely superior to consulting anyone at all except himself; "dear me, no. On such occasions the—the—er—party's time has to be the clergyman's. Besides, he is only the curate."

"He's a gentleman," said Mr. Milroy drily, "and represents the rector. He ought to be asked if the hour suits him, before fixing it finally. I'll walk down and name it to him myself, if you like."

But Mr. St. John held jealously fast to every scrap of patronage. "I think," he answered, "it may, on the whole, be best for me to see the young man. I'll send for him to come up here presently."

Which he accordingly did, and, carrying down from Hilary a message, "Would Mr. Stafford please have everything just as Aunt Phil would like it?" found the curate, though mortifyingly unpatronisable, so ready and anxious to be of service that Mr. St. John affably made considerable use of him. It was a small glorification he much enjoyed, this having the parish pastor to convey his messages and behests. So though Norris Stafford found little to like in Hilary's father, still, the fact of his so being, and the dear delight of working in some way for her comfort, took him willingly backwards and forwards to Abbotswick during the next two days, and thereby were sown seeds of apprehension in another man.

On Wednesday, as on Tuesday, Captain Cavenham rode round to inquire after Miss St. John. As he trotted down the drive he caught sight of a tall, square-shouldered figure coming up the avenue. "Who's that on yonder?" he asked the groom who came to his horse's head.

"Mr. Stafford, sir, if you mean him that's just left the house."

"Left? Oh! been calling like myself, I suppose?"

"Don't know, sir. Mr. Stafford's comin' and goin' pretty often; he've been up three times to-day. You see, he's one everybody looks to about here when they're in a fix; though, to be sure, Miss Hilary have got plenty of others about her. Here's Wilkins, sir."

Captain Cavenham sent in the most anxious-sounding message he could invent; received in reply nothing warmer than "Mr. St. John's compliments, he was happy to say his daughter was fairly well;" then rode away, plunged in unpleasant thought. What if this curate fellow took it into his head to make up to the young heiress? to turn his position as parson, consoler, and so forth, to his own advantage? He certainly looked at her very oddly that luncheon day; Gertrude had noticed it, and women were sharp about such things. What if he made a bold stroke to secure Hilary in these early days of seclusion, when she was shut off from other would-be suitors?

The very thought was enough to give a man a fit of jaundice. The Captain revolved it moodily all the way home, then found out his favourite sister, and laid the untoward aspect of the case before her.

"I'll tell you what it is," he ended desperately, "if this falls through, it's all up with me. A chap with my allowance can't do in the cavalry, unless he's closer-fisted than I ever shall be. If this confounded curate has spoilt my game, I shall throw up my commission, slope off to the colonies, and live upon my wits. That's what will have to be done if I lose Miss Hilary."

Gertrude was deep in her younger brother's confidence, and knew that the credit side of his accounts stood at next to *nil*, while the debit side, alas! ran into alarmingly lengthy figures. But she was fond of him, and almost believed what she was constantly telling her father, "that of course he would pull up all right if he were once married." To that end she set herself to work now to aid him, and suggested as the best thing to be done that he should outwit the presumptuous curate by proposing without another hour's delay.

"You don't like the idea of losing her; you'd give anything if you had her safely engaged to you, if you might see her a minute, or write to her, or anything of that sort," she said. "Well, just think hard of the situation, and of what a horrid nuisance it would be to let her slip, and then sit down and dash your sensations off in a letter. If it's incoherent, that does not in the least matter. We'll send it over this evening. That's the only thing I can think of, and I believe it's your best chance."

"Sharp work, isn't it? before the old dame's exactly—er—done with?" demurred her brother, gnawing his moustaches in his perplexity; "and I'm such a duffer at letter-making."

"Then manage somehow else for yourself," said his sister severely.

"You know very well I can't," he retorted in desperation; "so come along and help me, there's a good soul."

And the upshot of much consultation and a great many spoiled sheets of paper was a note which Joyce handed to Hilary just as that day began to close.

No unluckier moment could have been hit upon for its arrival. She was leaning on the balustrade that crossed the hall window, looking at the churchyard; a sort of fascination hung about the work-people still busy there.

"From Captain Cavenham?" she said, almost incredulous, and read the missive by the waning light.

"Dear Miss St. John" (it ran),—"It was with difficulty I could leave Abbotswick to-day without begging to see you. It seemed so hard to let you go on Monday without saying what I wanted. Indeed, though I fear I ought to be more patient, I positively cannot wait through a whole formal week without telling you plainly what I think you must have already guessed. I feel sure you know you have my happiness in your keeping. I am thoroughly wretched till I hear what hope you will give me. A single line, a

single word, just the dear promise that I long for" ["I say, Gerty," said Captain George, coming to this passage, "draw it mild!"—"Go on," said his sister peremptorily, and on he went], "will make me the happiest of men. The right to share your present" ["Income," said the Captain.—"If you've no sense of decency in you," said Gertrude, "finish your letter by yourself," and after that he joked no more] "trouble will be a cherished privilege. Dear—may I not say 'dearest'?—Hilary, give me leave to do this, and to be ever, as now, yours devotedly,

"GEORGE CAVENHAM."

Hilary's colour deepened at each line. Attention, admiration had been very sweet; by-and-by she was not unwilling to think she might taste them again. But this other strange mystic elixir! She dared not, would not for one instant suffer herself to think about it now. It jarred upon every better feeling of her nature, this proffered love-making under the very shadow of her kinswoman's death, within sight of her empty grave. What George Cavenham could be to her or she to him hereafter, she would not permit herself to dwell upon. He ought not to have spoken of it so soon. It was difficult for the girl to feel anger against the first man who had asked her to be his wife; but there was rebuke in the brief note the messenger took back:—

"DEAR CAPTAIN CAVENHAM,—Indeed I cannot give you any answer yet. "H. ST. JOHN."

And the young man used unparliamentary language when he found he had got nothing by his forced move.

CHAPTER IX.

UNDER Mr. St. John's directions the chief event of the next fateful Thursday expanded into an imposing and largely attended ceremonial.

All the forenoon through, a solemn bustle pervaded the old house. For tenants and such-like a repast was spread in the steward's room. In the dining-room an elaborate funeral feast waited those of higher degree. The self-constituted major-domo of the day's proceedings harassed the servants half out of their senses, and himself into a feverish state of pompous excitement. "I wouldn't have another such day," spoke Wilkins, when Miss Hilary's father had rung the library bell for the tenth time in an hour, to remind the old butler of something a boy in buttons at his first place could not possibly have forgotten—"I wouldn't go through all this again—no, not for double what my poor missis may have left me!" And, indeed, the active gentleman felt that his exertions were earning solid requital at his daughter's hands so soon as she should have the dispensing of her coming wealth.

At noon he took it upon himself to receive all comers "in his dear daughter's stead," and sunned himself amazingly in the respectful attention his vicarious position gave him. The tenants all rose as to the landlord *in propria personâ* when he went the round of their table. He waved them magnificently to their seats, thanking them in Miss St. John's name for their attendance. Captain Cavenham was sedulously polite to him. Mr. Bevis, who had worked his way into the party rather against Mr. Milroy's inclination, handed Mr. St. John his hat in the hall, and helped him on with his new overcoat, and would have cheerfully brushed his boots had he wished it. This prudent young man would bind himself by any civility to a prosperous client. And then Hilary's parent headed the long black procession down the avenue with an afflicted stateliness—he was a fine and personable man—that was quite the crowning piece of his perfunctory acting.

"Mrs. St. John stays with our dear child," everyone was informed; but in fact that lady stood peeping through the Venetian blinds of the hall window at the moving train tramping away over the fallen chestnut leaves. The good lady was much excited in her own mild way, and had so worried her rich step-daughter with gushes of obsequious condolence that Hilary had pleaded to be left alone till really wanted; and now, to get free of small Frances and Philippa (whom, beautifully arrayed in fashionable mourning, their mother was continually sending with smelling-salts, eau-de-cologne, or a large-type prayer-book, and other tormentingly officious attentions), she made her way to the garden, hid herself in the old yew arbour (Aunt Phil's favourite resting-place), and there sat listening, all alone, while the slow beat of the church-bell floated up across the hazy meadows.

It ceased presently; and filled with living, youthful dread of what that silence signified, Hilary sat, her hands lightly clasped, thinking with a great aching in her heart of that wide past which this moment cut finally off from her life. Poor Aunt Phil's cranks and quips of temper, as of tongue, faded clean out of mind: nothing remained to memory but her great generous goodness to the one she had adopted. Tears slowly welled up in Hilary's dark eyes as she recalled her sometime impatience of her kinswoman's curb, her flat defiance of her rules. Ah! if the lost could only be recalled, how differently she would show herself now, thought Hilary, longing vainly after that past which can never be re-handled by the touch that would fain be tenderer, never re-moulded by a spirit taught wisdom—perchance by wholesome pain. And while she was so longing, minutes sped by; feet came rustling back under the fading trees; the enshuttered house received some of the returning company; and Mr. St. John, his very step elastic with anticipation, came down the broad path, looking for his daughter.

"Milroy rather officiously suggested," he said, bestowing on her an impressive salute, "that I should hear the last testamentary directions and repeat them to you, my love. But I overruled the proposition. 'It is Miss St. John's right and duty to be first apprised of these,' I said; 'she ought certainly to be present.' So I have come to fetch you, my child. There are only just ourselves—except, indeed, the curate. As Mr. Milroy took upon himself to invite him back, I bade that other well-behaved young man, Bevis, join us too. He may become your legal adviser in time, so you won't mind him. Of course I shall be by your side. These

scenes affect the St. John constitution acutely. Doubtless I shall suffer for this week when it is over; but now my dear daughter commands me, regardless of consequences. Do you feel equal to coming?"

Hilary felt equal to anything rather than this rush of words. Instantly she rose, and, not noticing her father's offered arm, walked erect towards the house, giving her head a quick backward gesture, as if to order away the unusual weakness that dimmed her eyes. Mr. Bevis, watching her approach from the low window of the drawing-room, commented silently on the movement: "Carries herself like a young duchess. Called me 'Mr. *Medis*' the other day. Should think she'll have forgotten my name altogether now. It's a fine thing to be born lucky. Shouldn't find it hard to give myself airs under similar circumstances; don't I wish I had the chance!"

Entering from the garden, Hilary caught sight of a figure on the other side of the hall, and her momentary glance was met by a bow that spoke a whole chapter of expectation and entreaty. She looked quickly away, blushing and vexed; keenly conscious that Captain Cavenham's marked presence there at such an hour was a violation of all good taste. Her father saw her rising colour, and apologised for the suitor, who had used five minutes returning from church to such good purpose that Mr. St. John was of opinion Hilary might do worse by-and-by than take this member of a county family with only three weak lives between him and an earldom.

"Captain Cavenham would not intrude upon you for worlds, my child; but he was so deeply anxious to know how you had borne this, I myself permitted him to come and wait a message, possibly a few words with you."

"Not to-day, papa—not to-day," said Hilary, peremptorily, and passed swiftly into the drawing-room.

"Ask the Captain to stay and join Mr. Milroy and myself at coffee in a few minutes," Mr. St. John desired Wilkins, as he followed his daughter. If Hilary had no taste for the cup of congratulation in its first freshness, *he* had!

Mr. Bevis was quite right. Miss St. John not only forgot his name, but overlooked his very presence this morning. Something seemed suddenly to unnerve her in the portentous stillness of the big room, where the tall basket chair was set away up a distant corner, and everyone ceased speaking as she entered. Inheritance and wealth were alluring enough from a vague distance, but it did seem so cruel of her to step now into enjoyment of what Aunt Phil could nevermore share. When Mr. Milroy came forward to greet her kindly, she could only answer with an uncertain smile; and the hand was trembling that she laid in Norris Stafford's brief clasp.

Regardless of the deep velvet lounge which Mr. St. John was wheeling forward as fitting for the queen of the occasion, Hilary seated herself close to where the curate stood. He seemed the oldest friend she had there. Even her father she had seen less often than him, and knew less well. Mr. St. John, with an air of appropriation, planted himself behind her. His wife took the vacant lounge, gave a jump when Mr. Milroy said, "H'm!" and began to cry in a most suitable manner, little shining drops falling on her beautiful jet *passementerie* in a gentle shower that developed into a heavy downpour before the business was over.

"A—hem," said Mr. Milroy again, puckering up his lips and rubbing his eyeglasses, as he took a chair slowly by Miss Humphreys' office table (Mr. Bevis, in the rear, balancing himself carefully on a milking-stool, mentally adjured him to "hurry up"), "I—feel—some—little difficulty—I might almost say, some little pain—in making known these last instructions of my late client. By most extraordinary—chance, may we call it?—this will was only executed on Saturday last. As friend as well as solicitor to the testatrix, I am not ashamed to say it was executed contrary to my advice; but Miss Humphreys was not a lady easily diverted from any purpose, and I was unable to influence her in the slightest degree. Had she lived a little longer, it's extremely probable she would have reversed this disposition of her property, which I have now no choice but to communicate to those concerned." Then he broke the seal of a huge envelope, unfolded the enclosed document, and running rapidly through the first few clauses, which dealt only with unimportant legacies to servants, came to the paragraph for which Mr. St. John waited with anxiety, fanned by the lawyer's preamble into half-frenzied impatience:—

"To the distant relative whom I have brought up from her infancy, and provided thus far with a good home and a liberal education, I bequeath the additional benefit of a small independent income. I desire my executor to place the sum of two thousand five hundred pounds in Government stock producing four per cent., and to pay the income arising therefrom to Hilary St. John in half-yearly instalments until she shall attain the age of twenty-one, when the principal may be made over to her in full."

"O-h!" ejaculated Mrs. St. John, feebly. Hilary—startled, but hardly comprehending what she heard—turned pale, and bent ever so little towards Norris Stafford. To Mr. St. John the room spun round and round—floor, ceiling, people, pictures, all in one giddy whirl. "A hundred! A beggarly hundred a year! Only that pauper's portion to his child?" He grasped the back of Hilary's chair, his hands cold, his face clammy, such a passion of rage coursing through him from head to foot as half unsensed him.

But a gleam of hope pierced the horrid blackness. Perhaps Miss Humphreys had left some worthier bequest to him, his very own self, to be passed on hereafter to Hilary or to his other children. She had given no sign of such intention, but was odd enough for anything. At any rate, let him hear all.

"Go on, sir," he said hoarsely to Mr. Milroy, whose involuntary pause of a dozen seconds had seemed so many minutes of torturing suspense to some of his hearers; and the lawyer continued—

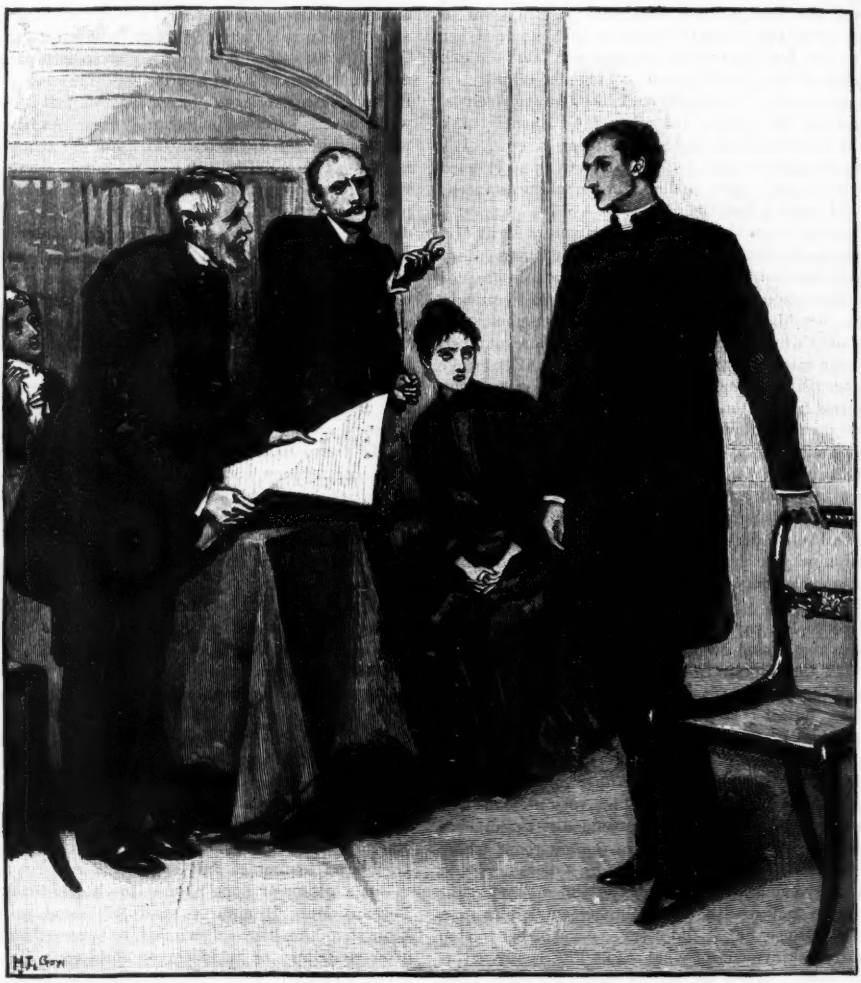
"The remainder of my estate, personal and real"—here followed a cruelly lengthy list of possessions, houses, lands, and stocks—"I give and bequeath to," Mr. St. John felt nearly suffocated as he listened—"to my tried friend Norris Stafford, clerk in holy orders, curate in charge of the parish of Netley. And I hereby appoint the said Norris Stafford sole executor

and administrator of this my last will and testament."

"Which was drawn up by my own hand, signed, witnessed, and sealed in this house the same day by the testatrix's urgent wish," said Mr. Milroy; and he laid the will down, feeling that in all his forty years' practice he had never been in the thick of a stranger upset than the present.

There was dead silence for a minute. The fortunate legatee stood simply dumfoundered by what he heard. Mrs. St. John whimpered forth a little plaintive sob. Then Mr. St. John, livid with uncontrollable rage, turned to the curate—

"So, sir, this, I presume, is the excellent use you have made of your opportunities as parish clergyman—inveigled yourself into the favour of a woman whose fancies almost amounted to insanity, and got such an ascendency over her as to defraud her relatives, to lead to this monstrous, infamous, iniquitous disposition of her property! I pronounce it robbery—robbery of my daughter, robbery of myself—a disgrace to yourself, sir, and the cloth you wear!"



"'So, sir, this, I presume, is the excellent use you have made of your opportunities.'"

Hilary sprang to her feet. Her own impoverishment was indistinct as yet, but she felt a thousand times more humiliated by this outburst than by the vanishing of any brilliant prospect on earth.

"Father," she flashed out, "don't—pray, don't—speak till you have got over it. Mr. Stafford"—she turned

to her supplanter, her pretty, girlish figure drawn up in new dignity, "my father is disappointed, and does not quite know what he says. I am sure you will excuse him."

The curate could not command his voice. He had no power to answer her. What was all this going to end in? The whole thing was so deliriously unreal, he could no more grasp his sudden enrichment than Hilary could her loss. In this overwhelming agitation he dared not even look at her. Mr. St. John caught his daughter by the arm and drew her roughly towards her stepmother.

"Make no apology for me, I beg. What I have said I shall maintain to the end of time. By every act and deed of her life Miss Humphreys led the world to believe you would be her heiress. Nothing short of undue influence can have altered her. Mr. Stafford is a lucky and unscrupulous schemer, whose appropriation of her property will be rank, gross robbery."

He was Hilary's father. Norris Stafford kept his lips fast shut with that recollection, though he burned to hurl back the false words. Mr. Milroy stepped into the breach.

"No one feels surprised at your disappointment, Mr. St. John; but let me strongly urge you to say no more till you are calmer. Meanwhile I can positively assure you that you are wrong in your idea of Mr. Stafford having wittingly biassed Miss Humphreys' disposition of her property. Only last week she complained to me in no measured terms of his—what I believe to be conscientious—unwillingness to please her, to pay her the exact sort of deference she demanded. I ventured to remind her of this last Saturday, but was bidden to attend to my own business and nothing else."

"Then, if I'm to credit this, what on earth induced her to make him her heir?"

"That's chiefly Mr. Stafford's concern," said the lawyer. "I believe her reasons are embodied in a letter which Miss Humphreys wrote with considerable care while I was drawing up her will. Here it is, exactly as she gave it to me," producing from the envelope a smaller one, sealed with the Humphreys crest, the last time it was to be used in that house. "My directions were to give this to Mr. Stafford immediately after the reading of the will. I now do so."

The curate moved forward, took the small missive, "brief sentimental supplement to the far more important business document that made him wealthy," thought Mr. Bevis, watching him enviously. Then he drew back again to the hearth-rug, and in full view of all began scanning the explanation of this his life's wondrous change.

For a page he read gravely on, betraying neither emotion nor surprise. Then all in an instant he swung quickly round, and leaning his arms on the mantle-piece, so finished perusing the letter. When he had done, he stood motionless as a statue, buried in profound thought.

Mr. St. John's exasperation was still at seething-point. The ticking of the gaudy French clock plagued him beyond expression. Could he have smashed the hideous thing, that might have eased him. Failing that relief, speak he must, spite of Hilary or anyone else.

"Well, sir," he said, with ironical courtesy, "having mastered the whys and wherefores of Miss Humphreys' proceedings, may we be informed if they furnish you with" (sarcastically) "conscientious motives for accepting her preposterous bequest?"

The curate faced round once more, but looked blankly past them all. Something had strangely, deeply affected him.

"They—do," he said.

He spoke with visible effort. A greyness, as of illness or age, had overspread his features. The kind old lawyer felt for the new-made heir almost as keenly as for the dispossessed heiress, who sat by, silent now, with tight-knit fingers, and wonder in her eyes. The sooner this conclave was broken up, the better.

"I think," he said, addressing Mr. St. John, "we are free to disperse now. About subsequent business I can communicate with your daughter or yourself later on. I am sure I only forestall Mr. Stafford when I say that Abbotswick is open to Miss St. John and—yourselves—any length of time that suits her convenience."

"Most certainly," said the curate, still gazing in curious abstraction beyond them all; but Mr. St. John resented this willing concession with a final spurt of passion.

"*And* most certainly, sir," he exclaimed, bowing ironically at Mr. Stafford, "my daughter shall not for one hour be cast upon your hospitality. I shall not suffer her to remain a night longer under the roof of which she has been defrauded. Unhappily, I must trespass on your new acquisitions," with a sneer, "to get away. I presume we shall be allowed a carriage in which to return to Brainford?—Hilary, be ready in half an hour!—Maria, see that I am not kept waiting!—Mr. Bevis, I wish you good afternoon."

Mr. St. John strode out of the room with this, to meet mortification of his own devising in his minute's interview with George Cavenham, who, in blankest unconcealed dismay, got out of the house with his ill-tidings as fast as he could.

Mr. Milroy folded up the miracle-working deed, and crossed over to where Hilary sat.

"My dear," he said, taking his leave, "I won't say what I think of you; but I should be proud of you if you were my daughter.—Good day, Mr. Stafford.—Now then, Bevis."

This last gentleman politely bowed his farewells; then Hilary was left alone with the new owner of Abbotswick.

She had declared, but a few days before, he was a man she disliked right thoroughly. Now, when he had gained everything she had lost, she had every reason to do so, and yet——

Her father's unbridled words had filled her with acutest shame. Somehow she knew they stabbed cruelly and undeservedly. Of the two, she was sorrier for the lucky man than for herself. She looked steadily and straight at him. There was no triumph written on his face, only pain; and the pain must be for her! She got up, and held her hand out to him bravely.

"Don't mind," she said; "Aunt Phil was right to do as she chose with her own. I'll never grudge it

to you, and"—just an instant's faltering—"and I hope you'll prosper in the dear old house. Good-bye."

He held her hand like a vice for half a minute; then let it fall.

"Good-bye, little Hilary," he said; "God bless you."

In less than the half-hour they were all gone. Norris Stafford stood in his own house—a rich man; but in all his life never had he felt more joyless.
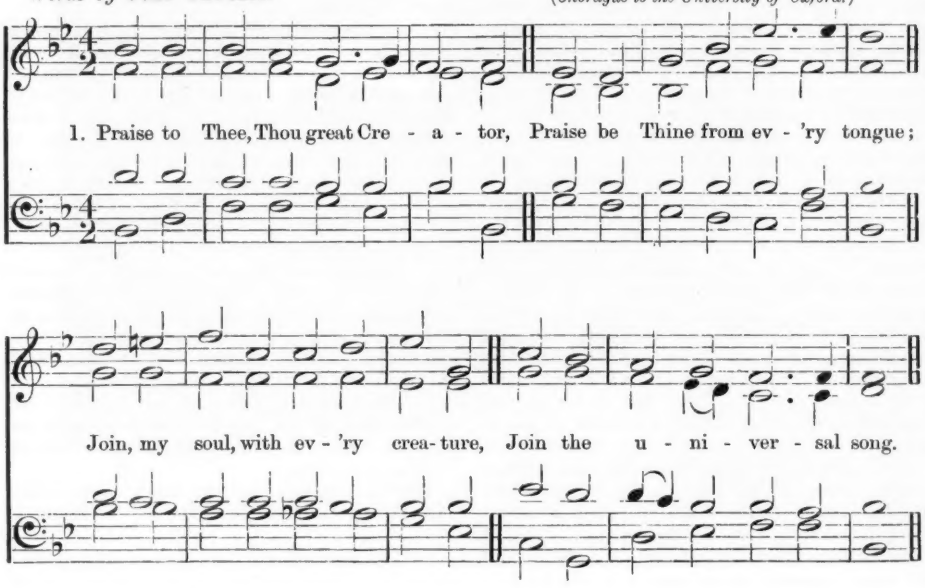
(To be continued.)



Praise to Thee, Thou great Creator.

Words by JOHN FAWCETT.

Music by C. HUBERT H. PARRY, Mus.D.
(Choragus to the University of Oxford.)



2.

Father, source of all compassion,
Pure unbounded grace is Thine;
Hail, the God of our salvation,
Praise Him for His love divine.

3.

For ten thousand blessings given,
For the hope of future joy;
Sound His praise through earth and heaven,
Sound Jehovah's praise on high.

4.

Joyfully on earth adore Him,
Till in heaven our song we raise;
There, enraptured, fall before Him,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise

GOD'S PREVENTING GOODNESS.

BY THE REV. HENRY ALLON, D.D.

"Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness."—PSALM xxi. 3.



HAT a characteristic note of the Old Testament this is! Its conception of God's rule was a stern one. The feeling of righteousness was very strong, the records of righteous retribution were very terrible, and the suffering experiences of life were very mysterious and severe, provoking outcries of remonstrance from men like Job, and David, and Jeremiah. But the feeling of God's goodness was the strongest feeling of all; nothing could repress it. It suffuses the Psalms with a wonderful sentiment of faith and joy. A new religious speech has to be created for the expression of it; such terms as "loving-kindness" and "tender mercies" are invented. Whatever the gloom, this light breaks in upon it; the thought of God's tender mercies turns every mourning into dancing. Psalms that begin as a *Miserere*, rapidly change into a *Jubilate*. The difficulties of a Job and a David find a religious solution. Job breaks out in passionate remonstrance, but still he adds, "though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." David complains of the prosperity of the wicked, and says for himself that he has "cleansed his heart in vain, and washed his hands in innocency;" and yet through the simple rising up of religious feeling, without anything happening, or a single word being said to him, the dark mood is chased away, and he sings of God's goodness. "Nevertheless, I am continually with Thee; whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee."

The feeling of God's goodness must have been amazingly strong to have prevailed, in that dispensation of imperfect knowledge, against the stern revelation of righteousness, against the dark mystery of providence.

There is nothing like it in the feeling excited by Pagan deities. Which of them—Baal, Rammuz, Moloch, Zeus, Jupiter, any one of the Olympian deities—is even thought of as a god of goodness? How is this Jewish conception—so vivid, so persistent, so predominant, so marvellous in its contrast—to be accounted for?

Here the conception of God's goodness is very remarkable; there is a kind of exuberance about it. "Thou *preventest* him with the blessings of goodness:" a significant word, which the Revised Translation has wisely preserved to us, although its earlier meaning has been somewhat modified. It literally means "to come before," but the sense now commonly attached to it is that of hindering or obstructing. We "prevent" the thing that the man would do.

But to "come before" does not necessarily mean to hinder; its more exact meaning is to anticipate, and that is the sense in which it is used here: Thou anticipatest me with the blessings of Thy goodness; they come before my prayers, even before my anxious needs. Thy blessings wait upon our necessities.

It is a striking conception of the Divine benignity: that goodness in God is so characteristic and so spontaneous, so eager for expression even, that He does not wait for the expression of our desires, nor measure His blessings by the exact requests that we make; goodness is so pervading and powerful in His disposition that it finds expression of itself, foresees and calculates our necessities, so that when the moment of necessity comes and we begin to pray, we find that, before we call, God has answered—His protecting arm is already stretched out; the necessary supplies are already garnered. He anticipates the necessities of our lives, the desires of our hearts, "crowns our lives with His loving-kindness and tender mercies," so that room for prayer is scarcely left. In the words of another Psalm, "How great is the goodness which Thou hast treasured up for them that fear Thee;" a provision of goodness as in a garner or a storehouse. Here the idea is—that God ever gets beforehand with us; we never suffer lack through His forgetfulness or negligence; upon our arrival at each successive stage or experience of life, we find all needful blessings awaiting us, our necessities anticipated, so that at length even prayer itself gives up the effort to keep pace with God's forecasting and affluent provision, and we can only with a kind of discomfited and overflowing gratitude exclaim, "Thou preventest me with the blessings of Thy goodness." Our cup runneth over, and still God's bounty poureth on.

It is a remarkable conception of God, full of religious inspiration and power. It is a great deal more than merely saying that God is good—that He supplies and helps us when we need. It represents His goodness as so fundamental to His character, as so intense in its feeling, that it devises purposes and provides rich blessings beforehand. What an inspiration the conception is to our grateful love and trust, to our strenuous obedience and endurance! No good thing fails; the habit, the law of God's dealings with us is to prevent, to anticipate us with His blessings.

That this is a great deal more than a religious imagination, or an excited personal sentiment, may be seen in the records of the entire Bible history. The feeling, the representation throughout, is of eager, anticipating goodness.

Take the representation of the first sin—

> "Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden"

—not to speak of the Eden itself, prepared for the newly created man, and enriched with every fitness, blessing, and beauty—the home of his abode, the temple of his worship—so as to be pronounced by the Creator himself to be "very good."

Not waiting for man's penitence or prayer. In the very utterance of his condemnation or sentence there is the promise of a Deliverer; a blessing is introduced into the curse. Unsolicited, unexpected, unthought-of Mercy lays its hand upon the uplifted arm of Justice. God's foreknowledge of human sin has quickened His love as well as His righteousness. The purpose to save is represented as being "from before the foundation of the world." God does not wait until sentence has been pronounced, until penalty has extorted the cry for mercy. He anticipates the retribution and its misery; before the guilty man can utter even a prayer for mercy the promise of it is eagerly added to the sentence.

Whatever the intrinsic character of the representation—literal history or religious parable—it is a marvellous and a touching conception of God's preventing goodness. While the sentence was a righteous necessity, the promise was a glad and eager goodness—"He delighteth in mercy."

So in the records of personal relations. In every instance the blessing anticipates the prayer, often the very sense of need. God tells the Jews that He chose them to be a special people, not because they were more in number than any people, but because of His love. He was "found of them that sought Him not." He said, "Behold Me! unto a nation that was not called by His name."

So the entire conception of the Gospel redemption is that its preachers are to carry it not where men crave it, but where they need it. God's yearning pity is chiefly excited by men's unconscious need. Sin has done its direst work when it has destroyed the sensibility to sin, just as slavery does its direst work when it produces the heart of a slave. "Not that we loved God, but that God loved us." "Even while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The Gospel of salvation is to be preached amongst all nations. From first to last it is the supreme illustration of the great characteristic of anticipating, preventing goodness. And in the diffusion of the Gospel through the earth, this has been the great law, the only law possible to it. Its preachers did not wait until the cry for the Gospel came to them; they "went forth everywhere preaching the Word." Thus it came to us here in the far west; thus it is now sent by us all over the world. Wherever the Gospel comes it comes as a preventing mercy; the only beseeching for it is the dumb, inarticulate cry of man's sin and misery. Its first process is to make men conscious of their need of it. It creates the sense of sin for which it is the remedy. Is it not a striking phenomenon that our great missionary societies, our home evangelising agencies, are all the spontaneous inspirations and seekings of Christian pity and philanthropy?

So with all Christian preaching. It comes as a preventing mercy to the individual hearts of men. Its first salutation to the individual man is, "Salvation is come to thine house." It awakens the feeling of need that unconsciously craves it, and the faith that lays hold upon it. Thus it came to Peter's hearers on the day of Pentecost, "pricking them in their heart;" to Lydia, "opening her heart;" to the gaoler at Philippi, awakening his solicitude to be saved. Thus it came to Saul, the arch-persecutor, "who was before a blasphemer, but who obtained mercy." We do not choose Christ; He chooses us. He "takes away the stony heart out of us, and gives us hearts of flesh." He comes "to seek and to save the lost;" His saving mercy prevents us.

The meaning of all this is—that among the religions of the world the religion of Christ alone is a great inspiration of this amazing quality of God himself. He yearns to bless men with His goodness—makes provision beforehand, that His goodness may be partaken. He is "the blessed God," because He supremely delights in blessing. The highest enhancement of His blessing lies in its spontaneousness; its supreme reason in the goodness of His own yearning heart to us sinful men. It is goodness in the supreme form of mercy, so that His grace stands in an inverse ratio to our deservings. Precisely in the degree in which we forfeit our claim to the natural rights of a creature, it pours forth its tender yearnings and beseechings; "not that we loved God, but that God loved us." Do we, think you, realise this distinctive characteristic of the God of the Bible, of the mission of Jesus Christ, of the entire Christian life of His disciples in the world? It is not merely that God is good, but that He is spontaneously good. His goodness provides beforehand for our blessing. Surely, in any comparison of the religions of the world, this is the transcendent quality of the religion of the Bible.

The field of illustration is too vast for more than general remarks and indications. We might take the physical universe, the world of things and properties which we inhabit. It is a prepared treasury of blessings, the ordinary things of everyday use, the products of the earth, trees and flowers and harvests, the economy of the heavens, sunshine and rain, the changes of the seasons, the products and forces of nature, the hidden riches of the earth, the properties which science is every day disclosing; every discovery, even to the latest, being a blessing to men, an additional ministry to men's service and happiness. Surely it is not a mere accident, that, of the myriad hidden properties of physical nature, slowly discovered through the long centuries, every one should be a minister of help and blessing, not one should be malign; and all this the work of the Creator before man appeared on the earth; so that every physical need of the human creature was provided for before he came! God "prevented him by

the blessings of His goodness." What a sermon from this great text of nature physical science has to preach!

So in the providence that rules the world—the orderings of human life—we see the same great characteristic of blessing; the affluence of thoughtful love which provides for the manifold wants and movements of human life; the blessings which attend our waking and anticipate our sleeping. He "compasses our rising up and our lying down, and is acquainted with all our ways." Unspeakably wonderful is the Divine thoughtfulness and tenderness that attend our daily steps. At every turn mercies are provided, without which life would be impossible or intolerable. How absolutely dependent we are upon the thousand minute provisions of what we may call God's active providence—the due admixture and supply of vital air, the minute and complex functions of our bodily organism, the varied necessities of its sustentation and healthfulness, the uniformity of great laws, and the freedom with which they work! Our dependence, again, upon the habits and good faith of myriads of fitful and wayward men around us, so that through a long succession of years life should be lived, and not one of these conditions should fail; that God's watchful eye should never for a moment be averted, His supporting hand never for a moment be withdrawn.

Talk of miracles! it were far less a miracle for God to repeat the wonders that He did by Moses, or the greater wonders that He wrought by Christ, or for God to work out for me signal deliverances in great exigencies, or to bestow upon me in sudden profusion a costly blessing:—all this were far less wonderful than this constant "holding of my soul in life;" this "visiting me every morning and trying me every moment;" this constant forecasting for my welfare, this waiting of His mercy upon my common necessities, so that the cravings of every moment shall find waiting and preventing blessings.

And then the problem of life is so perplexed by the fixedness of natural law and the freedom in which it works; and the economy of life, is so perplexed by the wickedness and wilfulness of men, who violate God's great laws, and in their awful prerogative of freedom rebel against Him! Men who would bow God out of His universe are eager to note the law; but they forget to account for the violations of it. And yet the order of the world continues! It is too wonderful for me. I have not credulity enough to be an atheist. A thousand problems there are in human suffering which I cannot even glance at; but, I am bold to say, their solution is easily suggested by the freedom and evil of the human creature—they are in their remedial purpose parts of the profound wisdom and goodness that orders all the great issues of human life. In our own individual lives we are perpetually working out the great problems of a wise and beneficent Providence.

The Bible, again, in its rich provision for the moral and spiritual life of men, would supply another affluent series of illustrations of this characteristic of the Divine goodness in its preventing or anticipating blessings. The wonderful history of its formation, extending over thirteen centuries; "holy men of old speaking as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" but chiefly, the marvellous character of its teaching—full of reserved wisdom and power—so that the wiser and more experienced religious men become, the fuller of meaning and help and sufficiency the teachings of the Bible are. The Bible is more to this generation than it was to any generation before it: the more holy and spiritual men become, the more the Bible is to them. God's light and truth are continually breaking forth out of His Word. All other books become less and less, as knowledge and thought overtake them, all other systems are exhausted or superannuated; "the Word of the Lord endures for ever." Is not this, again, a miracle—a miracle of God's preventing goodness?

I have already alluded to the crowning proof of all—the redemption of Jesus Christ. If I do not further dwell upon it as an illustration of the preventing goodness of God, it is because its vastness makes it impracticable, and your familiarity with it makes it unnecessary. "Not that we loved God, but that God loved us." Or we might turn to practical religious life—prayer, for instance, which works so wonderfully in the economy of God's providence of life. It is its great characteristic—both in Scripture and in experience—that God "does for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Even when prayer is the condition of blessing—when He "will be inquired of to do it for us"—when is God's blessing measured by our prayer? It comes abundantly, full measure, pressed down, running over. This seems to have been the Psalmist's special thought: "Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips: for Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness."

> "Beyond our utmost wants
> His love and power can bless;
> To praying souls He always grants
> More than they can express."

"He delighteth in mercy."

Is it not a great conception of God? What an inspiration of religious life there is in it! It is a characteristic of goodness that has a wonderful effect upon its recipient. The goodness is enhanced and augmented by the manner of it. Even of human benefaction we say, "He gives twice who gives quickly." Whatever the constraint of simple goodness itself, it is made more constraining by this spontaneous, eager manner of it. "The love of Christ constraineth us," not merely because of its benefits, but because of its pitifulness, its yearning sympathy, its eager relief. "Behold *what manner* of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." "We love Him because He first loved us."

It is the direct expression of His own essential

Nature—hasting towards us in its goodness, eager for its own blessed satisfaction—that delights in the affluence and eagerness with which it enriches us. "He forgiveth all our iniquities, healeth all our diseases; He redeemeth our life from destruction, and crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies: He satisfieth our mouth with good things, so that our youth is renewed like the eagle's."

And all this is made certain to us by the life and character and love of Him who is the "brightness of His Father's glory and the express image of His person," whom when men saw, they saw the Father—an embodiment of perfect, tender, infinite love, a Fountain of affluent, ineffable goodness. Whatever mystery about the Father's goodness there may be in the mingled good and evil of physical life, of human experience, there can be no doubt about the perfect, pitying, unspeakable goodness of Him whose love passeth knowledge. We cannot doubt the goodness of the Father when we see the character and mission and history of the Son.

What an inspiration of life it is! How perfect our *trust* may be—amid all the darkness, and the struggle, and the sorrow, to know that

"Perfect Wisdom, perfect Love,
Are working for the best!"

How calmly and strongly we may do the work and bear the trials of life! What an inspiration of *gratitude* it is—the strongest, the most blessed of all human feelings; the highest, intensest form of love itself; "calling upon our souls and all that is within us to bless the Holy Name of the Lord"—to remember obligations; to record instances of mercy, in which God has anticipated our wants and exceeded our expectations. We "forget not all His benefits."

Thus we inspire and sustain our love to Him; our worship and our service; we "present our bodies a living sacrifice;" we "live not unto ourselves, but unto Him who has so loved us."

Above all, we try to be like Him; to be perfect in our ministering love as He is perfect. We forgive others their trespasses as He forgives us; we do good to all as He has done good to us: for this is our Lord's own great teaching in the Sermon on the Mount—that in the greatness and ministering of our human brotherhood we be "perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

THE MISSION OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

To read—St. Mark i. 1—11. *Golden text, ver.* 3.

I. ST. JOHN A HERALD. (1—3.) Begin New Year with new course of Scripture lessons on life of Christ. Four accounts of Christ's life, all containing the "Gospel" (or good news) of His life and death. This Gospel written by St. Mark, friend of St. Peter, from whom probably learned much he has recorded. Also a friend of St. Paul, with whom he travelled on missionary tours. (Acts xii. 25.)

Begins Gospel by telling of Whom he is going to write. Notice the three names—

(*a*) *Jesus* (or Saviour) as foretold by angel to Joseph. (St. Matt. i. 21.)

(*b*) *Christ* (the Anointed One), anointed with Holy Ghost for His work as Prophet, Priest, King. (St. Matt. iii. 16.)

(*c*) *Son of God*, as declared by God himself. (St. Matt. iii. 17.)

Before great persons came, in olden time, two things to be done.

(*a*) *Messenger* sent on before to announce coming.

(*b*) *Royal road* prepared—hills levelled—valleys filled up.

Much more would God's Son need announcing and preparing for.

St. John foretold as messenger (Mal. iii. 1) to tell news of Christ's coming—to come in spirit and power of Elijah. (Mal. iv. 5.) How was he like him?

(*a*) Both stood up alone for God amongst ungodly.

(*b*) Both confronted wicked kings, Ahab and Herod.

(*c*) Both lived hard, austere lives.

(*d*) Both met with great success.

II. ST. JOHN PREACHING TO THE PEOPLE. (4—8.) St. John foretold as "preparing the way." (Isaiah xl. 3.) How did he do so? He preached repentance, viz.—(*a*) *Confession* of sin (ver. 5).

(*b*) *Contrition* for sin—*i.e.*, true godly sorrow.

(*c*) *Change of life.* Publicans to leave off fraud, soldiers violence, etc. (St. Luke iii. 12, 14.)

Thus turned heart of people from sin to holiness, from Satan to God.

As sign of new life, must be baptised. Water, pure and clean, cleansing and refreshing body—sign of grace of Holy Spirit cleansing soul. (1 Pet. iii. 21.)

St. John also bade the people believe on Christ—called Him the "Lamb of God who takes away sin." (St. John i. 29.) How does he describe Him?

(*a*) Mightier than himself—able to heal and save.

(*b*) Baptising with fire of Holy Ghost.

LESSONS from St. John's mission—

1. *Repentance* from sin.
2. *Faith* in Christ the Saviour.
3. *Confession* of Christ before men.

III. ST. JOHN BAPTISING CHRIST. (9—11.) Why was Christ baptised?

(*a*) To commend baptism to His people.
(*b*) To be made one with His brethren.
(*c*) To set example of obedience.
His baptism followed by signs of God's favour.
(*a*) Opening of the heavens.
(*b*) Descent of the Holy Spirit.
(*c*) God's voice speaking.

LESSONS. 1. Submission to authority gains approval of God.

2. Lowly spirit will be filled with God's Spirit.

A SABBATH IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

To read—St. Mark i. 21—34. *Golden text—St. Luke iv.* 16.

I. TEACHING. (21, 22.) Christ and His disciples go to Capernaum for the Sabbath. Sabbath ordained as day of rest. (Gen. ii. 3.) All labour forbidden by which man earns his living; but Christ was to teach that works of mercy might be done. But first He goes to the synagogue for worship.

Service consisted of "reading the Law and Prophets," reciting psalms, and saying prayers. Also instruction by rulers of the synagogue or others. (*See* Acts xiii. 15.)

Christ invited to teach as at Nazareth. (St. Luke iv. 18.) What did He teach, and how?

(*a*) His own mission to the world. (St. Luke iv. 18.)
(*b*) With authority as having come from God.

II. HEALING AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT. (23—28.) What a contrast between peaceful service of prayer, praise, and reading, and the ravings of a lunatic!

Notice the power of the unclean spirit.
(*a*) He tore the man so that he had no self-control.
(*b*) He knew who Christ was.
Notice the power of Christ.
(*a*) He silenced his ravings.
(*b*) He cast him out immediately.

Thus showing His human sympathy and His Divine power.

Are people thus possessed now? Evil tempers, drink, lust, etc., like demons. How can they be cured? Must seek Christ in same way, in His house, in prayer. His power still the same.

No wonder His fame spread!

III. HEALING THE SICK. (29—34.) Service over, Christ with four disciples enter St. Peter's house. What a blessing Christ is to all the houses He enters!

(*a*) *Multiplied* wine at the marriage-feast.
(*b*) *Sympathised* with sisters of Lazarus.
(*c*) *Healed* St. Peter's mother-in-law.
Notice (*a*) Christ touches her—no fear of infection.
(*b*) Heals her at once—showing acute sympathy.
(*c*) Accepts her services—approving of gratitude.

So the day passes on, but Christ's work not yet done.

At sunset, so as not to break (as they thought) the Sabbath—and in the cool of the evening—all the sick from neighbouring houses brought in. All—sick in body and mind—at once healed, but devils not allowed to say they knew Him. Why not?

Christ wanted to be acknowledged, not out of fear, but love. Accepted love and ministrations of Martha cooking food, Mary pouring out ointment, and others, but cares not for forced recognition.

LESSON. World still full of sin and misery. Christ, ever the same, sees, heals, knows, pities. We may take our suffering friends to Him. He will help, and also accept our services.

HEALING OF THE LEPER.

To read—St. Mark i. 35—45. *Golden text—ver.* 42.

I. PRAYER AND PREACHING. (35—39.) How tired Christ would be after long day's service in synagogue—talking to groups of fishermen—healing numbers of sick. How glad of rest! Most would sleep late and long after such a day. What did Christ do?

(*a*) Rose very early.
(*b*) Went into solitary place for retirement.
(*c*) Began the day with prayer.
What an example to us! Why did Christ do this?
(*a*) To prepare for day's trials and disappointments.
(*b*) To prepare for the day's duties.

Disciples seek Him—tell Him how popular He has become—crowds seek Him. Why does He not return?

He must not seek praise of man.
He must preach to as many as possible.

LESSONS. 1. *A busy life needs most prayer.* Remind of David the king, Daniel the statesman, Nehemiah the steward—all men of prayer.

2. *God's work can never stand still.* Success should lead to farther effort. Christ always went about doing good.

II. HEALING THE LEPER. (40—45.) Leprosy fearful disease. It was—

(*a*) *Foul*—covering the body—making whole unclean.

(*b*) *Infectious*—requiring lepers to live alone—worship in screened corner of synagogue—keep "afar off" from others.

(*c*) *Incurable* by ordinary means. (2 Kings v. 7, 15.)

This man heard of Christ. What did he do?
(*a*) *Came* to Him—showing faith.
(*b*) *Besought* Him—from a sense of need.
(*c*) *Knelt*—in worship to Him as God.
How did Christ treat him?
(*a*) *Pitied* him—showing sympathy as man.
(*b*) *Touched* him—as priest.
(*c*) *Healed* him—by His power as God.
Then gave him two commands—
(*a*) To be silent as to his cure.
(*b*) To offer the thank-offering commanded in the law. (Lev. xiv. 10.)

LESSON. Leprosy always been regarded as type of sin. Sin also is—

(*a*) *Foul*—infects whole man. (Isaiah i. 5.)
(*b*) *Infectious*—spreads over the world. (Gen. vi. 5.)
(*c*) *Incurable*—by man's own effort. (Hos. xiii. 9.)
But the same Saviour is ours.
He is able to save to the uttermost. (Heb. vii. 25.)
He is willing to save all who seek Him.
He did forgive the penitent thief. (St. Luke xxiii. 43.)
Shall we not seek forgiveness?

FORGIVENESS AND HEALING.

To read—St. Mark ii. 1—17. *Golden text—Psalms ciii.* 3.

I. THE SICK OF THE PALSY. (1—12.) Describe an Eastern house, and how it differs from English one.

(*a*) Built round an open courtyard.

XUM

(*b*) Windows opening inside and not outside.
(*c*) Roof flat—used for sitting, praying, etc.
(*d*) Staircase outside from roof to street.

Courtyard in day covered with a kind of tarpaulin to protect from sun. Under this a large crowd assembled, blocking up whole space even to very doors.

Procession approaches house—sick man carried on his mattress-bed by four friends. Doorway to courtyard blocked up, so carry him by outer staircase to roof—uncover the tarpaulin—let him down by ropes into Christ's presence. Notice four classes of people.

(*a*) *Man*, sick in body and soul.
(*b*) *Friends*, sympathetic, bringing man to Christ.
(*c*) *Christ* waiting to be gracious.
(*d*) *Scribes* looking on and sneering.

Christ first heals the man's soul—then his body.

How did Christ show Himself to be God?

(*a*) He knew what the Scribes were thinking.
(*b*) Also what the man most wanted—forgiveness.
(*c*) He cured the man's disease.

Therefore had Divine Power; could forgive sins.

Thus confuted the Scribes, and showed Himself indeed the Son of God.

LESSONS. 1. *Faith blessed to others.* When Christ saw *their* faith He blessed the sick man. Similar cases—

Centurion came on behalf of his servant.

Syro-Phœnician for her daughter.

2. *Type* of our Lord's all-prevailing intercession for man. (Heb. vii. 25.)

II. THE CALL OF LEVI. (13—17.) What made him become a disciple?

(*a*) Had heard Christ's teachings by the Lake.
(*b*) Had seen the paralytic cured.
(*c*) Had learned to believe in Christ.

How was his faith shown? By—

(*a*) *Obedience*—followed Christ at once.
(*b*) *Hospitality*—made a feast for Christ.
(*c*) *Zeal* for souls—invited fellow-publicans.

Who came in and saw the assembled party?

Scribes—writers of the Law.

Pharisees—trusted in themselves that they were righteous.

Both these despised the Publicans as sinners, heathen, and outcasts.

What did Christ say? His mission was to sinners.

LESSONS. Sinners alone obtain salvation. Christ came to seek and save the lost.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

To read—St. Mark iv. 1—20. *Golden Text—Verse* 23.

I. THE PARABLE. (1—9.) Notice the circumstances.

Great crowd collected to hear Christ—eager to learn.

Christ sits in St. Peter's boat—convenient pulpit—willing to teach.

Congregation stand on shore, or sit on sand.

A sower comes in sight on hill opposite. His work with its failures and successes turned into a parable—teaching from nature.

Notice four kinds of ground.

(*a*) *Wayside*—seed soon trodden down or picked up.
(*b*) *Stony*—little earth—small plant—soon scorched.
(*c*) *Thorny*—full growth, but no fruit—choked by thorns.
(*d*) *Good, i.e.*, prepared—properly ploughed—clods broken up—weeds removed—watered and cared for.

The seed the same in all—good.

The result—failure three times, success once, but in three degrees, 30, 60, 100-fold.

II. THE MEANING. (10—20.) Christ asked by disciples and others for explanation.

Two classes of people—those who care and those who care not to learn.

(*a*) *Disciples* (or learners)—seekers after truth, shall be taught.

(*b*) *Others*—careless, dull—see not, nor wish to see—become duller, less able to learn—gradually blinded like the Pharisees. (St. John ix. 41.)

This Parable simple—easy to understand. Notice—

1. *The Sower, i.e.*, the teacher. Christ and His disciples.

Ministers and teachers. All who in any way teach others about God.

2. *The seed*—God's holy truth—the Word of God—sown at different periods of life.

(*a*) *In childhood*—often makes no impression.
(*b*) *In youth*—quick impressions soon lost.
(*c*) *In manhood*—impression effaced by other things.

3. *The ground*—man's heart—able to receive.

But there are four kinds of ground—

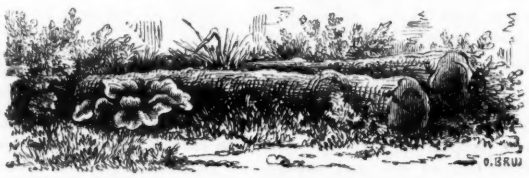
(*a*) *Wayside, i.e.*, stubborn heart—not receiving Word at all. Why not? Satan on watch—suggests other thoughts—drives away words sown.

(*b*) *Stony ground, i.e.*, hard hearts. At first hear joyfully—Gospel sounds pleasant—but persecution comes—laughed at, etc. No root—no firmness—religious habits, such as prayer, etc., dropped—no result.

(*c*) *Thorny ground, i.e.*, sordid hearts. Plant formed, *i.e.*, person apparently decided for Christ, but no fruit of good life. Why not? Other things occupy heart—pleasure, cares, money-getting, etc.

(*d*) *Good ground, i.e.*, sordid hearts. Sin put away—evil thoughts checked—bad habits given up. Then hearts ready to hear truth—it will sink in—show result in lives spent in God's service. Fruit in all—more or less abundant. (Gal. v. 22.)

LESSON. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."



SANTA CLAUS AT CLIFF COTTAGE.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.



"SISSY," said one rather mournful little voice, "will there be any Christmas here?"

"Oh yes, Gertie, to be sure there will! When Christmas comes, it's Christmas everywhere—right round the world!"

"But, Sissy," began another voice, not quite so plaintive as the last, but still decidedly dismal, "will there be any turkey and roast beef and plum pudding here? It won't seem like Chrstmas without."

Poor little Sissy! She was only fourteen, and so small and slight as to look much younger, yet already the care of two little brothers and one tiny sister seemed to have devolved mainly upon her. Less than a year ago, as their sweet mother lay dying, she had called her eldest daughter to her side, and asked her to try and be a "little mother" to the three younger ones, the eldest of whom was only eight; and "Sissy," as she was always called, though her real name was Madelaine, had promised earnestly to do her very best, though little guessing how hard the task would be.

The mother's death proved to be only the beginning of troubles. Mr. Dean, the children's father, was a clergyman of very small private means, who had for many years occupied the post of curate-in-charge of a wide rustic district in the midlands, which gave him a pleasant house and a comfortable income. But he was not at any time a robust man, and he was always disposed to work too hard and to spare himself too little. The shock of his wife's death affected him so seriously that it brought on an affection of the throat, which had occasionally threatened him before; and to make a long story short, he had been obliged to resign his curacy and retire with his four young children to a remote district in South Devon, where the climate was likely to be beneficial to him, and live there as best he might upon the interest of the £3,000 that comprised the whole of his fortune.

Possibly they might have been absolutely unable to "make both ends meet" had Mr. Dean and his little daughter been left quite alone to face this change of fortune; but the children's faithful nurse, Martha, had insisted on accompanying her nurslings and her kind master into their exile, and somehow, with her thrift and managing ways, the household was clothed and fed, the rent paid, and the quarter's bills settled, and there was yet a small margin, though a very small one, of the quarter's income to be laid by "against a rainy day."

Sissy was quite old enough to understand the change in the fortunes of the family, and sufficiently womanly to do her very best to cheer the spirits of her father, and to keep the little ones happy and amused; but sometimes during these short, dark autumn and winter days, it was an uphill battle, and the children, unable to find amusement out of doors, and confined within the narrow limits of one tiny parlour, without any new toys or books to enliven them, would often grow fretful or depressed, and tax to their utmost limit the powers and the patience of the brave little sister-mother.

In justice to the little ones, it must be admitted that they were docile, sweet-tempered children, seldom actively troublesome or boisterously rude, and more disposed to be depressed and aggrieved than angry. Still Sissy's lot was not always an easy one, and her earnest wish to see the little ones happy made the pain all the greater when she could not quite succeed.

Her busy brain had been hard at work for many days over the vexed question of "Santa Claus." She was too wise a little maiden to expect the socks and stockings to fill themselves, or to be filled by a fairy in furs who came down the chimney. She knew that mother had made or bought all the pretty little trifles that had so delighted them Christmas by Christmas; and now that those kind, skilful, busy fingers were at rest for ever, and there was no money in the household purse to be spent in toys or trinkets, how could the row of little socks be filled on Christmas Eve? How could Santa Claus be brought to Cliff Cottage?

Something must and should be done: and Sissy had cudgelled her brains, and Martha had helped her by more than one suggestion or promise: and at last a gleam or two of hope had lighted up the darkness: so when the eager cry met her ear, "Will there be any Santa Claus?" she smiled and nodded, and looked mysterious, but finally said they must "wait and see."

The little ones augured well from this. Of course Sissy knew, and she wouldn't have looked like that if no Santa Claus was to be expected.

"I don't expect the Santa Claus down here is a *rich* Santa Claus," she hastened to explain, fearing to awaken too much hope. "He'll be a regular *country* Santa Claus, I daresay, and won't have the things one buys in shops, because the shops are so far away; but I expect he'll come, and we'll hang our stockings out for him. I don't think he'll quite forget us just because we've come to Cliff Cottage."

This conversation took place about a week before Christmas Day; and upon the following afternoon, which chanced to be very bright and warm and fine, Martha took the three younger children with her on

an expedition to the farm which supplied the little household with milk and butter (a place they much delighted to visit), and Sissy, who, much to the surprise of the little ones, had declined the walk, watched them start with a smile on her earnest face.

The moment she was alone she ran into the kitchen, and took from a cupboard there two good-sized baskets, evidently placed there in readiness, together with a strong knife and a ball of string, and loading her small person with these things till she looked something like a donkey between panniers, she started off with a look of resolute purpose in the direction of a wood that lay about a mile distant.

On the farther side of that wood—to which place, in fact, the wood belonged—stood a fine old manor-house, often spoken of as Cliff Manor, in which lived an elderly childless couple—General and Mrs. Munroe. They were very quiet people, going little into society, and only entertaining their neighbours some two or three times in the course of the year. They were liked and respected in the county, but no one was intimate at the Manor. They had had many troubles in the course of their life, especially in the loss of the two fine lads who had once made the old house ring with life and gaiety. This sad loss (both boys had died in the same week, of scarlet fever) had greatly aged the parents; and although they were not really old, they seemed to have retired from active life from that time forward, and to live in the past as few people do who have only lately passed the meridian of middle life. General Munroe was about sixty years of age, and his wife a few years younger. They were still active in their movements, and often walked long distances together; but they seldom left the confines of their own somewhat extensive property, and their visits were paid more to their own tenants than to their social equals.

On this particular afternoon they had been on a round of some extent. They had wished to satisfy themselves personally that all their people were able to enjoy Christmas in a comfortable and substantial fashion; and in cases of need or sickness, to supplement the family's resources by appropriate and discriminating assistance. The General and his wife were very kind people, and very wise too (unluckily these two qualities do not always go together), and whilst very severe towards those guilty of wilful idleness, extravagance, and self-indulgence, they were exceedingly gentle with those whose poverty was genuine, and very thoughtful for all who were honestly seeking work and suffering for lack of it. They were returning from one of these charitable rounds when the General chanced to say to his wife:

"Shall we take the path through the wood, my dear? It is wonderfully dry under foot, and things are looking very pretty in their winter garb."

Mrs. Munroe assented, and very soon they were walking through the lonely pathway that led through the little wooded dingle. The owners of the pretty place did not often pass that way themselves. Their boys had made it one of their favourite haunts, and for the parents it was too full of sad and tender associations to be a spot frequently visited by them.

When they were about half-way through it, the General suddenly paused.

"Hallo! what's that?" he exclaimed. "What a quaint little figure, to be sure!"

His wife's eyes followed the direction of his glance, and rested upon the stooping figure of a little girl in a very old black frock, who was kneeling on the ground beneath a spreading oak-tree and gathering acorns with great assiduity.

Two baskets stood near to her: one appeared to be full already—too full, indeed, to be shut down—and from the open mouth protruded a number of green rushes. The other basket stood wide open, and from time to time the little girl emptied into it the acorns she had collected in her frock.

Now, it was no uncommon thing in the winter months for the poor people of the place to send their children out to collect acorns to give to their pigs; but this little girl did not look like a cottage child. She had a delicate, refined face, with big brown eyes full of thoughtful purpose, and a sensitive little mouth, the lines of which gave something of wistfulness to the character of the countenance. The dress, too, though very plain and poor, had that air of neatness and finish which is seldom seen in the attire of the peasant class. Altogether there was something quaint and unusual in the appearance of the small intruder that attracted the attention of the General and his wife, and aroused their curiosity.

"Have you any idea who she is?" whispered Mrs. Munroe.

"Not the least; but I mean to find out. She seems to have an odd collection in that basket of hers; yet she looks too serious and staid to amass rubbish as young children do. I mean to inquire into it."

General and Mrs. Munroe advanced from beneath the shelter of the intervening trees, till the rustle of their steps upon the dead leaves caused the child to spring up and turn round. They saw her more plainly then—a quaint little figure with an earnest, startled face, and a certain look of quiet self-possession that sat oddly upon her diminutive person.

"Well, little woman," said the General kindly, "and what may you be doing out here in my wood, eh?"

Rather a nervous quiver crossed the child's face, but the answer was quietly spoken.

"I hope I'm not intruding. I thought anyone might come here. Indeed, I don't think I've done any harm."

"I am sure you have not," Mrs. Munroe hastened to say; "but what are you doing, my dear?"

"Oh, please, I'm collecting Santa Claus," was the not too intelligible answer; "for the children, you know," she added, after a pause, as if to make all clear.

"Collecting Santa Claus, my dear!" repeated the lady, somewhat mystified; whilst the General, who caught the child's meaning more distinctly, laughed and said—

"But doesn't Santa Claus come of his own accord to little folks like you, without having to be collected first?"

But Sissy shook her wise little head.

"The children think so," she answered cautiously. "That's why I can't bear to have them disappointed, just because we are poor. There won't be any turkey, you see, and Christmas dinner won't be very much like Christmas, and there won't be any proper presents; but I *can't bear* that there should be no Santa Claus when they wake up. It would be so *dreadful* if Christmas began with crying, and they will cry if the socks are all empty: at least, Gertie and Bertie will, if Freddie doesn't. So I'm going to make Santa Claus for them myself if I can. It won't be quite the same, but it will be something, and much better than nothing."

"And what are you going to make?" asked Mrs. Munroe; and the genuine ring of interest in the tone unlocked Sissy's lips, and caused her to become communicative at once.

"Well, you see these rushes here? I can make little baskets out of them—baskets and mats and dolls' hats; and with holly-berries sewn on to them they look quite pretty. Martha is going to make a lot of little tiny buns to put in the baskets, and she is going to get a few sweetmeats too, and I shall make little bags for them out of odds and ends of print and silk, and that makes a kind of beginning, you know. Then acorn-cups and holly-berries strung together make lovely chains and necklaces and things for Gertie, and I've made a new frock for her best dolly too. It's more difficult to arrange for boys, but they like playing horses, so I'm going to make them a whole set of double and single harness, made out of acorns threaded on string, and some scarlet braid that Martha can spare. And I'm going to make them a set of ninepins, too, out of their old broken set. I've got fir cones for the heads that all got broken off. And the carpenter, Long (he's *such* a kind man!), he's going to stick them on firm, and I am to go to-morrow to his shop and paint them all with his paints, and the balls too, and make them like new. Acorn-cups do for dolls' tea-cups too, and one can do a lot of things with holly-berries, and hips and haws, and fir-cones, and gall-nuts, and acorns, and beech-nuts. Martha's going to help me. We've got some pictures and some coloured and gold paper, and odds and ends often turn up and work in. And after the children have gone to bed these next nights we are going to set to work as hard as ever we can. We shall make frames for some of the pictures, and we can make animals out of old pieces of rag stuffed with bran—with berries for eyes, and bits of red flannel for tongues, and shoelaces for tails. Martha is very clever; and there are a good many things I can do, from watching mother other years, and looking after the children when she died. Oh, I *think* we shall be able to collect and make them a real nice Santa Claus, and if they have that, I know they'll be as good as gold all day. A very little makes them happy now. They've had so few new things since we came to live here."

"Where do you live, my dear?" asked the lady gently.

"Over there, in the little house they call Cliff Cottage, about a mile away from the village."

"And how long have you been living there?"

"We came at the end of September. You see, after mother died, and father lost his voice, and was ill, and couldn't do clergyman's work any more, we had to leave the nice place we'd lived in, and come where it was warm and cheap. It's made father better already, not having to use his voice or to go out in the wet and cold. I think he might soon take duty again; but he says he may not be able to get it when he wants it. *I* think he could, because he is so very good, and because I'm sure God would hear him when he asked for things. But then, of course, as father says, some very good men have had very great trials and troubles to bear, as he has. However, father always knows that whatever happens is right, and though he can't help being anxious and sad sometimes, he is never really unhappy. That is a *great* comfort," pursued the little woman, who appeared to find it a real relief to talk, with the frankness of a child, to these truly sympathetic strangers. "He does not really mind being so poor except for the children—no more do I. And now that I've collected things enough to make them a nice Santa Claus, I don't feel as if I minded anything. I'm so much obliged to you for letting me have things out of your wood. I *hope* I haven't done any harm. I don't *think* I have. And now I think I must be going home. Good-bye, and thank you very much."

"What is your name, my dear?" asked the lady, as this small morsel of humanity lifted up her two baskets, and prepared to trot off with her load.

"Sissy Dean. Good-bye, sir; good-bye, madam."

"Dean—Dean," repeated the General, as the slight, childish figure disappeared amid the trees. "The name recalls nothing; yet that child's eyes and face and whole manner seemed strangely familiar."

"It did not strike me."

"No? I was haunted all the while she was talking by some memory that eluded me persistently. I mean to make some inquiries about them. A broken-down clergyman, in poverty at our very gates, ought not to be a stranger to us. But the troubles of distressed gentlefolks are the last that ever reach our ears."

"Indeed, yes, and yet are generally the hardest of all. As you say, we will make a few inquiries; and it shall not be our fault if these poor dear children do not have a brighter Christmas than they anticipate."

"I thought of that myself," answered the General, with a smile upon his face. "How glad I am that we came this way to-day!"

Christmas Eve had come. The day had been a very busy one for all the inmates of Cliff Cottage, for there had been the little rooms and tiny hall to decorate with holly and greenery, the house to "clean down," as Martha expressed it, in readiness for the coming festival, and a number of simple preparations to make, in order that Christmas should be as cheerful as possible to all within that humble home.

The children had gone to bed at their usual hour, quite tired out by all the labours of the day. A row of stockings hung suspended from the foot of the little cribs, the small owners of which were in great hopes of having them filled in the night from the wonderful sack of the beneficent Santa Claus. Freddie was

somewhat exercised in his mind because there was no chimney in the large double attic room that served as night nurseries, for he fancied the fairy always came down the chimney; but Sissy had comforted him by the assurance that if the little fur-capped man meant to find his way into the attic he would not be stopped by so trifling an obstacle as the want of a chimney.

So the children had gone to sleep in a state of glad anticipation, and Sissy was putting the last touches to her labour of love at the kitchen table, which looked quite gay with the array of pretty and ingenious trifles that busy brains and willing fingers had manufactured for the little ones up-stairs, so that Christmas in Cliff Cottage might not be too entirely unlike the same season in the former home.

"I heard such a funny noise a little while ago, Martha," remarked Sissy, as she surveyed the result of her labour of love with a not unpardonable pride. "It was when you were up-stairs with the children. It sounded like coal being put into our shed, only, of course, it couldn't be, because we've got to make what we have last a long time yet."

"To be sure we have," answered Martha briskly. "Coal's dear in these parts: we must be economical with it. Luckily, 'tisn't so cold by a long way as up farther north, so things are about as broad as long."

"I won't take the things up till quite late," said Sissy, her face smiling all over as she surveyed her pretty array of little toys and ornaments and cakes, "because they might wake up and see me. We never saw mother do it. We always thought Santa Claus came down the chimney with the things. Martha, don't they look pretty! I'm so glad we've got a real sort of Santa Claus for the children! They'll go on thinking he's a real fairy now for ever so long. I wish I could think so too. It used to be such a nice feeling," and Sissy gave a little natural sigh of regret for the lost illusions of her vanished childhood.

Just at that moment a curious rumbling as of wheels became audible in the diminutive paved yard which lay just outside the back door. Martha and Sissy both raised their heads to listen. Certainly there was something outside—something on wheels. It seemed to stop just at the back door. A single blow was struck upon the panel, and Sissy, whose hearing was very acute, fancied that she heard steps cautiously retreating, and then running away fast down the road. Martha had risen to her feet.



"'Why, child, I can't think what it all means.'"—*p.* 189.

"Gracious goodness! Who can be at the door at this time of night?" she cried, and went to undo the bolts and lock. Sissy stood just behind her, half-expectant, half-frightened. When the door was opened, no living thing appeared in sight; but just outside stood a sort of porter's trolly heaped with parcels and baskets; and in full view, as they stood astonished at the apparition, was a great card, on which was printed in large letters—"A present from Santa Claus to the little folks at Cliff Cottage."

"Gracious me!" cried Martha, looking vainly round for some farther explanation of the puzzle; whilst Sissy clasped her hands in silent ecstasy, and said to herself softly—

"Then there *is* a Santa Claus, after all—a *real* Santa Claus—and he's come!"

Martha meantime had stepped out with the lamp to look round for some more practical explanation of the puzzle. She came back very quickly, however, with a look of even greater bewilderment upon her face.

"Why, child, I can't think what it all means. The shed's as full of coal as it can hold, and there's a great pile of logs against the wall, as I've not seen this many a year. The fairies seem to have been at work. I can't make head or tail of it, anyhow!"

"It's Santa Claus!" cried Sissy, her pale face aglow. "Oh, Martha, don't you understand? There *is* a real Santa Claus, and he's come to us! Oh, do let us see what he has brought!"

Sissy looked years younger all in a moment. The grave, careworn expression that so often clouded the natural gaiety of the child's face was quite gone now, and smiles and dimples chased one another round the laughing little mouth. Martha looked again at the card, and gave up trying to find a natural solution to the puzzle.

"Well, it all seems plain enough. Yes, to be sure, child; carry anything in you like. It's all for you and the children. We may just as well have a look at the things first."

What a wonderful unpacking and inspection that was!

Out of one long cardboard box came a lovely wax doll, almost as big as a baby: a doll with clothes that would take off and put on, and with a wardrobe that would have done credit to a duchess. Then there was a wonderful horse on wheels that could be ridden like a tricycle; and a mechanical locomotive, that when wound up could pull a whole set of trucks after it. There were boxes of sweetmeats and a great frosted Christmas cake; little toys and big toys, bricks and games and puzzles; and nearly at the bottom was a big box labelled thus: "For the little girl who made Santa Claus for the others;" and when Sissy, with a beating heart and glowing cheeks, lifted the lid and looked in, she saw that it contained a work-box and a writing-desk in satin-wood, beautifully fitted with everything she could possibly want, and underneath lay a selection of tempting-looking story-books in bright covers, the very sight of which made the child's eyes glisten with delight; for Sissy loved reading, and she had not had a new book since last Christmas Day.

Altogether, she was so much overwhelmed that she sank down upon the floor, hugging some of the new books in her arms.

"Oh, Martha!" she cried, "I'm sure it's all a dream! Oh, I do hope I shall keep on dreaming it for hours. It is *so* lovely!"

But getting no reply, she looked round, and saw that whilst she had been unpacking the toys, Martha had found occupation over a couple of big hampers, and that the dresser was groaning beneath the weight of the load laid upon it; and with another great "Oh!" of unmitigated astonishment, Sissy drew near to see the wonders that had been unearthed.

First there was a huge turkey, all stuffed with sausages just ready to pop into the pot; and beside it was a great ham ready for table, even to the frill round the shank-bone; then there was a huge plum pudding, quite the grandfather of all Christmas puddings, and a big dish of mince-pies, and another of snowy *meringues*. And there was a basket of new-laid eggs and a large jar of clotted cream, a pot of preserved ginger, and some lovely rosy apples and great yellow pears. Oranges and crackers were amongst the children's things, and as the astonished servant and her little mistress stood in the midst of all this wonderful profusion, they could only look at one another in blank astonishment, whilst Sissy said, with a deep-drawn sigh, "I never in all my life knew such a delightful Santa Claus!"

Sissy had certainly never looked forward to such a happy Christmas Day as the one spent in Cliff Cottage that year. Even the piled-up fires and the grand Yule logs seemed to share in the general delight of the young folks; and the father, who had heard all about the wonderful Santa Claus from the faithful servant overnight, put aside his own sadness to join in his children's happy enjoyment; and though much perplexed to account for the wonderful gifts showered upon them, had resolved, despite a momentary shrinking of sensitive pride, to accept them in the spirit in which they were evidently offered.

Sissy was very politic in her method of dispensing the fairy gifts. The stockings were duly filled with the simple trifles of her own manufacture, which greatly delighted the recipients without unduly exciting them. Then upon the well-laid breakfast-table, beside the unwonted luxury of eggs and ham, was a box of sweetmeats for each child, that evoked a clamour of pleased surprise.

Then came the walk to church and the beautiful joyous service, into which Sissy entered heart and soul, and which all the little ones enjoyed; and Gertie whispered to her sister that "she thought the angels helped to make things nice at Christmas, because it was Jesus's birthday, and He liked everyone to be pleased."

The walk home through the bright frosty air, and the wonderful dinner which followed that hungry exercise, were both enjoyed in turn, and the children exchanged puzzled glances as they took their seats at table, whilst Bertie gravely asked if the turkey had "comed of his own self," which greatly delighted his brother and sisters.

But the grandest moment of the day was about dusk, when the little ones were called across into father's room, where the table had been pushed on one side, and the toys spread out in tempting array

(ticketed with the name of the new owner) in the light of the roaring log fire.

Oh, what a hubbub of delight there was! what a shouting and laughing, and hugging and scrimmaging, as the little ones claimed their wonderful presents, and shouted aloud in the joy of their hearts. It was long indeed before the tumult subsided, and the little ones were able to listen, with grave and absorbed faces, to Sissy's story of how Santa Claus had sent a truck-full of things, as well as a cellar-full of coal, and how the truck had vanished in the night as mysteriously as it had come. Six eyes, round with awe and astonishment, were fixed upon Sissy's face as she told the tale, and three earnest faces grew grave with the intensity of interest; but at the end Bertie heaved a great sigh, and summed up the family feeling in the following remark—

"Well, I do think he's a dear, nice, kind Santa Claus; and I hope he'll go on coming to see us every Christmas for ever and ever."

Three days later Sissy was surprised to be told by Martha that a lady and gentleman had called to see her father, and as he was out, had asked for her. Callers were so rare at Cliff Cottage that Sissy was a good deal surprised and rather frightened, but she knew she must go if asked for, and with some trepidation approached the door of the little room opposite the dining-room, which her father used as a study.

The moment she opened the door she recognised in the visitors the lady and gentleman who had surprised her in the wood the other day. The gentleman had in his hand a miniature portrait of her mother which always stood on the mantle-shelf, and he was talking to his wife with some excitement.

"My dear," he said, the moment the little girl appeared, "I want to know who you are."

"I—I am Madelaine Dean, though they always call me Sissy," answered the child, in some surprise. "You see, mother's name was Madelaine, and they began it to make a difference. Since mother died——"

But the old gentleman had turned, in visible excitement, to his wife.

"There! I was certain of it. If she had said Madelaine the other day I should have got the clue at once. My dear, was not your mother's name Madelaine Trevor before she married your father?"

"Yes," answered Sissy, opening her eyes wide. "Did you know her, please?"

"My dear, she was my cousin, and, as children, we loved each other dearly; but families get broken up, and I was abroad soldiering for many years after I entered the army, and lost sight of many friends and relatives, Madelaine amongst them. I knew she was married years ago, but her married name had long escaped me. Your face recalled hers, though I could not recollect at first of whom you reminded me. My dear, we are relations of yours—the nearest, perhaps, that you have. We must not be strangers any longer;" and Sissy was taken in the arms first of the gentleman, and then of the lady, and tenderly kissed and caressed.

And after that visit, somehow things began to be different at Cliff Cottage, and strange and pleasant things happened one after another in regular succession. One of these was a long visit to the Manor House, which was quite a new experience for the children, and which completely restored the father to his wonted health and strength; and very soon afterwards came the news that he was made rector of a small country parish not very many miles away. Sissy was old enough to understand that that meant the end of the pressing poverty they had suffered once, and a restoration of her father to the duties he loved so well and prosecuted so zealously.

Long before another Christmas came round, the Deans were established in their pretty new house, of which Sissy made a capable and quaint little mistress, and very happy are all the family, and very grateful to their kind kinsfolk and friends, to whom, in one sense, they owe it. But Bertie always boldly asserts that "Santa Claus began it all." One of the stories they never tire of telling to each other is how Santa Claus came to Cliff Cottage, and what wonderful things he brought with him.

EVELYN EVERETT-GREEN.

THE JOY OF CHRIST.

BY THE REV WILLIAM BURNET, M.A.

WE are perhaps too much accustomed to think of our blessed Lord as only the "Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief." Such undoubtedly He was, and this aspect of His character has ever been a source of exceeding great comfort to His tried and sorrowful people. Still, we should seriously err if we were to regard His life as one of unmitigated suffering and shrouded in unbroken gloom. It is mentioned in a letter of very doubtful authority, said to have been written by Lentulus to the Roman Senate concerning Jesus Christ, that "He was never seen to laugh, but that He has been observed to weep." This remarkably accords with the inspired accounts of the New Testament, where He is thrice said to have wept and only once to have rejoiced. There are, however, other considerations which point to a juster and more complete conception of what He really was. Since He was at once perfect God and perfect Man, His must have been in the highest sense a joyous spirit. From the very harmony of His own being, and as the Source and Fount of happiness to His creatures, God must be supremely happy. He who was "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His

person," even when He tabernacled on earth in human nature, must have participated in that happiness. His deep and inexpressible griefs were, therefore, ever counterbalanced by a Divine, ineffable joy. Sorrow is the fruit of sin. Whilst, then, contact with sin in others, and the sight of suffering of every kind around Him, could not but cast an ever-deepening shadow over His pure soul, the consciousness of stainless purity within, as well as constant communion with His heavenly Father, would at all times irradiate His Spirit with Heaven's own sunshine. The Founder, too, of the only really joyous religion which the world has ever known must have experienced even here in their highest degree that peace and joy which He communicates to others. It may help us to sympathise more with our Redeemer in His gladness as well as in His sorrows, if we reverently inquire into the sources of His joy on *earth* and of His joy in *Heaven*.

I. Strong, deep natures are not demonstrative. The shallow stream, as it ripples over the stones, babbles noisily and makes loud music wherever it goes, whilst the broad, deep river moves along in majestic calmness. So the most profound emotions do not lie upon the surface, and are not always ready to be expressed by the tongue. It was pre-eminently thus with our Lord. He seldom spoke of His own sorrows. He thought much more of the sorrows of others. His own were too great for utterance. In Gethsemane His bursting heart found momentary relief in the truly human appeal to the sympathy of the chosen few: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with Me." At other times in silence and solitude He poured out the heavy burden of His grief into the ear of His Father. It is not, then, surprising if He was as reticent of His joy. His silence about it is no proof of its absence. On the contrary, we feel sure that He, whose first miracle at Cana was wrought to supply the wants of the guests at a wedding-feast, and Who adorned and beautified with His presence the holy estate of matrimony, was in fullest sympathy with the innocent joys of society. His love for children is another sign of a bright and cheerful temperament. "The heart of childhood is all mirth," and they shrink from the gloomy and morose. But the little ones seem to have been fascinated by His grave yet tender aspect, and were easily won to His embrace.

Then His delight in Nature is an evidence of a keen appreciation of the beautiful closely akin to joy. How often did He borrow illustrations of spiritual truths from the outer world. The genial sunshine, the warbling birds, the gaily painted lilies, the seed cast into the ground, the lightning flashing across the sky; these and the like images show how familiar was the Divine Teacher with His own fair creation, and how He delighted in it. How many, too, of His parables derive much of their point from the occasions of human joy. Thus, we have the shepherd's joy in rescuing the stray sheep, the poor woman's joy in finding the lost piece of money, the father's ecstatic delight in the prodigal's return, the marriage feast, with all its joyous accompaniments. The choice of these indicates a genuine sympathy with the brighter side of life. We may add that His regular attendance at the Jewish feasts, and His joining in the Passover hymn—probably the same still sung at the Paschal Supper—were a fulfilment in the spirit as well as the letter of the injunction to "Rejoice before the Lord."

But, happily, we are not left to conjecture on this important matter. We have it recorded that on one occasion "Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit." (St. Luke x. 21, R.V.) The seventy had returned with joy from their first missionary journey. They had even exceeded their commission by casting out devils, and were unduly elated with their success. Very solemnly did He warn them against the danger of spiritual pride; and yet He rejoiced that these babes in grace had so far grasped the mysteries of the Kingdom as in His name to gain those victories over evil, whilst these things were mercifully hidden from the wise and prudent, who might have turned them to their own destruction. Thus His deepest joy was derived from His full acquiescence in His Father's will and His conscious fellowship with Him. "Even so, Father," He adds; "for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

Nor was this, although so profound, altogether a solitary joy. On the evening of His Passion, even when the powers of darkness were gathering round Him for their last terrible assault, after speaking of the mystical union of His true disciples with Himself, under the image of the Vine, He said: "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Immediately afterwards, in His intercessory prayer, He pleads thus: "And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves." Joy, then, is one of the richest and sweetest elements in the fruit of the true Vine, which flows from Him into the hearts of all that abide closely in Him. Like their Master, the true followers of Christ are ever solving in their varied experience the seeming paradox of being "sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing." Their purest happiness, like His, flows from submission to their Heavenly Father's will and simple reliance upon His love. Joy and peace are found only in connection with faith in Christ's finished sacrifice and completed work. Whilst earthly joy is like lightning, short, fitful, transient, leaving greater darkness behind it, such spiritual joy resembles the bright, warm sunshine, and is healthful, vitalising, enduring.

II. So far, we have obtained a faint glimpse of the deep spring of joy in Christ's heart even on earth. Now let us strive to look higher, and to measure, so far as we can, the boundless height of His unalloyed, unshadowed joy in heaven.

> "Hope's precious pearl in sorrow's cup
> Unmelted at the bottom lay,
> To shine again, when, all drunk up,
> The bitterness should pass away."

The first Easter morn must have been an occasion of unutterable relief to Him who came forth victorious from the tomb, to die no more, all His sufferings ended, His bitter Passion past, His atoning work accomplished, His sacrifice accepted, and Himself the living Witness of the fact. Yet more joyous to Himself, as to His people, would be His triumphant Ascension, when He returned on high "leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men." Then, especially, was the Psalmist's prophecy fulfilled, and He was "anointed with the oil of joy above His fellows." This, indeed, is joy utterly beyond our loftiest conceptions and our most glowing imaginations. Nevertheless, if we are faithful to Him, we shall, according to our measure, one day know it. In the parable of the talents, He represents the Master as saying to those who by zeal and diligence shall have doubled their trust, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

See you that stern and venerable veteran: his iron frame is scarred by many a wound. His massive brow is wrinkled by care's deep furrows; but his expressive eye is lighted up with all the fire of youth. He has just concluded a long and hard-fought campaign, and returned home decked with laurels and exulting in success. How deeply does his bosom swell with the joy of victory! In that earthly victor's triumph may we not discern a true, though most imperfect, image of the exultation of the great Captain of our Salvation, when He had dealt their death-wounds to Satan and his myriad hosts, and He ascended on high bearing the trophies of victory to His Father's Throne? And, oh! how infinitely will that joy be enlarged, when He shall be revealed in His final glory, and a subjugated Universe shall bow beneath His feet. The same in kind, though immeasurably lower in degree, shall be the joy of every faithful soldier of Christ who shall have fought manfully under His banner against the world, the flesh, and the devil. They, too, shall be more than conquerors through Him that loved them. Again, the Lord's is the joy of *Rest*. Like their Master, His followers are a laborious people. He recognises no idlers as His own. Some spend their days in bodily labour; and they perform it as in His sight, and often feel it lightened by His approving smile. The employments of others are of a higher order. All are workers who have the power to work; and, although not weary of well-doing, they are at times weary in it. How sweet to all such, after a life of earnest, if not altogether successful, service, will be the rest which remaineth for the people of God! Arnauld, one of the Port Royal divines, requested one of his brethren to assist him in a new work. He declined, saying, "We are now old; is it not time to rest?"—"Rest!" replied Arnauld, "have we not all eternity to rest in?"

Then there is a third and a principal element in our Redeemer's joy. It is that foretold by the Prophet: "He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." It was with this joy set before Him "He endured the cross, despising the shame." Nor has it yet been attained by Him in all its fulness. It is daily receiving fresh accessions as His Gospel wins its way into sinners' hearts, and one and another soul is added as gems to His crown. Such, too, shall be the joy of those who are careful in improving their talents for the spiritual good of others. A physician, some years ago, in his closing days, was brought to a personal knowledge of the Saviour. So fully did he realise its comfort that he longed to impart the same to others, and he said, "If I could only bring one soul to Christ, I should go mad with joy." But it was then too late! Saved himself, he had no time or strength left wherewith to save others. Happy they who, having found the Saviour in health, can tell the glad news to their fellow-men, and win even one soul to Him.

Such is the joy of the Lord, into which He will invite His faithful ones to enter. "It is but little," wrote Archbishop Leighton, "we can receive here—some drops of joy that enter into us; but there we shall enter into joy, as vessels put into a sea of happiness." The vessels receive just as much of the ocean as they can contain; so the capacity of our renewed nature will be the measure of our future bliss. The greater our spiritual receptiveness acquired here, the more fully shall we enter into the joy of our Lord.

ON THE LAKE OF THUN.

UP beyond the châlets
Browse the sheep and kine;
Down amid the valleys
Ripen corn and vine.
Honey-bees are humming
Through the glowing noon;
Summertide is coming
On the Lake of Thun.

Pleasant 't is at even,
When the sun is low,
And in western heaven
Skies are all aglow;
When the lake is gleaming
In the light of June,
There to lie a-dreaming
On the Lake of Thun.

Dreaming, yet not sleeping,
In the evening still,
I watch the shadows creeping
Down the thorn-crowned hill
Of Stockhorn, where yet linger
Latest beams of light,
That tip with roseate finger
The cone of Nissen's height!

I linger till the daylight
Fades from out the sky,
And evening with its grey light
Drapes the heavens on high.
And so I lie a-dreaming
Until the rising moon,
With soft radiance beaming
Silvers the Lake of Thun.



"Silvers the Lake of Thun."

Awake, yet still a-dreaming
In the drowsy air,
I see the light still gleaming
On the landscape fair,
Where homesteads white are peeping
'Mid gardens rich and green,
That to the margent sweeping
Of that calm lake are seen.

And then I dream of heaven,
Beyond the skies away,
Where there's nor morn nor even,
Nor night, but ever day;
Nor sun nor moon to render
Faint light, for *there* shall shine
The glory of God's splendour—
The Lamb give light divine!

'Tis gone! My dream is over;
My wandering way I take,
Through many a scene a rover,
By hill and vale and lake.
Still memory will restore me
That pleasant eve in June,
When waking dreams came o'er me
Upon the Lake of Thun.

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER.

THE END OF AN OLD ROMANCE.

MISS SOPHY BRAMBLE sat by the fire in the chill dusk of an early spring evening, with a bunch of primroses in her hand—primroses which had bloomed years and years ago, when Miss Sophy was young, and now were dried up, and withered, and shrivelled. They had lain for some time, untouched, in a sacred box in one corner of Miss Sophy's drawer, together with other worthless tender symbols of bygone days, carefully stored away, "for old sake's sake," where no profane eyes could penetrate. It was not often that the contents of this box were disturbed. Miss Sophy buried her dead with reverent care, but she did not forget that she was still of the living; and her life was too active, too full of little pleasures, little duties, and little cares, for her to waste much time in firelight dreaming over a dead past. But to-day something had happened which had suddenly merged all dead memories in a living present; and now, as she sat in the early dark, with the firelight softening the lines of her spare figure, and catching now and again the silver gleams in her hair, Miss Sophy was living over again the sweet primrose-time of her youth. She held the poor little withered bunch of flowers in her left hand, and stroked it gently with the fingers of her right; while innumerable tender memories and tremulous hopes were fluttering in her heart. The primroses were endowed with magic power, for at their touch the intervening years rolled away, and she was little Sophy Bramble again, and Joe Westlake was the noblest and handsomest man in the world.

The Brambles were the chief people in the village in those days. They occupied the largest pew in the little church, and the high, straight pew-backs were not more stiff and uncompromising than was Mr. Bramble, when he sat there on Sunday morning with Sophy by his side. But the church was a long way off, and with advancing years he was becoming a victim to gout, so that more often the big dark pew contained none but Sophy—a little spot of bright colour in the sombre surroundings. She carried a big prayer-book, and cast down her eyes as she walked up the aisle: and no one could be more devoutly attentive to the service than she was—yet, somehow, before she had been ten minutes in her pew, she always knew whether Joe Westlake was in his place in church. And then, when service was over, if he should come up and offer to relieve her of that heavy prayer-book, and escort her across the green meadows, still with the sweet Sabbath silence, and golden in the noonday sun—well, it was very polite of him; and where was the harm? Mr. Bramble answered that question, when some floating gossip on the subject reached his ears. The harm was that Sophy was an heiress (in village estimation), while Joe's sole possessions were a handsome face and empty pockets. Mr. Bramble was not a man to beat about the bush. Next Sunday, young Joe, waiting in the fields for Sophy, was met by Sophy's father, who ironically proffered himself as a substitute. He would not listen to a word of excuse or entreaty from the unfortunate lover. "*You* to dream of making up to our Sophy, indeed!" said the irate father. "Go and make money for yourself. Go out into the world, instead of sticking here with no more spirit than a sheep! A young man like you, with all his wits about him, and his life before him, ought to be able to make money if anyone can." That was the kindest word he would say, and meanwhile he absolutely forbade any intercourse between the two. As for poor little Sophy, it was not until her father lectured her that afternoon that she discovered how very dear those Sunday morning walks had become to her, or what a blank, dull week it would be with nothing to look forward to any more. She wept so heartily that her father relented at what he believed to be genuine penitence; but her tears were caused by a mixture of feeling, in which rebellious, impotent misery had certainly as large a share as penitence. Still the habit of obedience was strong within her, and for some time Mr. Bramble's law of separation was kept implicitly.

But one day in the spring-time Sophy received a letter. The letter was from Joe, beseeching her to meet him next morning in the church meadows at seven o'clock, as he was going to London, and would like to say good-bye. "London!" the very word was full of despairing remoteness! Sophy was a very good girl; she did not go to church for nothing, and the sins of disobedience and deceit weighed heavily on her conscience; yet, after a small struggle, love triumphed. She felt too guilty to say her prayers that morning, and the omission troubled her; but when once she was in the open air, and her feet trod the dewy grass, and the breath of the morning swept the hair from her forehead, she forgot all her qualms of conscience, and only remembered that she was young, and was going to see Joe again. And when she did catch sight of him, leaning pensively against the trunk of a tree at a discreet distance from the house, how her heart gave a sudden leap, as it had never done before, at beholding him, and she was minded to turn back and run home again as fast as she could! But he turned and saw her, half-hesitating, in her white gown, with her bright hair glittering in the morning sunshine, and then there was no more question of flight.

"I've come to say good-bye, Joe," said Sophy, with a new sweet shyness.

"I hardly thought you would," answered he, moodily. He had plucked some primroses on his way, and now occupied himself with throwing them away bit by bit.

"Oh, Joe!" said Sophy, with deep reproach, "how *could* you fancy I would not come?"

XUM

To Sophy, as she said these words, her coming seemed not merely the only right, but the only possible course.

There was a moment's embarrassed silence, and then Joe broke in desperately—

"Sophy, you know what I want to say, what I am dying to say, and yet must not, after the promise I gave your father—but, Sophy darling, you do understand, don't you?"

Joe took her hand, utterly disregarding the spirit while so careful of the letter of the law, and looked into her downcast face. She was trembling so that she could not speak, but she did not attempt to release her hand, and Joe continued with emboldened fervour:

"I am going away now, and it may be years before I see you again, but however long it is, when I have made my fortune I shall come back and say what I dare not now. I would not have *you* bound, Sophy," said the young man, with affecting unselfishness, "but *I* shall always consider myself bound to you in heart."

"Oh! Joe, Joe dear," sobbed Sophy, realising for the first time the tragedy of separation, "so shall *I* be always bound—always your own Sophy. Give me those primroses, Joe, as a pledge, and I will keep them for ever."

And then came the parting, for the sun was rising higher in the heavens, and the dew had dried off the grass.

"I promised that you should not bind yourself," Joe faltered, "and I've been true to my word—but it *is* good-bye—and, Sophy dear, just one kiss—to remember."

"To remember!" Sophy had remembered, whatever Joe had done. It was the remembrance of that kiss which, five years later, when Farmer Warren pressed his suit, had made it impossible for Sophy to do anything but refuse him, with a tender reluctance and fear of giving pain, that made the honest farmer vow that, whether she loved him or not, Sophy Bramble would always be the one woman in the world for him.

It was the remembrance of that kiss which now, as she sat in the firelight, thirty years afterwards, with Joe's primroses in her hand, thrilled to her heart, and sent a youthful rosy flush to her cheeks.

Thirty years afterwards! and through all those thirty years she had never seen Joe Westlake again. Once, on her birthday, a few months after they parted, he had sent her a lace tippet, which, after much persuasion, she had been allowed to keep. She wrote back a very prim letter, "thanking him for his kind present, which her father had permitted her to keep;" then followed inquiries after his health and general welfare, concluding "With kind regards, Sophy Bramble." At the end of this letter was a hastily scribbled, untidy little postscript: "I keep the primroses always. Joe dear." Since then nothing more had been heard of Joe Westlake; he had no relations in the village, and had disappeared entirely from the little world of which, to Sophy, he had constituted the principal element. For years she believed him too proud to write until he had made money; then she ceased to speculate at all, and, simply believing in him, placed him in the most sacred recesses of her heart, and his primroses in her drawer up-stairs.

But to-day, as she was returning from her morning round of shopping, she had met the Rector's wife, who stopped in the middle of the street, as usual, to chat over parish matters with Miss Sophy. "And who *do* you think called at our house yesterday?" asked she, with some pleasurable excitement in having a fresh topic of conversation. "You remember young Joe Westlake—a fresh-faced young fellow he used to be? He asked particularly after you, and where you lived now, and I believe he intends calling on you to-day——" She stopped, for Miss Sophy was staring straight before her, with a dazed look on her face.

"Joe Westlake," she said; "Joe come back again!" And she suddenly turned and shook hands with the Rector's wife so abruptly that no time was left to do anything but say good-bye. She passed on through the village street as if in a dream, until in the window of the greengrocer's shop she saw a bunch of primroses, and then she remembered that it was primrose time again. She went in and bought the bunch—pale, stunted little things, but to Miss Sophy the most beautiful flowers she had ever seen. Now, as she sat by the fire, with the dead primroses in her hand, the bunch of living primroses bloomed on the table by her side.

Her listening ear caught the sound of a heavy tread on the gravel without; and as she sprang to her feet and pushed the primroses inside the bosom of her dress, a long "rat-tat" resounded through the little house. Miss Sophy ran into the hall: "Matilda, Matilda," called she, in an excited whisper, "don't open the door for a minute, but light the lamp in the sitting-room, and put on a clean apron." While Matilda was obeying these instructions, she hurried up-stairs, and with trembling fingers drew forth from the box in her drawer a tissue-paper parcel. She was so tremulous that it was some moments before she could undo the manifold wrappings, and the impatient knock at the door was repeated, as she unfolded a small faded lace tippet, yellow with age and antiquated in shape. She handled it gently, as some precious thing, and then, standing before her dim reflection in the glass, she fastened it round her throat. She had never noticed before how grey her hair had become. Then she crept to the top of the stairs, and peeped over the banisters into the dark little hall, and heard a deep voice ask for Miss Bramble, and saw a dark figure move into the subdued light of the sitting-room. She screwed up all her courage, and went down-stairs. The door was shut, and for some time she stood, powerless to turn the handle; then with a supreme effort turned it sharply and entered the room. A grey-whiskered man of portly presence was seated in the biggest chair the room could boast. At her entrance he rose, bowed stiffly, and waited for her to speak. For a moment surprise kept her dumb; then the truth flashed upon her:—

"Joe!" she cried, in a sharp voice, "don't you know me?"

"What, Sophy!" he exclaimed, "it *can't* be Sophy!"

The cry had been wrung from her lips by the first

keen pang of disappointment, but she recovered her self-possession instantly, and spoke with a certain prim formality.

"I ought not to be surprised that you do not recognise me, Mr. Westlake," she said; "so many them; I passed through on my way here. Your father and mother are gone, I see."

The loud, careless way in which he uttered the dear names so sacred to Miss Sophy jarred upon her. She answered, in a voice even more cold and quiet than



"She cast down her eyes as she walked up the aisle."—*p.* 194.

years have passed since we met one another, and the years leave their mark upon us all."

"Well, that's true," he answered, re-seating himself—Miss Sophy never remembered that he had so loud a voice in the old days—"That's true enough; we're neither of us so young as we were. Dear me! it's really astonishing how the people here have altered—although the place remains pretty much the same—and so many dead too! The churchyard's full of

before, "Yes, they are both at rest. My mother died only two years ago, my father some time before."

"Ah, well," said he cheerfully, "perhaps it was as well the old gentleman went first; the gout hadn't improved his temper, even in the days when I knew him."

Miss Sophy drew herself up, with a dull pain at her heart. Could this be Joe—her hero—her ideal?

"He was always a good father to me," she said,

with dignity, "and a most devoted husband to my dear mother."

Then she changed the subject, and talked of her parish interests—the lending library, the Sunday-school, the clothing club of which she was secretary.

"It is a very useful institution," she said, talking for talking's sake, "and I only wish the funds were not so low."

Next moment she longed to unsay her words, for the portly gentleman opposite to her drew out a well-filled purse, and with much emphasis laid a sovereign on the table.

"Allow me, my dear Miss Bramble," said he, "to have the pleasure of contributing to so worthy a charity."

Poor Miss Sophy! she could not refuse his donation, so she murmured her thanks, but let the sovereign lie on the table untouched.

While she was wondering what to say next, his eye caught sight of the vase of flowers at his elbow.

"Primroses!" he exclaimed. "It's early yet for them, isn't it? But these are poor little things. Ah! it reminds me of the days of my youth, 'when we were young and foolish,' eh, Miss Sophy? How well I remember giving you a bunch, ever so long ago! Well, well! young people will be young people, I suppose."

She could have forgiven him if he had spared her this last allusion. She pressed his primroses tight against her heart, which seemed suddenly withered and shrivelled also.

It was a relief when he said, "I must be going. I dine with the Rector to-night, and shall be off again to-morrow, so may not see you again. Good-bye, Miss Sophy, good-bye."

He shook hands, secured his hat and stick, and was gone, closing the door noisily after him before Miss Sophy had time to ring for Matilda to show him out.

She stood for a minute or two in the empty room quite still, in the same position as when he left her; then, very slowly, she drew from her bosom the withered primroses, and placed them on the fire, watching them consume away to ashes.

Then she rang the bell. "Matilda," said she, shivering slightly, "bring some more coals; I feel the cold more than I used to do; I am getting old."

HELEN SMETHAM.



"THE SEVEN LEAVES OF THE VINE."

THOUGHTS UPON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF OUR LORD UPON THE CROSS.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM ALEXANDER, D.D., D.C.L., LORD BISHOP OF DERRY AND RAPHOE.

II.—THE SECOND WORD FROM THE CROSS.

"Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."—ST. LUKE xxiii. 43.

LET us note the contexture of circumstances by which these words are at once surrounded and elucidated. The "malefactors" of St. Luke (three times so-called by that Evangelist*) are the "thieves" of St. Matthew and St. Mark.† Judging from the fact that Barabbas‡ also is styled by St. John "a thief," it would seem that these men were concerned with a nationalist insurrection. At all times and in all languages the thief, the robber, and the patriot of a certain type are closely connected. The word is popularly stripped of much of its ignominy by the lofty ideas to which it appeals, or by the ennobling touch of adventure and of daring.*

It seems quite clear, from the two earliest Evangelists, that during the first part of their crucifixion both of these culprits joined in reviling the august Sufferer with whom their fate was so strangely associated. "The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth." "They that were crucified with Him reviled Him."† Strong and desperate as

* κακοῦργοι. (St. Luke xxiii. 32, 33, 34.)
† λῃστής. (St. Matt. xxvii. 33, 34; St. Mark xv. 27.)
‡ ἦν δὲ ὁ Βαραββᾶς λῃστής. (St. John xviii. 40.)

* So the λῃστής by sea is spoken of in the Odyssey, not without a touch of admiration, as "roaming the sea, hazarding his life unto the death" (Od. ix. 254); and Thucydides significantly notes, in his citation of the passage, that in Homeric times there was no ignominy attached to the name.

† St. Matt. xxvii. 44; St. Mark xv. 32.

such men commonly are, one was the harder and bolder villain, the "evil genius" of the other. A Christ of earth was the only Messiah for whom he was willing to fight or die. The other was a man of higher and softer mould. He had heard something of the gentle Galilean, with His works of love. He had seen part of the drama of the Passion in its earliest scenes. The dignity and patience, supreme and ineffable: the first words, even at the moment when He was being fastened to the tree ("Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!") went to his heart. At first, custom makes him join in the revilings of his companion. But better influences are at work; repentance ripens quickly in the soil of the Cross. He confesses—"we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds.' He shows the truest concern for his sinful brother —"Dost not thou fear God?" He makes his own act of faith as he prays—"Jesus! remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom."

Let us note, first, that we have in the record of this word one of the characteristics of St. Luke's Gospel.

In other parts, the third Gospel is the Gospel of the beauty of the Redeemer's life. It is the Gospel of the holy angels; the Gospel of ecstatic song and liturgic chant, heavenly and earthly; the Gospel of woman in the presence of Jesus. No woman in that representation is hostile to Jesus. That saddest sight was reserved for later times.

Above all, St. Luke's is the Pauline Gospel, the Gospel of triumphant grace, of abounding forgiveness. The same writer, by old tradition called a Painter, has given the most exquisite picture of woman's passionate penitence. and the most complete picture of man's sterner and more restrained penitence. The first is drawn in soft and coloured lines; the other cut as if by a diamond point on a plate of steel.

If the first word from the Cross be the priestly, this is the kingly word. Consider the *assurance*, the *promise*, the *revelation* in it.

I.

The *assurance*. "Amen* I say to thee." Here we have the old style of the Lake and of the guest-chamber. There is absolute certainty in it. In intellectual society there are "autocrats" of the table and of the *salon*. They are soon overthrown; and we find that there is nothing of permanent royalty in them; they are mere temporary presidents of republics of small talk. These speculative dictators are in the habit of announcing, "I *think*." The harder headed logician draws out his syllogisms, and writes down, "I conclude," or "I infer." The scholar ransacks manuscripts and volumes, and pronounces magisterially, "I read." But it is too plain that students may wander restlessly through libraries, as idle people stroll through a busy city, and be dissipated among their books, even though they be books of theology. There are persons of whom we are peculiarly sure that they have really nothing to say, who begin sentence after sentence with "I say." But Christ's especial utterance is not "I think," "I infer," "I read," not even "I say," but "Amen I say." In His utterances we make an act of faith, because we believe in Him.

This second word, then, has about it the characteristic utterance of the King of Truth.

II.

THE *promise* in this word is twofold.

First, it is a gracious promise of the abridgment of suffering.

There are instances of unquestionable authority to be found in the pages of writers who lived when the Roman cross was planted on the same soil with the Roman eagles, which show that men might live for many hours, possibly for two days, upon the cross. The position, of course, was agonising; the tension fearful; the cramps constant. Yet, physically strong as armed insurgents generally are, such a man might go on for weary hours, even while the sun set once and again, shaking the cross with his throes. Here there is an absolute promise of death within the day, before sunset.

But again, "He who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," gives this dying penitent something better than was implied in that which he had requested.

The man had only asked for recollection in a probably distant future—"when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom." He hoped that in that great day of the manifestation of the true Messianic royalty, the King of Israel, in His glory, might deign to revert to His humble companion in the dishonour of the punishment of Calvary. What an answer is accorded to him! Not merely was it a contingency—a possibility of which he need not despair—"Amen, I say unto thee." This hope, faint in his dying heart, but dearer than life, was not relegated to the dim future of distant ages. The very moment was big and thrilling with its presence—"to-day!" The convert of a few minutes should not be lost in the surging myriads of the redeemed. He should be close to the presence of the King—all his guilt

* I venture to cite the following sentences:—"This at once enables us to perceive the meaning of the 'Amen' so often used in the Gospels. The double 'Amen' occurs as the prelude to sentences of Christ twenty-five times in St. John's Gospel alone. The single 'Amen' occurs about thirty times in St. Matthew. It is half assertive, half liturgical. To those simple men as they rocked with Him in the boat, in the long golden hush of the summer evenings by the lake of Galilee, came His 'Amen.' It was like the hymn of their nursery, and the chant of their synagogue. It was also the expression of *certainty*. It told them of that upon which they could lean unhesitatingly; of the resolution of their simple doubts; of a fixed heaven over the fleeting waters of human opinion. 'These things saith the Amen.' (Apoc. iii. 14.) It is a name of Christ; but it is so only for those who know one characteristic of His teaching—its absolute, unhesitating self-assertion."—"The Great Question, and Other Sermons," p. 50 (Second Edition).

pardoned, all his hardness softened, all his ignorance changed into the fulness of light. He should have in a special degree the highest privilege promised to the most faithful of the servants of the King—"*with me.*" What is that but the fulfilment of the sweetest of all prophecies?—"Where I am, there shall also my servant be." "That where I am, there ye may be also."*

But in this second word from the Cross there is also a *revelation*—"in Paradise."† When speaking of departed friends, we constantly say "in heaven." To say that this is *false* would be a heartless exaggeration. It is not false, but *inaccurate*. The park is not the palace, but it is the precinct of the palace.‡ The word Paradise (Eden) is associated with softness, greenery, rest, coolness, refreshment. "In Paradise are fairer trees than on Golgotha."

Have we not reason to pray, in the presence of this second word from the Cross,§ that He Who spoke it would pardon the Sadducism of our hearts: our little belief in this revelation for ourselves or for others; our little hallowed curiosity about the hereafter? The "majority" is ever increasing on that other shore to which we are daily growing nearer. O the stillness round our noisy years! O the preciousness of the hope which enfolds the dead in Christ, ever since the dying Lord said to the dying penitent, "*to-day—in Paradise!*" To sum up the whole verse with Bossuet: "'To-day'—what speed! 'In Paradise'—what rest! 'With Me'—what companionship!"

III.

THIS paper may conclude with two reflections:—

1. There is something in these thoughts which requires to be guarded against abuse. Let us beware of turning the very lavishness of our Lord's generosity into a weapon against His holy Law. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid."

There is deep truth in the old familiar saying about the repentance of death-beds—"In all Scripture one that none may despair; one only, that no man may prepare." We read some months since of a wild leap from an express train going at full speed, and a desperate escape by the man's being landed on a parapet of a bridge. Who in his senses would follow such an example? "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, Art not Thou the Christ? save Thyself and us. But the other answered, and rebuking him, said, Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this Man hath done nothing amiss. And he said, Jesus, remember me when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom."*

Take all this together, and we find the germs of faith, hope, charity, humility. Give such a germ time to bud, and, under favourable circumstances, it will unfold itself into the rose. Give to such a penitent time to live the life of faith lodged within him, and he will be that wonder of the new creation—a saint. The repentance, so seldom found on a soft bed, is matured with divine rapidity on the hard bed of the cross. Those old writers scarcely exaggerated who affirmed that the case of the penitent thief exceeds in wondrousness that of Magdalene or of Paul.

2. Above all, both the Church and individual Christians should learn to believe in grace—the free gift of God to sinners through Jesus Christ His Son.

What was the source of the thief's pardon? Strange surmises have arisen in times of ignorance. The author of the Arab gospel of the Infancy tells his poor wild story how, when the Holy family was in Egypt in some dangerous place, two brigands sprang upon the little cavalcade; how one of the two, awed by the awful purity of the Mother, and by the light of hidden Godhead smiling "in the bright features of the Blessed Child," protected the wayfarers; how the Babe foretold His Passion, and the repentance upon the cross of the good thief. The Middle Ages fabled that the Blessed Virgin stood in the middle between this robber and Christ, obtained grace from Him, and proposed Christ crucified in fact to the dying man, as the crucifix is held up to people in their last agony. One of later date preached that as the shadow of Peter healed certain of their infirmities, so the shadow of Christ on the cross, when the sun came to a certain point, touched this man, and converted his soul. No! the cause was the efficacy and freedom of grace.

Theologically speaking, grace, no doubt, by the last analysis, is not irresistible. He who stands knocking at the door of the heart does not ungently force His way in, but waits for us to open. An early writer says with justice—"On the cross, the nails had fastened the hands and feet. In that supreme suffering nothing remained free. Yes! something: heart and tongue. By the gracious inspiration of God the dying thief presented to God all in him that was free, so that with the heart he believed unto righteousness, and with the mouth made confession unto salvation." Do we

* St. John xii. 26; xiv. 3.

† "Paradise" is the translation in the LXX. of the "Gan. Eden"—Garden of Eden.

‡ It has been supposed that an objection to this doctrine of Paradise is presented by St. Paul's language—"caught up even to the third heaven—caught up into Paradise,"—as if Paradise and the third heaven were identical. (2 Cor. xii. 2-4.) But "*even to*" denotes the *future*, "*into*" (εἰς) the *present*, condition of the saints.

§ St. Fulgentius has called the second word "the testament of Christ written with the pen of the Cross."

* St. Luke xxiii. 39-42.

believe in the influence of one human will over another? Can we doubt that a spell of fascination is capable of being exercised by one human being over another, even at a distance? If we believe that there is a Personal God, why should we doubt the fact of grace? for grace is the magnetism of heaven.

Of later years, we have had many tracts upon death-bed repentance. That upon this subject which at one time was nearly the most popular in England was the (not quite satisfactory) narrative of the notorious Earl of Rochester's last days, by Dr. Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. Stories of this class in our own time are briefer, and the heroes and heroines of humbler rank. Some of these narratives are deeply pathetic, yet they do not always convey the impression of being simple and unsensational. And unquestionably the writers of the New Testament do seem to have a horror of what are known as "death-bed scenes." Are there any but two to which any prominence is given—the penitent thief's and the martyr Stephen's?

Now, undoubtedly, there is, in the whole incident which we have been considering, something quite alien from—apparently almost inconsistent with—the view of the Christian life taken by all large, organised, constituted churches. Their conception is of a soul brought into the household of God in infancy, growing in grace, following in the footsteps of Christ's most holy life, falling asleep in peace. Not only is this the conception of churches—read the Pauline Epistles: is not this the view which they give of the Christian life? Each separate soul imitates Christ's progress, as each bird of the vast throng that makes westward follows each strange and graceful evolution of the leader bird. Is it in His birth? "until Christ be formed in you"; His circumcision? "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ"; His baptism? "buried with Him by baptism unto death"; His death? "ye died"; His resurrection? "risen again with Christ"; His very ascension? "raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Paul's ideal is the image of a soul seen in the dust of death, loved, pardoned, quickened, robed, throned, crowned; not smirched and soiled. Or take the image of Christian life given us in that mirror of a soul, St. John's first Epistle. How does the penitent thief fit into that calm contexture of progressive holiness for any who have once believed? The very word repentance is non-existent in that Epistle.

Yet, taken in its widest capacity, the Church, if it is to be fitted for our weak humanity, must not only be a home for saints—it must have a porch for the penitent, for backsliders, for those who have relapsed. It must be a hospital for restoration. Preach regeneration alone, and you will have an icy Church; preach conversion alone, and you will have a fluid Church; but preach both one and the other, and you will meet the wants of all classes whom the Church includes.

Certainly, ever since Jesus pardoned the dying thief, the Church has believed in pardoning grace—has believed that this incident has its perpetual lesson even for those who have believed and been baptised. The Church sends to the jail, the scaffold, the penitentiary. Let the worst be stricken with the sense of sin, and Christian men and women will tell him of One who abundantly pardons. The tide of grace breaks bright and broad. We can never say—"There is a point where the tide can never wash, and the wave never reach; a heart that can never be softened by love, or baptised afresh with grace."

OUR MODERN HEROES.

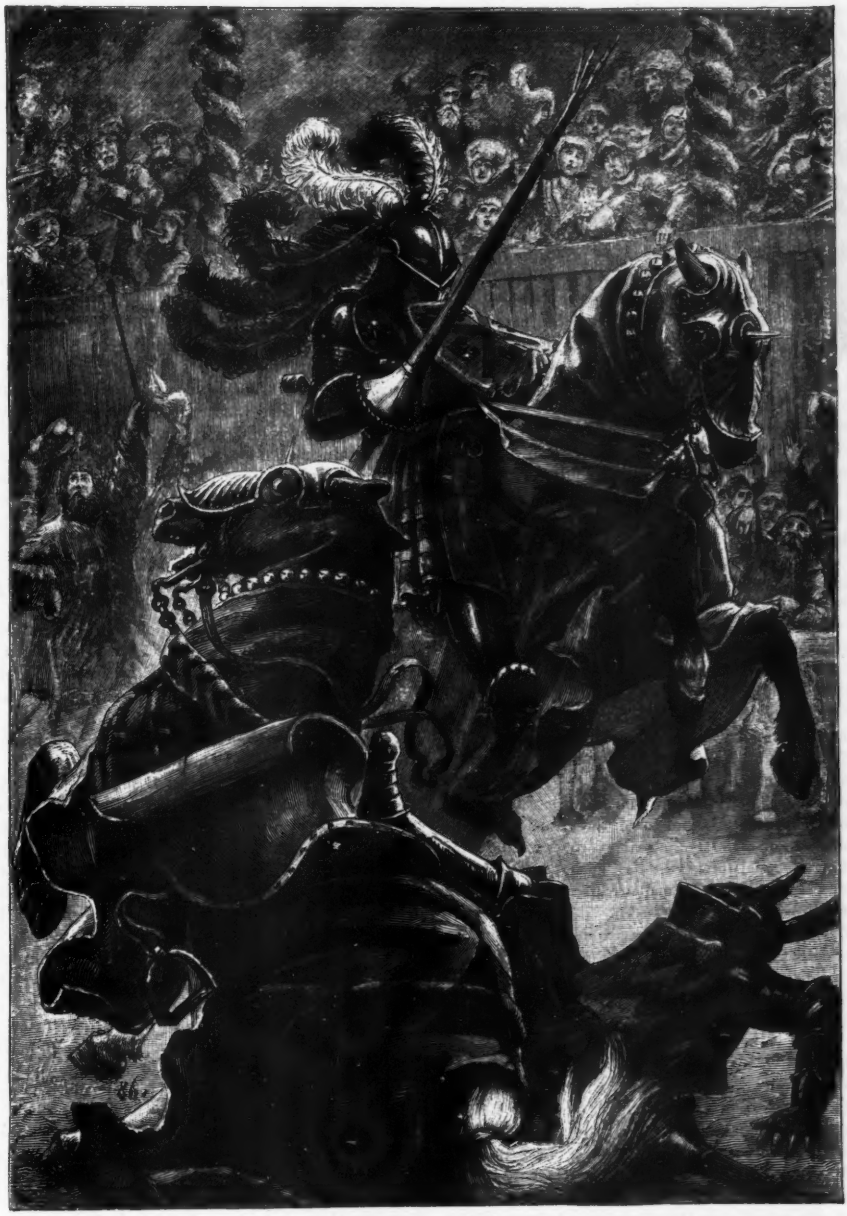
NOT as the knights of legendary days
Do modern heroes gain renown:
Battles with dragons and with goblins grim,
That lit with glory all those ages dim,
Bring *them* no crown.

Not as the heroes of old chivalry
Do our brave knights win fame to-day:
They enter not the lists with pride to fight
For God, their country, honour, and the right,
In rich array.

Our heroes' acts are never blazoned forth
With the loud blast of olden time:
Yet theirs to face death in its every form—
Through fire and water, pestilence and storm,
Through strife and crime.

A noble army stand they forth to-day,
Ready all risks to undertake,
If there's a life to save, a soul in need;
For this their motto in their every deed—
"For Christ's dear sake!"

GEORGE WEATHERLY.



"KNIGHTS OF LEGENDARY DAYS."

See p. 200.

"TO THE LIONS!"

A TALE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS. BY THE REV. PROFESSOR CHURCH, M.A.

CHAPTER VII.—THE ARREST.

THE centurion's message was duly delivered to Rhoda, nor, though it failed in its immediate object, was it sent wholly in vain. The girl herself never for one moment entertained the idea of profiting by the warning so as to secure her own safety. She would have been even capable of suppressing it altogether, if she could have been quite as sure of others as she was of herself. There was nothing that she felt to be more desirable than the martyr's crown, and why should she hinder those who were dear to her from attaining the same glory? But these high-wrought feelings had not wholly banished common sense. She was perfectly well aware that such aspirations were beyond the average capacity of her fellow-creatures. She doubted whether her own sister was equal to them. She was quite sure that some of her fellow-believers would fail under the fiery trial of martyrdom, and she shrank from the peril of exposing them to it. Nothing could be more dreadful than that they should fall away and deny their Lord. It would be a deadly sin in them, and, to say the least, a lifelong remorse to her, if she should have led them into such temptation. Her mind was soon made up. Her first step was to find her father, and give him the warning, only keeping back, as she felt bound to do, the name of her informant. Bion, whose practical good sense told him that dangers come quickly enough without one's going to meet them, resolved to keep all his family at home. Under ordinary circumstances, knowing the temper of his elder daughter, he would have charged her on her obedience not to venture out. But Rhoda's action in freely coming to him with the warning that she had received, put him off his guard. He took it for granted that she would attend to it herself, and, not a little to her relief, let her go without exacting any promise from her.

The next morning she started earlier than usual for the place of meeting. Her hope was to see the Elders, communicate what she knew to them, and leave the matter in their hands. They would know what was best for their people. If they judged it better that the disciples should hide from the storm rather than meet it, she would obey their decision, whatever might be her own disappointment. If, as she hoped, their counsel should be "to resist unto blood," then she would be there to share the glorious peril.

One of the little accidents, as we call them, that so often come in to hinder the carrying out of great plans, hindered Rhoda from accomplishing her design. She started at an earlier hour than usual, before there was even a glimmer of twilight, and instead of being more careful than was her wont in picking her way along the rough lane that led from the farmhouse into the public road, was, in her haste, more heedless. Before she had gone fifty yards from the house, she stumbled on a stone, and for some moments felt as if she could not move another step. Then her resolute spirit came to her help. "To think of the martyr's crown, and then be daunted by a sprained ankle!" she said to herself; and she struggled on. But all the courage in the world could not give her back her usual speed of foot; so that the hour of meeting had already passed while she was still some distance from the chapel. She was still crawling along when another of the worshippers, a young slave who had been detained at home by some work which he could not finish in time, overtook her. She at once made up her mind that he must act as her messenger, and that the message must be as brief and emphatic as possible.

The young man halted when he recognised her figure, saluted her, and asked whether he could give her any help.

"Leave me, Dromio," she answered, "leave me to shift for myself; but run with all the speed you can and tell the Elder Anicetus that there is danger."

Dromio waited for no second bidding. He started off at once at the top of his speed, and as he was vigorous and fleet of foot, reached the place of assembly in a very few minutes.

The celebration of the Holy Communion was going on, and the congregation was engaged in silent prayer previous to the distribution of the bread and wine, when the breathless messenger, pushing aside the doorkeeper who would have barred his entrance at what seemed so inopportune a time, burst into the midst.

"Venerable Anicetus," cried the young man, "there is danger!"

Such alarms were not unknown in those perilous times, and though the congregation was startled, there was nothing like panic.

Anicetus, a veteran in the service of his Master, and a confessor who had stood more than once in peril of his life, kept all his presence of mind.

"Be calm, my son," he said; "tell me whence or from whom you bring this message."

"I bring it from Rhoda the deaconess"—for as such the girl was known, though, as has been said before, she had not been formally admitted to the order—"I overtook her on my way hither. She was limping along, in pain as it seemed, though she said nothing, and she bade me hasten on, and deliver this message."

"It is no false alarm," said the Elder, "if it came from our sister Rhoda. Saw you or heard you any signs of an enemy as you came?"

XUM

"I saw and heard nothing," answered Dromio.

"And you came from the town?"

"Yes, from the town."

"Then the soldiers have not yet started," said the old man in an undertone to himself, "and we have a few moments to think."

By common consent the whole assembly waited for his decision. This deference was not so much paid to his office as to the man. Ordinarily such a matter would have been discussed by the community. But Anicetus was one of the men to whom in a time of peril all look for guidance. After a very brief pause for deliberation he spoke.

"All brethren and sisters that are of the servile condition will depart at once, and do their best to escape from the soldiers."

There were doubtless one or two bolder spirits among the male slaves who murmured inwardly at this command. But they obeyed it without hesitation. Indeed, they knew only too well the cogent force of the reasoning which dictated it. A free man or woman was exempted by law from torture, but it might be applied to a slave; and it would be applied almost certainly to some at least of those who might be arrested in the act of attending an unlawful assembly. If, on the other hand, they could escape for the time, their masters, even from the mere selfish motive of saving valuable property from damage, would do their best to protect them. It was well, therefore, to get them out of the way, both for their own sake and for the sake of the community. The Church had found many times what a horribly effective instrument her persecutors had in this power of torturing the slaves. It was not that she dreaded the truth that they might be thus compelled to speak, it was the falsehoods that might be forced out of them that were so much to be feared. Again and again miserable creatures, whose courage had broken down under this pitiless infliction, had purchased relief from their sufferings by inventing hideous charges against their brethren. The mere truth had not satisfied the persecutor, who often really believed that there must be something more behind; and so they had been driven, as it were, to lie.

When the slaves were gone, Anicetus spoke again: "Brethren and sisters, you must be brave; that, I do not doubt, you will be. And you must be prudent; that, to some of you, will be less easy. Therefore I warn you. Court no danger. You shall have strength for your day, but not beyond it. When you are accused, be silent—as far as you may. The law does not compel you to bring peril upon yourselves, and they cannot force you to speak. Acts unlawful to a Christian you will, of course, refuse. There you will not yield so much as a hair's breadth. But see that these acts be such as may lawfully be demanded of you. This is the counsel that I give you, so far as things of this life are concerned. Spiritual help you will not lack, if, indeed, you have not believed in vain. And now, while there is yet time, let us strengthen ourselves with the Communion of the Body and Blood of our Lord. It shall be provision for a way that may lie through rough places."

Just as the Elder had finished speaking, Rhoda entered the chapel. The strength that had supported her through her painful journey failed when she reached its end, and she sank, almost fainting, on the floor. Two of the women helped her into a little ante-chamber, and gave her such comfort and relief as was possible. Meanwhile the interrupted rite went on. The little congregation again offered up their hearts in silent prayer—not less earnest, we may be sure, than that which had been broken into by the arrival of the messenger of danger. This ended, the sacred Bread and Wine were administered: with what depth of feeling in ministers and people it is impossible for us to realise, whether (as will be the case with most who read these lines) we are living quiet and peaceful lives, or even are brought face to face with great perils, such as are the perils of the sea and the battle-field. To "resist unto blood," as these weak men and women were called to do, wanted an enthusiasm of courage far greater than is needed for the lifeboat or the forlorn hope.

The Communion was almost ended when a loud knocking on the door of the meeting-house showed that the soldiers had come. The Centurion Fabius had not ventured to evade the duty of executing in person the order of the Governor; but to make the actual arrest was more than he could bring himself to endure. To enter the chapel on such an errand would have been an intolerable profanation. Happily, military etiquette permitted him to delegate this duty to his deputy. It was this officer, who had been duly cautioned to perform his office as gently as he could, who now presented himself at the chapel door. It was thrown open at once. One point that the Christians were always careful to insist upon was that, though they might find it prudent to meet in secret, they had nothing to conceal. Anicetus was just about to administer the Bread and Wine to Rhoda—who was now partially recovered—when the deputy centurion entered the building. With a gesture of command, which the rough soldier felt himself strangely constrained to obey, he motioned the man back, and then, without a change of look or voice, performed his sacred office.

The rite finished, he turned to the soldier, and cautiously asked him his errand. The man produced the Governor's order to arrest all the persons who should be found assembled in the guild-house of the wool-combers. Anicetus perused the document deliberately, and then returned it to the officer, with the words, "It seems to be in order. We are ready to obey."

The number of prisoners who had been thus taken was a few less than forty, of whom six, including Rhoda, were women. The men were lightly bound—that is, the right arm of one was attached to the left arm of another. The old knight Antistius, and the Elder Anicetus, both of whom were Roman citizens, were not subjected to this indignity; nor was it thought necessary so to secure the women.

The question then arose, What was to be done with Rhoda, who was clearly unable to walk? The deputy consulted his chief.

"There is a woman among the arrested," he said, "whom it will be necessary to carry, if she is to

accompany the others. Will you be pleased to give your commands?"

No sooner had Fabius heard these words than an agonising suspicion of the truth crossed his mind. Something, he knew not what, told him that this disabled woman could be no other than Rhoda herself. The wild idea of making this a pretext for releasing her occurred to him, only to be dismissed the next moment. She could not be left; and if she was to be taken, she must go with the rest. With a sinking heart he entered the chapel, and a single glance at her figure, though her face was turned from him, convinced him that his fears had not been vain. It was Rhoda. His warning had been fruitless, although a hasty glance showed him that neither Bion nor Cleoné was among the prisoners. She had been more careful for others than for herself.

It was agony to Fabius to feel that he was the man to put her into the hands of her enemies, and he was glad to leave the chapel before she could recognise him.

Meanwhile the practical difficulty had been solved by an ingenious soldier who had fetched a bier from the mortuary of the burial ground. A little contrivance converted this into a litter. It was convenient enough, and was made comfortable with the cloaks of the party; but Fabius shuddered at the sight of the living borne on the vehicle of the dead.

The departure of the soldiers from the town had not been unnoticed, and a crowd was assembled to witness their return. The principal street was indeed thronged with spectators as the prisoners were marched along it to the Governor's quarters. A few groans and hisses were heard at one point, where Arruns with some of his friends had stationed himself; but on the whole the feeling was friendly rather than hostile. Few knew much about these Christians, but they had already begun to find out that they were the friends of the sick, the poor, the unhappy.

CHAPTER VIII.—BEFORE THE GOVERNOR.

THE arrest at the chapel had been made so early that it still wanted more than an hour of noon when the prisoners were brought into the presence of the Governor. Pliny, aware of the importance of the case which he was about to try, had called in the help of a trained lawyer—an advocate of high reputation—who had some time before retired from his profession, and who now sat as his assessor. At the same time he had invited Tacitus, as a senator and ex-consul, to take a seat on the bench. The prosecution was conducted by the principal lawyer of the town, and Lucilius, Arruns, with several of the Nicean merchants, supported him by their presence. The accused, numbering about thirty in all, of whom two-thirds belonged to the labouring class, were undefended. All the slaves had contrived to escape arrest. The lower part of the hall was densely crowded with a mass of interested spectators. All available space, indeed, had been filled up within a few minutes of the arrival of the prisoners, and the approaches to the hall were thronged by eager candidates for admission.

When the prisoners had answered to their names, and had stated their several occupations and condition of life, the inquiry began. A long harangue by the prosecutor on the subject of the importance of the worship of the gods was cut short by the Governor, who intimated that his eloquence, if it should be wanted at all, would be more relevant after



"With a gesture of command . . . he motioned the man back."—*p.* 203.

his evidence had been produced. Thus checked, the advocate began his examination, addressing it in the first instance to Anicetus.

"You are one of the leaders of the society which calls itself by the name of Christus?"



"'There were two lovely little girl-babies.'"—*p.* 207.

"Is this the matter, or among the matters, of which you accuse me?"

"Certainly it is."

"Then you hold it to be a crime to belong to this society of Christus?"

"Certainly, seeing that it is not one of the societies that are permitted to exist by the constitution of the Roman State and the will of our sovereign lord, Trajan Augustus."

"If that be so, I appeal to the Governor whether by the law of Rome I can be compelled to make such answer as would criminate myself."

The appeal was so manifestly just that the Governor did not think it necessary to consult his assessor, but decided that the question need not be answered.

Baffled at this point, the prosecutor re-commenced his attack at another.

"You do not deny that you and your associates were assembled this morning in the guild-house of the wool-combers?"

"We do not deny it."

"For what purpose, then, did you meet?"

"Before I answer that question, I would myself wish to know whether you have the right to ask it. Are free men and women, against whom there is no evidence of wrong-doing, to be questioned by anyone as to the purpose of their meeting? That we have the right to use the guild-house of the wool-combers is proved by this document."

So saying, Anicetus produced from his pocket a small parchment, which simply recited that the wool-combers, in consideration of a sum of four hundred drachmæ yearly, permitted the use of their guild-house to Anicetus.

"You see, then," resumed Anicetus, "that we have not taken possession of a place to which we are not entitled, nor is there any evidence against us of unlawful dealings. Were we found with weapons in our hands, or preparing noxious drugs, or practising forbidden acts, or plotting against the safety of the State and the life of the Emperor, then might you justly ask us for our defence. But you do not attempt to prove against us any unlawful deeds or words."

The prosecutor now tried a third method of attack. "Are you and your associates willing to worship the gods of the Roman State, and to pay the customary homage to the image of our lord, Trajan Augustus?"

Without answering this question Anicetus turned to the Governor: "Is it permitted to us, most excellent Plinius, that we see the accusation under which we have been this day brought before you?"

"There are many accusations," replied the Governor; "they are substantially the same, and it will probably suffice for the purpose that one should be read.—Scribe," he went on, turning to an official that sat near, "read the information of Lucilius against the people called Christians."

The document was read. It charged a number of persons, including all of the prisoners then before the

court, and many who were not in custody. Treason, impiety towards the gods and towards the Emperor, hatred of mankind, licentiousness, were among the accusations brought against them.

"Here," said Anicetus, when the reading was finished, "are many terrible things brought against us, whereof no proof has been given by our accuser. Is it lawful, most excellent Plinius, that, such proof failing him, he should seek thus to raise prejudice against us? What right has this advocate, being but a private person, to call upon his fellow-citizens to do sacrifice to the gods or to the Emperor? What right has he to fix the time, the place, the manner of worship? Were an Egyptian, a worshipper of Isis, standing here, could he be lawfully compelled to do sacrifice to Jupiter? Or should a German—a worshipper, as I have heard, of Hertha—be condemned because he does not pay reverence to Apollo? For tell me now," he went on, addressing the accuser, "you that charge us with impiety, are you diligent in the performance of your own duties in divine things?"

The accuser was notoriously a man who believed in nothing, and was known not to spend a drachma on any religious duty. A hum of approval ran round the court at this manifest hit. So far, the line of defence taken by Anicetus had been successful. It might easily have failed with another Governor, a man of more imperious and tyrannical temper than Pliny; but the Elder had skilfully taken into account the Governor's mild and tolerant character, and his probable desire to avoid any measures of severity. But it was now to be overthrown in an unexpected way. A tablet was passed from among the crowd of spectators and put into the hands of the prosecuting counsel. On it were written the words, "*Challenge the free condition of Rhoda, commonly called the daughter of Bion and Rhoda his wife, and call as your witness the freedman Eudoxus.*" This document bore the name of Lucilius, and the prosecutor at once perceived its importance. Indeed, it was his last hope, if his case was not to break down completely. He resumed his address.

"As your regard for freedom, most excellent Plinius, protects the silence of Anicetus and his companions, I will address myself to the case of one of the accused who cannot claim this same protection. I maintain that the woman Rhoda—reputed daughter of Bion and Rhoda—is not of free condition, but is a slave."

Had a thunderbolt fallen in the court, judge, assessor, accused, and audience could not have been more astonished. The first feeling was one of absolute incredulity. To no one did the statement seem more absurd than to the girl herself.

"This is a strange contention," remarked the Governor, "and not lightly to be made against a family of good repute. What evidence can you produce?"

"I call the freedman Eudoxus," replied the prosecutor.

The freedman Eudoxus was present, it soon appeared, in court, for he answered when his name was called. Most of those present knew him, but none, it may safely be said, knew any good of him. He did a little pettifogging business as an informer—a person who performs functions that may sometimes be useful, but are certainly always odious. If a baker gave short weight, if a wine-seller hammered the sides or thickened the bottoms of his measures, Eudoxus was commonly the man to bring his misdeeds home to him, getting for his reward half the penalty. Had he been content with this, he might have been endured; but he was not content—his gains had to be increased. If he did not find offences, he manufactured them. All the little traders and shopkeepers of the place—for he did not fly at high game—were in terror of him, and most of them submitted to the blackmail which he levied of them. As he spent his ill-gotten gains in the most discreditable way, it may be guessed that Eudoxus had about as bad a reputation as anyone in Nicæa. Great was the wonder among the audience what this miserable creature could know about the family of the respectable Bion. A few of the older people, however, had the impression that he had once been in the farmer's employment.

Eudoxus, a man of dwarfish stature, with a large misshapen head, whose countenance bore manifest tokens of a life of excess, stood up in the witness-box. The usual oath was administered to him.

"Tell us," said the Governor, "what you know about this case."

"Twenty years ago I was in the service of Bion. He is my patron. He enfranchised me. I was his bailiff."

"Why did you leave him?" asked the Governor.

"We had a difference about my accounts."

"I understand," said Pliny, who, like the rest of the world, was not impressed with the appearance of the witness; "you made things better for yourself and worse for him than he thought right. But go on; what do you know about this matter? You understand what it is; practically this, that the accused Rhoda is not truly the daughter of Bion. Do you know this said Rhoda?"

"Perfectly well, and her sister Cleoné also."

"Proceed, then."

"Bion bought me about a month after he came to the farm which he now cultivates. I was there when he brought thither his newly married wife, Rhoda by name. I lived in the house for the five years following that time. They had no children. Of this I am sure, for I saw the said Rhoda day after day, without the intermission of more than a day at the most, during the said five years. It was a matter of common talk among us of the household that this want of children was a great grief to the master and his wife. Three years after his coming, one morning—it was, I remember, the first day of May—Bion called us all into the dining-chamber. There was a cradle with two children in it. I should judge that they were a few days old. He said, 'See the daughters whom God has given me.' The same day he enfranchised me. To the other slaves he gave presents, and promised them their liberty in due time, according to their age, if they should show themselves worthy of it."

"He called them his daughters, then?" asked the Governor.

"Truly; but no pretence was made that they were so in truth, for his wife did not keep her chamber."

"Who were the women that waited upon her? Are they yet alive?"

"The elder, who was called the mistress's nurse, died, I believe, some ten years since. The younger is married to Lucas the butcher, that has his stall in the north-east corner of the market-place."

The Governor gave directions that the wife of Lucas the butcher should be sent for. Meanwhile he adjourned the proceedings for half an hour.

On the re-assembling of the court the witness was ready to be examined. Happily for herself, as will be seen, she had been emancipated before her marriage. She gave her testimony with evident reluctance, but it was clear and conclusive.

"I was a waiting-maid of Rhoda, wife of Bion. Bion bought me of a dealer in Ephesus a few days before his marriage, that I might wait on his wife. I went to her at once, and never left her till I was married, now ten years ago. She never had a child born to her. It is impossible that she should have done so without my knowing. It was commonly said that this was a great grief to her. I have seen her weeping, and knew that this was the cause. One day, when I had been with her about three years, the old woman whom we used commonly to call her nurse said to me, 'Come now, Myrto'—that was my name—'see the mistress's lovely babies.'—'What?' I said; 'it is impossible.'—'Nay, say nothing,' she said, and put her hand on my mouth. Then she took me into a chamber next to the mistress's, and, sure enough, there were two lovely little girl-babies, twins, as one could see at once, not more than a few days old, as I judged. Nurse said, 'You are a wise girl, and can keep a quiet tongue in your head. From to-day these two are Rhoda and Cleoné, daughters of Bion and Rhoda. And now, mind, not a word to anyone; and, above all, not a word to the little ones themselves when they grow up. For love's sake, I know, you will keep silence, nor will you miss your reward.'"

"And did you know whose the children really were?" asked the Governor.

"I did not know."

"Could they have belonged to anyone in the household?"

"Certainly not. Of this I am sure."

"Someone, I suppose, knew?"

"Yes, nurse knew, but she never told. She has been dead some years. The matter was never mentioned. We were the only women in the house. Eudoxus was the only man. The other slaves were outdoor labourers. None of them, as far as I know, are in this neighbourhood now. The girls, when they grew up, always supposed that they were the daughters of the house. It was never doubted; nothing was ever said to make a doubt."

The witness, whose self-control utterly broke down as soon as she had finished her evidence, now left the box. After a brief consultation with his assessor and with Tacitus, the Governor directed that Bion and Rhoda his wife should be called.

The two were of course present. One of the slaves who had left the assembly, at the bidding of Anicetus had made them acquainted with Rhoda's proceedings. As the girl herself failed to return at the usual time, their fears were aroused, and they were turned into certainty by the news that reached them from the town that a large company of Christians had been arrested at their meeting-house. On hearing these tidings they had hurried down to the town, accompanied by Cleoné, whom nothing indeed could at such a time have kept away from her sister.

The two answered to their names.

"Let Rhoda, the reputed mother of the person whose condition is questioned, be first called," said the Governor.

A way was made for her through the throng with no little difficulty, and she made her way, with tottering steps and face pale as death, into the witness-box.

"You have heard," said the Governor, "the testimony of Eudoxus, and Myrto the wife of Lucas?"

"I have heard," she answered.

"Nevertheless, for the more assurance, let the depositions be read over."

A scribe accordingly read the depositions.

"What have you to say to this evidence?"

The unhappy woman did not hesitate a moment. Nothing could have induced her to go aside by one hair's-breadth from the truth. She lifted her eyes, looked the Governor in the face, and answered in a low firm voice—"It is true. The children are not mine."

"And do you know whose children they are?"

"I know not."

"Nor whence they came?"

"Not even that. My nurse, as I called her, said that I had best not know. I think that they had been deserted; but even of this I am not sure. I can only guess it, because I never heard so much as a word about the parents. Nurse would never speak on the subject. Even when she was dying—for I was with her, and asked her again, as I thought it right to do—she would tell me nothing. 'They are your children by the will of God,' she said; 'no one else has part or lot in them.'"

A whispered consultation now took place between the Governor and his assessor. As the result of it, Bion was called.

"You have heard," said the Governor, "the testimony of your wife. What say you to it?"

It would have been useless to deny it, even if Bion, who was as truthful as his wife, could have wished to do so. "It is true," he said.

"Do you know whence the children came?"

"I know nothing more than my wife. The nurse knew, but she would say no more to me than she would to her."

"Then you cannot say whether they are bond or free by birth?"

The force of the question did not strike the witness, overpowered as he was by the situation, though there were many in the court who saw its significance, while an evil smile crept over the face of the prosecutor.

"Free, my lord!" he answered, after a pause; "of course they are free—they are my adopted children."

The Governor saw the course that things were taking, and was glad to leave the matter to the

prosecutor, being ready to interfere if he saw a chance of helping the imperilled women.

"Excuse me, sir," said the prosecutor; "you speak of them as being your adopted children, but can you produce the instrument of adoption?"

The poor man was staggered by the question. "I never adopted them in that way. I never thought it necessary. But I have treated them as my children; they have lived with us as children. I have divided everything that I have between them in my will."

"Pardon me," said the prosecutor, with his voice most studiously gentle, and his smile more falsely sweet, as he saw his toils closing round his prey, "I do not doubt your kindness to them; but if you cannot produce the usual legal instrument—which, indeed, I understand you to say you have never executed—they are not your adopted children. And if you have not adopted them, may I ask whether you have emancipated them?"

The purport of the examination now made itself clear to the unhappy man. He had, of course, done nothing of the kind. Taking it for granted that their condition would never be questioned—ignorant, too, of law, as a man of his training and occupation would almost certainly be—he had never dreamt of either adopting or emancipating the two girls. He had simply treated them as his daughters, and never doubted for a moment that all the world would do so likewise.

"I have established then, most excellent sir," said the prosecutor, "that the woman Rhoda and her sister Cleoné, with whom, indeed, I am not at present concerned, are of the condition of slaves. I demand, therefore, that the woman Rhoda be questioned in the customary way."

The Governor interposed, "Doubtless the accused will answer such questions as will be put to her."

"Pardon me, sir, if I say that the law knows but one way only of questioning a slave."

"But if the slave be willing to speak?"

"Even then, I submit, the law presumes that he will speak the truth only under this compulsion. I demand, therefore, that the woman Rhoda be questioned by torture."



"'We will suffer together.'"

A movement of horror went through the whole assembly.

Another consultation followed between the Governor and his assessor. "This seems to me a needless severity," said Pliny when it was finished. "Why not reserve this compulsion if the witness should be obstinate?"

The prosecuting counsel, hardened as he was, was staggered by this appeal. He turned to Lucilius for further instructions. Lucilius was pitiless. He had been enraged by the cool and skilful defence of Anicetus, and he was determined not to lose his grasp on the victim that had fallen into his power. "Keep to your point," he whispered to the accuser.

"I demand the question by torture against the woman Rhoda."

"It is granted," said the Governor, "but so that nothing that she shall say be used against Bion and Rhoda his wife."

Cleoné, who was standing by the side of the elder Rhoda, had gone on hoping against hope till the fatal words were spoken. Then she rushed forward and caught her sister in her arms. "We will suffer together," she said.

(To be continued.)

THE PENKNIFE AND THE BRAZIER.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE 'I WILLS' OF THE PSALMS," ETC.

"And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he [the king] cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was (in the brazier or) on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth."—JER. xxxvi. 23.

NEVER was there a man who made such a bad use of his penknife as that unhappy Jehoiakim, king of Judah. Better for him to have taken it and cut off his hand, than to have cut that roll; better for him to have shivered every winter of his life to that life's end, than to have used that brazier to burn the words of the Living God. Poor wretched man! with his brazier and his penknife he entered the lists with God, who is a consuming fire, with the One whose word is quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword. The cutting up and burning of that roll by Jehoiakim was a bad business; and the worst of it is that though Jehoiakim is dead and gone, his dead body cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost, the like is going on now. He has left successors enough. God grant that they may not be amongst us to-day. If they be, God grant that they may be afraid, and rend their garments, or do whatever might be the equivalent of it, before it is too late.

Jehoiakim, as everyone in Scripture is, is a representative man, a specimen of a class of men, who with greater or less audacity do as he did, and with a like result, and a common doom.

I shall occupy your attention but for a short time to-day, doing little more than barely mentioning some of the teachings with which this incident supplies us. Such as I have time to notice will group themselves round two centres—Jehoiakim and God.

Let us first take what is to be noticed in connection with this madman who, with his brazier and his penknife, defied the Living God.

When Jehoiakim had read three or four pages, or columns of the roll, and got from them a sample of the whole, he took his penknife and cut up the MS., and threw it into the fire. He treated it as waste paper, though he knew well enough that it was the message of the Living God.

Jehoiakim read but three or four columns—a little of that kind of thing was quite enough for him. The whole counsel of God was what he did not want to know; he went no farther than mere curiosity would take him. There was deep and serious matter here, which, as a king and a man, he was bound to go into; but, with a levity and an obstinacy of character which seem fitter for a madman than for one in his common senses, he went no further, but acted as though by putting an end to the roll itself he could do the same to the living and awful words which were written therein.

The complexion of the story seems to point rather to a treatment of supercilious contempt, than one of open violence. The penknife is probably quietly and calmly drawn through the roll; and then most likely Jehoiakim sat still and watched the MS. shrivel in the flames, and laughed at the black and formless and letterless ashes of what a moment before had been the word of the Living God. A breath would now suffice to blow away all the heavy maledictions which had been denounced.

Jehoiakim thought that he had effected a *complete* destruction of all that that roll contained. The gash of the penknife would have still left the roll so that it could be read, but the fire consumed the whole. Mark that. Jehoiakim aimed at a thorough work, and he carried it out.

And mark yet further that the natural action of the fire was not restrained.

We should have said: "God will never tolerate the insult, He will never allow such a thing to happen, He will interfere with Nature, rather than allow such an act of rebellion to be carried out."

For the moment there was an apparent human triumph over God. The king sat before the fire in the pride of his royalty, his courtiers around him, and the charred and dishonoured fragments of a burned roll were the only representatives of the living God.

No voice from heaven had cried to "stop," as it had done to Abraham when he took the knife to slay his son; none called as the trumpet sound which arrested Paul on his persecuting path; the thunders of heaven which we should have expected to have boomed, and crackled, and crashed, and shaken the throne and scattered the brazier's fire, were silent. The fires of heaven, which in their forked descent would have soon avenged the impious deed of the fire on earth, did not cleave the skies and kill the king. All this would have been awful, but to me it is yet more awful that all remained still; the fire burned on; there was no fear. Jehoiakim had provoked the Living God, and there was no sign of the insults being revenged.

And with what simple instruments the whole thing was done! The common things of daily life are quite sufficient as weapons against God, when there is a heart to use them as such. The fire which God had given the man to warm him, the common penknife, one of the little conveniences of daily life, are weapons enough with which to fight *against* God, even as David's sling and stone were weapons enough wherewith to fight *for* Him. So ready to hand lie the

instruments of the will, for evil or for good, so effective can the humblest instruments become in the hands of those who desire to do right, or whose heart is set on wrong.

Now, I want you to learn, I want myself to learn, some important lesson from all this.

See here how the elements of high defiance of God lie ever ready to our hand.

Let Jehoiakim's penknife and brazier be your preachers and say, "The elements for the destruction of conscience, for turning you away from God's reproof and the Spirit influences, from any of His dealings with you, are round about you in your common daily life. Jehoiakim had no glittering sword with which to strike at the Almighty, but he had a penknife, and that did as well. He had no lightnings to hurl upward at Him; but he had a fire burning in his brazier, and that did the deed.

You don't need me to teach you what all that means. Your common sense will tell you plainly enough. You can fight God, fight your consciences, ruin yourselves with what lies readiest at your hand; the most commonplace things will do this. Let the will but be there, and what is harmless, and even useful in itself, will suffice for you to work therewith the deadliest hate to God, the direst injury to yourselves.

The lawful amusement, the lawful food, the lawful relationship, the lawful love may all be perverted; aye, the very trifles of life a man may use against his own soul. The book that is misused to divert you from serious thought, the coin that the world claims and gets, when it is God's, the child you fondle, the home you love, the very clothes you wear, may become to you the penknife which rends, and the brazier which burns the message which comes from God to *you*. Perverted uses are often only one step from deadly abuses. The brazen censers of Korah, Dathan and Abiram became sin against their own souls, as Jehoiakim's brazier became a sin against his. Men err in thinking that they have to go far afield for weapons wherewith to fight either for God or against Him. When the roll of the prophet was brought in before the king, the brazier and the penknife were ready for it there.

Three or four columns! that was enough for Jehoiakim. It was bitter reading, and he would not go on. Who knows but that if he had read on, the terrible tale of lamentation, and mourning, and woe, folding and coiling itself around his heart, might have made him shudder, and by the very excess of misery have crushed him into humility; and he that humbleth himself under the mighty hand of God shall be lifted up. The possibility was there, for God himself has said, "It may be that the House of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin." Who knows but that one of those gracious touches of mercy which glisten like planets in a winter sky, which touch the murkiest cloud and fringe it with golden light, may have wakened up some penitential thought, which He that is "slow to anger and of great mercy" would have been ready to act upon, and forgive?

No, young man—you who will not read your Bible, because it has hard things in it; and you, old man, too—you for whom three or four chapters are enough—go on, go through it all; the Lord has a "may be" in it for you. Read what He will surely do to you if you do not repent; with your miserable brazier and your penknife I adjure you not to enter into conflict with the Living God.

But you may do this. There is here a distinct recognition of man's ability successfully to rebel—*i.e.*, apparently successfully for a time. The knife cut! the brazier burnt! the roll was *gone!* But Jehoiakim was not gone, and God was not gone, and there was another roll to come, with the *same* things in it. Oh, foolish man, mark that—with "the same" things in it. "All the words of the book, and there were added besides unto them many like words."

I will say nothing about that last awful sentence, it would want a sermon to itself; the resurrection roll is more awful than the one which has perished in the flames; the first contents are there, "and there were added besides unto them many like words."

And now, what shall I say about God? He seems vanquished; He is gone. There is an interval. All is quiet, and Jehoiakim no doubt thinks that all is well.

Stay. "Then the word of the Lord came to Jehoiakim, and it said, "Take thee again another roll," and in that roll was to be written every word which had been burned, "and there were added besides unto them many like words."

What have we here? The vitality of the purposes of God under, and in spite of, the resistance and apparently destructive power of man.

So the brazier and the penknife were no good. They destroyed the roll, but they could not reach God. Ministers may be unheeded, Bibles may be unread, consciences may be seared, hard, but God's purpose is unchanged, God's will remains, when God's roll is destroyed. Remember that it is with God Himself you will have to deal; until your penknife and your brazier can conquer Him, He will conquer you.

Oh! the terrible calmness of "Take thee another roll." The idea is frightful of God being calm, unhurried, unimpassioned with you. You have tried your best against Him; now *He* is going to renew the strife, and that with the determination of gaining the day. And what is He going to do? Why, if you fight His word, to vindicate His word, to show that not a jot or tittle of it shall fail; to make it even more stringent than before. The general law will be restored, and the special offender—Jehoiakim then, you now—punished.

That was a miserable failure of Jehoiakim's—his last state was worse than the first; the whole of what was written in the first roll is written now

XUM

again, and much more beside, and he has written against him a special doom.

My readers, the roll, the law, with all its curses, comes to every one of you. It comes with a purpose. Jeremiah's roll is sent that men may return from their evil ways, that God may forgive their iniquity and their sin. It is your bounden duty to listen to and to believe what God solemnly declares He will do to those who do not heed His threats and forsake their sin.

God comes to you with His Law, that you may hate and flee from the evil against which the Law is directed, for evil cannot live with God. That is its purpose; and it is a good and gracious deed of God to tell you that His hand must be against evil, and that it will be too. Be as merciful to your own souls as God is to them, when He tells you plainly what He means to do with the unrepentant sinner and his sin.

The Law comes to you, unfolding its terrors that you may believe them and escape from them; it wants to be honoured in obedience and not punishment. Christ has fulfilled its demands, and yet borne its curses. You must in your repentance first turn to Him, and then through Him from sin.

If there is any one amongst us to day who is flattering himself that all is well because, though he has rejected God, and God's Law, and God's salvation, all is still—let him remember that another roll may be preparing this time, not for repentance, but for judgment, and that his name, his very name, the name by which we all know him here, the name by which he is known in society, in business, in church, at home, may be on the point of being entered therein.

Break the awful silence this very moment, and say, "Lord, stay Thine hand. I, ere my name goes down, I bow beneath the accusations and the terrors of the roll; I flee to Christ, that in Thy other roll my name may be written, even in the Book of Life."

And if there is any among you who would tell me that I have made too much of the brazier and the penknife, those instruments of the King of Judah's sin, for that any little things might be made the instruments of evil, if only the heart be set on sin, then I say, Out of thine own mouth shall be thy teaching to-day. See, if thine heart be evil, how the elements of defying God, of sin, are ever ready at thine hand—how in even the commonest things of daily life thou mayest work out thy doom. And pray God for the Holy Ghost, that thy heart may be right with Him, that none of the things of daily life may to thee be ministers of sin, as were the brazier and the penknife to that fool who with them did an awful deed, even no less than defying the very Living God Himself.

To you, to you, brethren, comes there this day by my hands the roll of a book, a book written within and without, with lamentation and mourning and woe, but also with grace, and mercy, and peace; these all are true in the very fulness of truth itself—the denunciations, the curses, the woes, the death, the doom are all terribly true; the deliverance, the life, the joy, the peace, are gloriously true also. To those who have taken to themselves first the death and then the life, it is well—they have passed from death unto life; but for others it is yet only a "may be;" it "may be" that they will do the like, but the brazier and the penknife are at hand, and what if there be a heart to crucify the Son of God afresh, and to neglect so great salvation?

Upon the "may be" of to-day, of perhaps this very day, may hang the dread "shall be's" of eternity.

Refuse, like Jehoiakim, to go into the whole Bible roll. Cast it from you when you have read a little, and not found it to your taste; then the "may be" of salvation will become the "shall be" of ruin; and the roll which God sent you as an instrument of life, will become to you a most certain and terrible instrument of death.

EARLY MORNING.

A PARABLE FROM NATURE. BY LADY LAURA HAMPTON.

"DING-DONG," and through the stillness of the morning air the old church clock began slowly to toll forth the hour of five.

"Twitter, twitter," "Chirp, chirp," sleepily answered the birds from the trees and bushes around, as they one by one untucked their little round heads from under their wings and shook out their feathers.

Softly rustled the leaves beneath the breath of the balmy air, as they strung the dew into beads on leaf and stem.

Swiftly and silently the lark mounted high in the rose-tinted ether from her nest amid the daisies, who, already half-awakened, gazed expectantly through their petals.

A breathless spell held all nature entranced as the golden rays brightened in the east, and the stars, who had so patiently and unobserved watched all night, paled and faded before the rising sun. Suddenly a burst of song from highest heaven heralded the new-born day, which was taken up and echoed from earth and sky as hundreds of feathered warblers flitted hither and thither in the sunlight, and trees and flowers offered their silent homage in sparkling dewdrops or opening buds, or filled the air with their fragrance.



"Heralded the new-born day."—*p.* 211.

A wave as of regret passed over the field of long grass in which the daisies bloomed, as it quivered at the faint touch of the breeze.

"Alas!" it murmured, "that I who have received so much should have nothing to offer in return."

"Well, you certainly have not beauty," sang a hedge-sparrow who was intent on domestic cares; "and for my part, I do not understand this perpetual jargon about thanksgiving. Receive! of course we all receive light and food; how could we live if we did not? and as long as we do our duty I do not think there is time or need for praise."

"It seems so ungrateful," replied the grass, "to take all and give naught back—just to grow, and nothing more."

"You are wronging yourself there," slowly remarked a snail, who with difficulty had crawled up the daisies. "Growth in itself is a giving back, for are you not thus—though perhaps unconsciously—responding to and making the most of gifts received?"

"And to grow at all, one must look upwards, even though it be silently," said the flower on which it rested; "and surely to adore is to praise."

So the grass was comforted, and the rustling of the leaves and the song of the birds, the hum of bees and the scent of the flowers, troubled it no more as it grew and gazed upon the sun, and the birds and the flowers and the bees sought and found shelter amongst it, and were welcome. Spring passed into summer, and days lengthened as the cuckoo's song, the sound of the scythe was heard, and the grass, in the morning green and growing up, at night lay withering beneath the stars.

Once more all Nature sang her hymn of praise to the rising sun, and as its rays rested on the new-mown hay the gift so longed for in life was granted; a subtle fragrance filled the air, and floated heavenwards.

HOMELESS.

"Home, home! sweet, sweet home!
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home!"

CHAPTER I.

SILENCE fell on the generally noisy audience as the pathetic music of the well-known ballad touched all hearts. The promenaders paused in their walk to and fro. The busy devourers of oranges and penny ices forgot for the moment the delicacies before them. The hum of voices ceased.

The singer's voice thrilled through the heated concert-hall as she sang with tightly clasped hands, and shining eyes that saw, beyond the glitter of mirrors and chandeliers and the multitude of faces, a little rose-covered cottage, knee-deep in gilly-flowers and shaded by fragrant lime-trees, which had once been her own "sweet home." The clear tones trembled with suppressed emotion. Sympathetic tears started to the eyes of many a listener. For the moment another atmosphere seemed to pervade the stifling, glaring hall. Then the song ended. There was a brief silence, followed by tumultuous applause, and "Mademoiselle Claudine" came back with a sigh from her dream to reality.

A little later she was wending her way to what she now called "home"—an attic in a back slum of the East End of our modern Babylon. It was a terrible night; the rain fell in torrents, and Ella Maize—yclept "Mademoiselle Claudine" by the aspiring manager of the Swan Road Hall—shivered as the bitter wind caught and buffeted her mercilessly at the street corners. The shadow of the past was upon her—a past which the words of her song had only too powerfully recalled—and not even the delighted manager's promise to raise her salary could dispel it.

Ella Maize was a country woman, whose life until the last two years had been spent in a bowery Hampshire village. Her mother had died soon after Ella's marriage to the village carpenter—a steady, good-natured young man, who had everybody's good word; and her loneliness made the girl cling more closely to her husband, who was indeed all in all to her.

Never was there a happier couple than this young pair. Their cottage was the abode of peace. Nobody ever saw it "in a muddle," or its mistress untidy. Windows, pots and pans, were all as bright as Ella's face. Round the old-fashioned porch roses were trained. The garden was full of flowers, where bees held carnival. All day the door stood open for the free entrance of sun and air, and Ella might be heard at almost any hour singing over her work as gaily as a lark. The cottage was indeed a *home;* and when a child came to the happy wife, she felt she had not a wish unfulfilled.

Baby Walter was six months old when the first cloud darkened Ella's sky. Her husband's health began to fail. He had a cough; he grew thin; and village gossips, remembering how his father had died of consumption, shook their heads, pouring their forebodings and condolences into Ella's terrified ears.

To die? Her dear Walter to die? A shuddering horror came over her at the thought. Death, both to him and to her, meant only darkness and separation, unlighted by any real faith in the love of Him who takes the sting from death.

Strict keepers of the moral law, they had never learned the first and great commandment, "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*," and each was the other's idol.

When a friend—the captain of a small sailing-vessel—offered to take Walter for a voyage, which would give him the one possible chance for his life, both of them caught at the chance, though the prospect of parting was a heart-breaking one.

Especially was it terrible to Ella. It was impossible for her to go with her husband, and it was bitterly hard to send him away from her in his weakness to suffer and—oh, thought of anguish!—perhaps to die, without her at his side. But, no, he should not, would not die! He would return to her strong and well, and, like the happy lovers in old fairy tales, they would "live happy ever afterwards"—in the dear little home among the limes.

The dreaded hour of parting came. White and tearless, Ella stood with straining eyes fixed on the fast-lessening vessel that bore her husband away from her until it was lost to sight. Then she turned away—her child, her sole remaining comfort, clasped close to her breast to still its aching. One letter she had from Walter—full of cheering accounts of returning health and vigour—full of words of love and longing for her and her baby. One letter—and never another!

A fortnight later Mrs. Smith, from the next cottage, came in with a newspaper in her hand. The *Merryweather* had been run down one foggy night by a steamer, all on board perishing with her.

God alone, Who sent the trouble, knew the fierceness of the pang that seemed to tear Ella's heart in twain. He only knew the awful burden of loss and loneliness which that fatal news laid on her—the anguish of hopeless days and sleepless nights. He, who leads the blind by ways that they know not, gave the widow strength to bear her grief, and to live through it, though she never thought of looking to Him for help. For herself she would not have cared if she had starved; she would have been glad to die—to close her eyes to the mocking sunshine, to lose the pain that gnawed ceaselessly at her heart. But for her child's sake she must not die; she must live and work, she must take up the burden of life and bear it to the end.

With the restlessness of grief, Ella could not stay at Fairyburn, in the home that had been so dear and was so desolate. She determined to go to London. The noise and bustle of the great city would distract her mind—would take away that dreary sense of silence which weighed on her very soul. She would find some sort of work, of course!

It happened that Mrs. Smith had a married sister in London, therefore Ella was not utterly friendless when she arrived there. It was to the big lodging-house in Magson's Yard, where Mrs. Lee lived, that she went to make a new home.

As the train swept into the Waterloo station, a lurid sunset was burning over London, the smoke flared dull purple in it, hanging over the houses like a pall. Certainly there was noise and bustle enough. The incessant roar of traffic, the endless train of pedestrians, the confused shouts and cries, quite stunned the country woman. How many faces full of unrest and misery she met! How many wan with disease, and dark with sin!

Ella's heart sickened as she followed the man who carried her one poor box through the streets, while the sunset faded into a dull gloomy twilight.

At last they reached Magson's Yard. Ella pressed her child more closely in her arms, and averted her eyes as she passed groups of bold, slatternly women and drunken men, lolling at windows and in doorways. Up flights of dingy stairs they went, past room after room from whence sounds of quarrelling or loud merry-making issued, to the top—where was the attic which was to be Ella's home from henceforth.

It was a good-sized room, in spite of the sloping roof, and a bright fire burned in the grate, thanks to Mrs. Lee's exertions; but to the young widow it was an abode of desolation. She sat down with baby Walter on her knee, and burst into tears. Vainly she wished that she had never left Fairyburn. She could not live, she told herself, among these dreadful sounds and sights, or breathe in this stifling air. Again and again the desolate cry rose to her lips from her breaking heart—"Oh, Walter! oh, my love! come back to me!"

"My goodness gracious me!" exclaimed Mrs. Lee, hurrying in, with her tall daughter, Grace, to welcome the new arrival; "but this won't do at all! you must cheer up, my dear! Come in and get a bit of tea with us—we 've kep' it a-purpose for you, and there 's a bit of something tasty after your journey."

"Thank you," answered Ella faintly, "I—I don't want anything."

"Nonsense! You feel like that just because you want something so badly! Give me the child—you see, it 's quite ready to come to me, a pretty! and Grace, you bring Mrs. Maize in. Tom and Jim 's out, so there 's only me and Grace."

Mrs. Lee chatted incessantly, being one of those women who cannot live without talking.

"What are you going to do?" she asked at length, when a little colour had crept into Ella's white cheeks under the influence of the hot, strong tea.

"I don't know—plain sewing," replied the latter, dubiously.

"Whew!" whistled Miss Grace, whose costume of crimson and amber, set off by various beads and bracelets had entirely absorbed baby Walter's attention during tea, and also somewhat excited his mother's wonder. "You'd better take to my line of business. Plain sewing 's a fool to it!"

"What is your business?" Ella asked with interest.

Miss Grace tossed her curly head till all her beads jingled again.

"I sing at the Swan Road Hall," she explained proudly. "I sing in character. I'm a comic. Oh! it 's fine!"

Ella's eyes opened in wonder and dismay. Grace laughed a loud, good-natured laugh.

"Shocked your country ideas, eh? Well, you come and see me sometimes, that 's all! I say, can you sing?"

Ella could sing. She had been the leading soprano in the village choir, and owned it modestly.

"I 'll hear you sing," pronounced Miss Grace; "and if you 've a voice, our manager shall hear you. If you enter the purfession your fortune 's made."

Grace and the manager decided that Ella had a voice, and some few months later the widow began her new career as "Mademoiselle Claudine, the celebrated ballad-singer: for the first time in London."

At first the "celebrated ballad-singer" was shy, and the musical critics of the popular Hall voted against her; but on the night on which our story opens she had made a success, and the hall rang with her praises.

Ella was very wet when she reached Magson's Yard, very tired, and strangely dispirited in spite of her success. All night she tossed sleepless on her bed. In the morning she was slightly hoarse, and by the

next night her throat was really bad. Evidently she had caught a severe cold. Fortunately, she had three days' rest from singing, and hoped by the end of that time to be quite well again.

"It don't do for us purfessionals to be ill," declared Grace Lee on the third day, shaking her head over Ella's wretched looks—for her hope of being quite well had been a baseless one. "You must suck some lozengers, and keep quiet. It won't never do to disappoint 'em to-night of 'Home, sweet home,' just when you've made a hit."

"I don't know how I shall manage," said Ella despairingly; "but I'll do my best."

The place seemed to swim round her when, at last, the time arrived, and she came on the platform to sing. Her limbs ached; her throat was on fire; and a bewildering humming in her ears added to her distress. The listening faces glimmered indistinctly before her. How impossible it was to sing! What an effort it cost her even to raise her voice—that grew weaker and huskier with every note!

From the back of the platform she heard the manager say, "Sing up!" in an angry undertone. She made a frantic effort to obey. What *was* the matter with her? she wondered with a feeling of terror.

> "'A charm from the skies
> Seems to hallow us there'"—

So far she got, then her voice broke with a curious jarring wail. Not another sound would issue from her white lips. She looked wildly round with a mute pitiful appeal for help. The humming in her ears grew maddeningly loud, the audience disappeared, the lights went out in a rush of darkness, and "Mademoiselle Claudine" fell to the ground insensible.

CHAPTER II.

"WE don't want any new hands, thank you!" said the portly mistress of a small baby-linen shop, in answer to Ella Maize's plea for work.

"I can sew very neatly, and I am willing to take very small payment," said Ella imploringly; "I—I can't get any work anywhere, and I'm nearly starving!"

"We've so many such applicants," replied the other, shrugging her shoulders.

"I've sold all my things to pay the rent, and this morning I've been turned out of my room because I can't pay; I've nowhere to go, and nothing to eat, and I've a little child! For God's sake, help me!"

Miss Steen fumbled in her pocket and produced a penny.

"There, that's all I can do for you. I've enough to do to keep myself!" she said, turning away with a gesture of dismissal.

Hopelessly and heavily Ella passed out into the street. She had utterly lost her voice—her one talent, and the disappointed manager of the Swan Road Hall had refused to pay her anything. Vainly she had tried to get work, day after day dragging her weary limbs from place to place, hearing in her broken slumbers baby Walter's cries for bread, seeing in the cruel daylight his little cheeks losing their colour, his eyes growing hollow—despairingly fighting the grim wolf from the door, which it must enter at last!

The friendship of Mrs. Lee and Grace—never a trustworthy one—cooled as Ella's fortunes declined.

One by one her few possessions were pawned until all were gone. Then the widow and her child were turned into the street—homeless. Oh, terrible word when a *woman* must say it—*homeless!*

In all the wide world she had not a friend. Of the crowds that passed her by not one knew or cared anything about her. Sometimes so-called charity put a penny into her outstretched hand, and then went comfortably on its way, forgetting her.

Into the rich West End she strayed wrapped in the old plaid shawl which Grace Lee—with a kindly impulse—had given her at parting. There, there were stately homes enough, whose pampered servants threw away the food for which Ella was starving. Luxurious carriages swept by. Ladies extravagantly dressed, rosy children laughing and gay, glanced askance at the bonnetless "tramp" and fatherless child—for whom was no refuge but the workhouse or the grave. The splendid shops groaned under their plenitude of raiment and food. Ella turned sick at the sight of the latter, but baby Walter first laughed, then cried because "mammy" wouldn't get him one of the pretty sugared cakes he coveted. His cries made the mother's broken heart bleed anew. Surely her cup of woe was nearly full! Slowly the cold April night came on. To home, friends, and dinner, ladies and gentlemen—full of mirthful anticipation or languidly bored by very excess of pleasure—whirled along in their closed warm carriages. Lights glared through the dusk. The noise in the streets grew more deafening. Seeking a quiet corner with a last effort, Ella sank down on a doorstep—yielding to the apathy of weariness and despair—sank down to die.

> "O, it was pitiful!
> Near a whole city-ful,
> Home she had none!"

She would rather die than go into a workhouse, she thought bitterly. A workhouse for Walter's wife and child! No, she would die, since there was no home for her in the world, and no hope! Death could not be darker than life.

Little Walter soon wailed himself to sleep, and his mother's head fell heavily against the door-post. She was not asleep, but completely exhausted, and her life seemed to be floating painlessly from her into outer darkness.

* * * * * *

"I've no husband and no home—no home!"

Her own words roused Ella with a start. She opened her heavy eyes and met a pair of friendly blue ones, that were watching her anxiously.

Where was she? She was lying on a clean white bed in a cheerful firelit room, and on the pillow by her side lay baby Walter's sleeping face.

Ella put her hand to her forehead, trying to recall her scattered senses. By degrees it all came back to her—the dreary wandering in the streets, the cold doorstep.

"No home! no home!" she wailed again.



"The widow and the child were turned into the street, homeless."—*p.* 215.

"Yes, my dear, you've a home; and if you ain't got a husband, you've a Father!"

"No, no! I've neither home nor father," moaned Ella, exerting all her strength to speak. "Oh, *don't* send me out into the streets again! I shan't be in the way long, ma'am; I'm dying!"

"There! there!" replied the owner of the blue eyes, soothingly. "Be still, my dear, and go to sleep. A kind gen'leman as lodges with me brought you in, and you 're to stay here. He wouldn't turn a homeless dog out, he wouldn't, let alone a woman!"

"He is kind," murmured Ella, her eyes filling with tears.

"Aye, it's true. You might have died on the doorstep but for him—and your Father."

"I have no father," Ella declared with weak impatience.

"*Our Father which art in heaven*," said the other woman softly. "Him as cares for His wandering children, and brings the homeless Home."

Ella was silent; but the words had touched a chord in her heart, and set it vibrating. Strange new thoughts and emotions stirred within her.

"*Our Father which art in heaven.*"

Ah! that was the Father, that the Home her new friend meant. She had never gone for love or comfort to that Father—never desired that home. But now, brought very low by weakness and suffering, the long-estranged heart said, "I will arise and go."

A Father and a Home! How sorely she needed both! What sweet, what precious words they were! Ella felt like a child waking from some long feverish sleep, in which it has been wandering lost and hopeless. She clasped her hands and murmured, "Father! our Father!"

It was her first real prayer.

"The gen'leman says as how he'll come in and see you if you're willing," said good Mrs. Morris next day, when her patient had eaten some breakfast and declared herself better, though still too weak to rise; "and don't you go and be afeared of him. He's had a deal

of trouble too, and he can feel for you. He's a real Christian, and if anybody can do you good he can."

"I'll see him," replied Ella. "I'd like to thank him."

She looked up, half-timidly, half-eagerly, as her rescuer entered, and saw—*her husband!*

* * * * * *

It was no dream; though, at first, neither Ella nor Walter could believe in the reality of each other's presence in the flesh. It was a happiness almost past belief; a joy almost too great to be borne. They mingled their tears together, while Mrs. Morris wept for sympathy, and baby Walter, thinking that "mammy" was being somehow injured, cried lustily also.

With her hand in her husband's close clasp, Ella told her pitiful story, and listened to his.

When the *Merryweather* went down, he had clung to a floating barrel and been tossed about, as it seemed to him, for hours, before he was picked up—almost dead—by a passing outward-bound vessel. For weeks he lay at death's door, being most kindly tended by a clergyman who was on his way to Melbourne. Body and soul this young man cared for him, and, by degrees, as his brain cleared and his mind strengthened, Mr. Williams led him to seek that gracious Lord who is always found by them that earnestly seek Him.

On his return to Fairyburn, Walter found his home deserted. Nobody was able to give him any clue as to the whereabouts of his wife and child, for the Smiths had gone away in debt, and all that was known by others was that Ella was "somewhere in Lunnon." To London he went, full of hope; but after months of vain search and sickening disappointment his hope began to fade.

Through the Vicar of Fairyburn's influence he obtained work, in the intervals of which he still pursued his almost despairing search.

In the darkness he had not recognised his wife in the huddled-up bundle of clothes he carried in from the doorstep to Mrs. Morris's warm kitchen. Being already late for an appointment, he had placed his burden hastily on a sofa, leaving her and her child to his landlady's good offices, with the brief request—"Don't turn her out, poor soul! I'll see her to-morrow."

This was the story which Ella was never weary of hearing.

A month of happiness passed away, during which the happy mother and child rapidly recovered health and strength; and then Walter asked his wife if she would like to return to their pretty cottage home at Fairyburn.

"I hear it's to let again," he said; "and I know you love the country."

For a moment Ella hesitated, as a vision of the sunny, flower-sweet garden, with its blossoming limes rose before her; but only for a moment.

"No, dear Walter; we won't go back," she said, with a brave, bright smile. "Don't you think that God has led you and me through so much trouble just that we may be the better able to help others in their troubles? When I remember how I felt when I was starving—and, oh! far worse, when I saw my baby starving—my heart bleeds for all such! I'd like to live among them, and help as many as we can, Walter. The helpless women! the little orphaned children!"

"Right, Ella! and God bless you for saying so! It's what I wanted to do; only I wasn't sure it was your mind. It will be a work of love to us both, my darling!"

So Walter and Ella Maize live on in London, though they are well-to-do people now. Among the poor in the poorest quarters of the great, wealthy, noisy city they live, finding a joy above all the dreams of selfish happiness in rescuing the fallen and feeding the hungry—in bringing the fatherless to the loving Father, and leading weary, homeless wanderers Home!

S. W.

WHITE BERRIES.

(See Frontispiece.)

BY THE REV. FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE, M.A.

ACROSS the meadow, wintry white,
They passed, dear girls! so April-bright,
My heart went after;
Ah, poet, turn your rhyme for weeks—
What word will paint those morning cheeks,
Or chime that laughter?

They dragged the burnished branches down;
The red-gold ringlets brushed the brown;
The gazer lingers;
To lend one's aid were sweet enough—
But holly-spikes, howe'er so rough,
Would kiss those fingers!

I saw sweet Gold-hair toward her friend
Hold up a bough, white-globed, and bend,
And half caress her;
The other blushed and turned her head,
And, as her brief romance I read,
I thought, "God bless her!"

Then, throbbing over roof and field,
The Bells of Christmas crashed and pealed
In concord golden,
And on those glad young hearts and mine
Tell, with a balm of peace divine,
The tidings olden.

WIDOWS' WORRIES.

BY THE REV. FREDERICK HASTINGS.

WHEN two persons get married, it is said of them "they have tied a knot with the tongue that cannot be undone with the teeth." Death comes and unties what the teeth cannot touch. The two may have lived happily or unhappily; but the untying has ofttimes terrible consequences to either the one or the other. It is said by some that the wife will get on better without the husband than he would without her; but, as a rule, we find the woman has a greater struggle when the husband is taken away.

Every man should provide for himself, if possible, against a rainy day; but it is imperative that he should do something to provide for his wife against the most fearful rainy day that can come—the day when he will be carried to his long home. He should insure his life, at least. A tradesman told me with pride, "I insured my life at my marriage, and I have gone on increasing the amount as often as I could. I know I shall never otherwise save money; and I am compelled to pay the premium, so I am saving that way." His wife stood by and looked on with equal pride at a husband who was so careful for her. She was not as blind as that one who said, when her husband came home and told her, with gladness, that he had insured his life for five thousand pounds, "Just like the selfishness of men! always insuring and thinking of their own benefit."

When a man dies leaving an estate or a good amount in insurance, his wife will find that there are many drains upon the amount before she can get it invested so that it shall bring her in a permanent income. Perhaps he may leave a will that is so carelessly drawn or so complicated that his poor widow may have endless trouble, and even have the whole estate thrown into Chancery, and a very trifling amount come out. We knew of one who had nearly £20,000 left by her husband, but after some litigation over the will she had about a tenth of that amount left.

It seems terrible enough that a woman should have to bear such sorrow as comes when the prop of the house is taken, but she has so frequently immediately to bestir herself to think of ways and means. After the funeral expenses have been met, there are the daily expenses that have to be curtailed or discharged. How few can indulge the luxury of grief like a certain Marchioness of Tavistock, whom physicians ordered to Lisbon to divert her mind and restore her health. She prepared to go. A consultation of physicians was held just before she started. One of them feeling her pulse asked her to open her hand. She declined. He urged it, and gently pressed it open. Then was disclosed, hidden in the hand, the miniature portrait of the deceased Marquis.

"Madam," said the physician, "prescriptions must be useless if you are determined to keep before your eyes an object which, though deservedly dear, only confirms the violence of your illness."

She replied, "I have kept it in my bosom or hand ever since his death, and thus I shall preserve it until I drop after him into the grave." It might in her case have been a mercy to have been compelled to do something that would take her mind from grief. The absence of necessity for thinking of "ways and means" is not an unmixed good. Few can, however, linger long to mourn. They may not dry their tears altogether, but they must not let the world see too many. They must put forth effort that further bitter tears of poverty may not be wrung from them and their children.

It is not of those of high rank that we speak in considering the question of "how widows live." Nor is it of those who soon after the loss of one husband think only of how to secure another; but we speak of those who have to begin at once the struggle to keep the wolf from the door, those who are left to themselves to face the cold world and battle for life. Pitiful is the sight of the pallid face under widow's weeds, looking for some employment or projecting some scheme that shall enable her to earn a living. What bitter tears must often be shed over disappointments and failures in effort! If men could but know



"Free service for at least a month."—*p.* 220.

to what wives would be subject they would never procrastinate in respect to providing something that should be a help to them when left alone. The Jewish Talmud warns men against causing women to weep. It says "God counts their tears." Many, alas! cause wives to weep for the way in which they are left to bear heavy burdens which a little forethought would have easily prevented coming upon them.



"Few can linger long to mourn."—*p.* 218.

Look at that widow with crape-laden dress, how she goes from place to place, thinking of how she may start a little school and earn something. She finds a place and begins, but pupils are few and expenses are heavy. She may have a goodly number after a time; then some infectious disease may break out and the school be scattered. We have known some succeed in educational work admirably. The opportunities, however, are now, through the operation of the School Board, greatly lessened, and other outlets for widows' energies have to be discovered. Some will start a little shop for the sale of papers, or sweets, or Berlin wools and fancy goods, or grocery or drapery. Said one to me who had kept a little shop for several years, "The rent and taxes are so heavy and profits now so small, that I shall have to give it up, and I don't know what to take to or where to go." Others, again, take to keeping boarding-houses, or letting lodgings. We have known this succeed well if the sea-side town were properly selected, or the house were near to where medical or other students lived. Others will go to hospitals and learn how to nurse invalids in private homes or public institutions, and they can only do this when someone takes their children. Others will take to the pen, write articles or verses, which they send to editors gorged already with manuscripts. They wait impatiently and send imperatively to know whether the articles or poems are accepted or not. Should they receive any remuneration they may find it is so trifling that it is hardly worth waiting for. Some have indeed earned a good living by the pen in writing for the newspapers. One London newspaper gave a sketch a short time ago of one who in a foreign city makes the best special correspondent of a great contemporary. But there are many widows who cannot keep school or lay out money for fitting up shops, or for furnishing houses to let, or who cannot handle the pen, and their case is sometimes most painful. The widows of artisans and labourers have often a

very anxious season. They go out charing, washing, and scrubbing: they have to clean out offices early and late, and poor ofttimes is the pittance they receive.

Here is a widow who has to go and live with her married daughter, and she often finds it very humbling to be told emphatically to do this or that. One widow had to go and live with her son, and she had not too happy a time with the daughter-in-law. We saw one poor gaunt widow who was too glad to creep into the one room in which already slept a man, his wife and two children. When I was once visiting one who was ill in that room, it was with difficulty I could find standing-room in the place, so lumbered up was it with bundles, and old chairs, and a rickety table. To be by oneself, however bare the room, would be preferable: so thought a widow who had drifted into being a caretaker of empty houses. She lived in one until it was let, and then was sent to another. She was so trusted by agents and landlords that she had always several to look after. Whenever one was let she received a sovereign as a bonus, and upon this she would manage to live until another house was let and another sovereign came to her palm.

One widow who had five children to care for, found that she could make a better living after her husband was dead than before. He had given way, at one time, to drink, and then, having lost his situation, he had to remain at home. Slight paralysis brought on by his evil doings made him of little service in the house. As his wife kept a little "sweetstuff" shop she was able to earn a trifle. When she went out to work he often would take the few farthings and halfpence which the children had paid for sweets, and would go to the nearest public-house, where he would speedily dissipate the small earnings and capital of the poor woman. She knew not what to do. To stay at home was to get but little, to go out was to lose at home. At last the man died, and then the woman was able to make a better living by herself than when he was with her. She had faculty.

One widow, whose brothers were well off, hoped for help from them. A two-shilling piece was the extent of the assistance that came after a most earnest appeal, backed up by the writer. Poor woman, how I pitied her! Of course something had to be done to start her. In order to live she made aprons and tried to get into a factory, but she was told that although "she could do machining well, she must yet give, as a sort of premium, free service for at least a month." Thus a widow was taxed in order to secure regular employment. The proposition was made by the manager of the factory of one of the sweating firms. I had even myself tried to interest the principals of that firm in this poor widow, and they gave me directions as to sending her to their manager of the factory department. When the manager proposed the month's gratuitous service, the widow protested that she "could not live for a month and feed her children on nothing." She came back to me in great trouble. Fortunately afterwards she was able to find other employment which, though very poorly paid, was yet better than nothing. She has now been at it some time, and when I recently saw her she said she was grateful "for the way in which her God had provided for her."

Here is the one-room home of another widow. How does she live? She is eighty years old. She has several labouring sons, and each one makes a weekly contribution out of hard earnings towards the support of his mother. What a tiny room she lives in! and yet for this she pays 2s. 6d. per week. Poor thing, she often knows what pinching is. "I only had a cold potato yesterday for my dinner and supper," she said. "Ah, sir, I should not have been in my present position if the two husbands I have had had not given away so much to keep up the public-houses. I remember once I went to bring my second husband out of the 'pub,' and the landlady said to me, 'Don't hurry the man.' I spoke up and told her I did not want him to spend all his money in keeping up her house. I told her them beautiful caps she was a-wearing belonged to me if I had my rights, as my husband's money paid for them, and she knew very well he had no right to spend so much.

"'My word!' she said to my husband, 'your wife do speak out her mind.' Ah, I did speak it out, and meant it; for if it had not been for the money gone to the pub, I should not now have to be dependent on my boys. I know one of them has been out of work for several weeks, and he could not give me that which he usually gives me. Still, God takes care of me, as He does the sparrows and buttercups."

"Why do you say the buttercups?"

"Because I always think that they have no one to water and tend them, yet they grow; so I call them 'God's flowers.'"

"And you are one of God's buttercups, then."

"Yes; He do take care of me and always has done so. I don't know how I have got through, but I have never really been without something to keep life in me, and I am over eighty, and ha' been twelve years a widder."

The same testimony came from the lips of another. She had suddenly lost her husband and bread-winner, a very steady, good man. She seemed at first in her grief so helpless and despairing. What to do for her was a perplexity. She was left with several children, and these young. However, a brother took charge of one, then her husband's employers bought her a mangle, so that she managed to earn a little. The people in whose house she lived let her have an underground kitchen at a much lower rent, and so she struggled along. Then she was called in to attend to an invalid old gentleman every night, and thus she earned a little more. "It is hard work," she said, "but, you know, God gives me strength to do it, and I can only thank Him. It is simply wonderful how He takes care of me. I could not have believed I could have gone through all I have."

Many poor widows have more faith in God and live simpler Christian lives than those who have as far as eye can perceive all that can make life bright and valuable. Looking poverty in the face they often see God's care more specially manifested. They would be perplexed to fully describe how they live, but they would assert unhesitatingly that He fulfils His promise and becomes a "Husband to the widow."

XUM



ST. COLUMB'S CATHEDRAL.

ST. COLUMB'S CATHEDRAL, LONDONDERRY.

BY THE HON. ISABEL PLUNKET.

THE name of Ireland is associated too exclusively, especially in the minds of Englishmen, with thoughts of ignorance, superstition, and crime; and it is, alas! true that in a country where the Bible is virtually a closed book to the majority of the people, and public-houses, in alarming proportion to the number of its inhabitants, lie temptingly open at the corner of every village, almost at the corner of every street, the process of development is naturally one of evil, and not of good.

But there is, thank God, another process at work in the hearts of the Irish people, "a power that worketh for righteousness." Protestant Ireland is justly proud of her historic past, brave and unselfish in the discharge of present duty, and reliant, even in these perilous times, as in the greater perils of old, upon the assurance of God's presence and help. "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early."

St. Columb's Cathedral, Londonderry, offers a grand though silent witness, not only to the faith and courage of Irish Protestants in old historic times, but also to the zeal and self-sacrifice of Irish churchmen of the present day. It rests as a fair crown upon the summit of the picturesque hill upon which Londonderry is built. This hill was overgrown in ancient times with wild oak, and was known as "Derry Calcagh" (the hill of the fierce warrior).

But, under the "sweet influences" of Christianity, which ruled with such powerful sway in Ireland between the fifth and sixth centuries, this name was exchanged, with expressive contrast, for that of "Columbkill" (the church or cell of the Dove). The

oaks amongst which the "fierce warriors" had fought and ambushed were cut down, and St. Columb raised in their stead a "House of Prayer," round which, as children round a mother's knee, "peaceable habitations" were quickly grouped, and the city destined for so great a future grew up under the protection of Divine blessing and prayer.

But that mysterious essential of "much tribulation," through which entrance lies to the Kingdom of God, applies not only to the history of individuals, but to that of nations and churches also.

St. Columb died in exile; his eyes and heart turned often yearningly towards Ireland—so yearningly that, as we are told by his biographer, he welcomed with tender love and pity even the spent bird that alighted on the bleak shore of Iona from the Western Island, still called by him his "own dear land."

The town of Derry, although true to the simple faith taught by him, ceased after a while to be associated with his name, and became again the scene of many fierce and desperate conflicts, which it would be impossible to enumerate here. Enough to know that it was in defence of this faith that the men of Derry fought and suffered; and although, in the dark and terrible days before the Reformation, this faith seemed almost to be extinguished under the baneful influences of Romish supremacy, it was only to spring up more bright and vigorous in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, by whose command the maiden city was girdled with a zone of battlemented walls, and freed from all traces of Rome's brief but malignant sway.

The prefix of "London" was then, by royal desire, added to the ancient name of "Derry," so forming the modern name of Londonderry, suggestive of that union of heart with the mother-country dear to all thoughtful and true Irish patriots as the only basis of real and lasting prosperity for their nation.

Since those good days of Queen Elizabeth Londonderry has been impregnable to all foes—a bulwark and a shrine of the Protestant faith. But not without cost has this defence been kept, not without the blood of many martyrs has the victory been won.

The battlemented town, standing in its commanding position at the mouth of the River Foyle, in the midst of a rich and well-cultivated neighbourhood, formed an important and inviting point of attack for many opposing armies, and the Cathedral of St. Columb, erected in 1632, on or near the site of the ancient "House of Prayer," crowned, as we have said, the highest ground within its walls, and offered a tempting target for the aim of the enemy.

But no weapon that was formed against her seemed to prosper, no foe prevailed. Within the troublous years between 1640 and 1689—not quite half a century—Londonderry sustained successfully three desperate sieges, the last and most terrible in 1688—1689, when the army of James II. was stationed for nine long months without the gates, and when famine, disease, and death held ghastly reign within.

Outside the city, the whole strength of King James's forces was gathered, with the French army at his command. Upon the issue of this struggle there hung not only the fate of the town itself, nor even of Ireland, but in all probability, as has been often said, the fate of the Protestant monarchy and Protestant religion throughout Great Britain.

"'T was the Lord who gave the word, when His people drew the sword
For the freedom of the present, for the future that awaits."*

The gallant defenders of the city, who manned its walls day and night; the population, not less heroic, who languished in the slow martyrdom of hunger and disease within; the women and children braving day by day the enemy's fire that they might hand up the scant rations and ammunition to the men upon the wall—these all knew that they were fighting not only for themselves, and suffering not only for the sake of those dear to them, but for the love of their open Bibles, their religion, and their God.

Through all the horrors of that long, fierce struggle—too terrible for record here—it was around the Cathedral of St. Columb that the enthusiasm of the brave defenders seemed to gather, and to centre itself within her walls.

Upon its roof cannon were placed, which kept up a brisk attack upon the besiegers. Beneath its roof the heart of the whole people seemed to throb with one mighty impulse of devotion and prayer.

Not once through all the long months of that terrible siege was the daily service omitted. The Episcopalian and Presbyterian ministers, drawn together as men are wont to be in the face of a great and common danger, led the services there in turn.

From its pulpit the valiant Walker—soldier, governor, priest in one—nerved the people, Nehemiah-like, with "words of hope and courage great," and inspired them again and again by the ardour of his own enthusiasm, by the strength of his conviction of the righteousness of their cause, and by his unswerving faith in God.

At length the courage and endurance of the brave soldiers and citizens had their reward. Walker's faith in his cause and in his God was vindicated. The deliverance so ardently longed for, so earnestly prayed for, came, and—as if in recognition of the people's prayer—it was from the towers of St. Columb's Cathedral that a sentinel first announced to the starving citizens the arrival of the English ships which bore to them not only relief from famine, but with it the assurance of victory and peace.

A few weeks later, and that assurance was confirmed; bonfires flared at the foot of the tower where so lately the beacon had blazed and the red flag waved, as a signal of distress to the loitering ships.

The cathedral bells, with their silver chimes, rang out a joyful peal that day; a voice of great thanksgiving rose from the heart of the people: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name be the praise."

Lord Macaulay thus describes the general rejoicing:—"The recollection of past dangers and privations, and the consciousness of having deserved well of the English nation and of all Protestant churches, swelled the hearts of the townspeople with honest pride. That pride grew stronger when they received from King William a letter acknowledging in the most

* "The Siege of Derry," by C. F. Alexander.

affectionate language the debt which he owed to the brave citizens of his good city. The whole population crowded to the Diamond to hear the royal epistle read. At the close, all the guns of the ramparts sent forth a voice of joy."

The people of England have to-day an opportunity of acknowledging in some degree the debt so graciously recognised by King William in his letter



INTERIOR OF ST. COLUMB'S CATHEDRAL.
(From a Photograph by Alexr. Ayton, Londonderry.)

Two hundred years have now passed since that eventful day, and England still rejoices in the open Bible and in the religious liberty for which she is so much indebted to the bravery and endurance of the loyal citizens of Londonderry.

Within the Cathedral of St. Columb now hang the treasured trophies of the siege, amongst them two of the French flags, which fell into the hands of Colonel John Mitchelburne. The steep ascent by which the peaceful worshippers approach the House of God is formed in great part by the graves of the heroes who fell in that siege in defence of the pure faith which is now so freely proclaimed there.

to the people of Derry. The Dean will be very glad to acknowledge any help which English friends may send towards this good work.

On the 18th of February, 1887, the Cathedral of St. Columb was reopened with a joyous service of praise and dedication, having been closed for some months for the purposes of enlargement and restoration. This enlargement was made to meet the demands of an increasing congregation, and of a growing desire on the part of the middle and poorer classes to share in the beautiful services of the Cathedral.

This fact gives cheerful evidence of the vitality

with which the Protestant Church of Ireland is still instinct; the Cathedral now affording accommodation for nearly twice the number of worshippers who gathered in 1689 to listen to the stirring words of Walker.

The cost of this undertaking has been about £8,000. £7,000 of this has been already defrayed chiefly by the contributions which Irish churchmen, even in these times of difficulty and depression, have "offered willingly."

But when the Cathedral of St. Columb was first built, English money was also offered willingly for its erection; later on, English soldiers fought bravely in its defence. Are there not many English Protestants even now who will hear gladly of its restoration, who will rejoice to share in the completion of so good a work, and thus awaken the echoes of the old rhythmic motto engraved on a tablet of the Cathedral belfry?—

"If stones coulde speeke,
Then London's praise should sounde
Who built this church and cittie
From the grounde."

PRESBYTERIANS IN COUNCIL.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL OF 1888.

FOR several successive days in the middle of last summer the eye of passengers in London thoroughfares could not well avoid a glance at a row of lugubrious sandwich-men, on whose backs and bosoms was displayed, in great staring letters, a placard of the "PAN-PRESBYTERIAN COUNCIL." It is said that some of the authorities of the Council were by no means pleased with the placard, having a special dislike to the first syllable of the designation, which is apt, on irreverent lips, to degenerate into "the Pan." The full official designation is, "The Council of the Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System;" or, more briefly, "The General Presbyterian Council." The placards on the sandwich-men announced that it embraced a constituency of twenty millions of people. This was a strange announcement to many a Londoner who had always fancied that Presbyterianism was confined to the people of Scotland and a few Unitarians in England. Twenty millions is a big number, and if, as the official title bears, they have their local habitations throughout the world, there must be something about this Alliance or Council that is worth knowing. A few facts concerning it will, we trust, be acceptable to the readers of THE QUIVER.

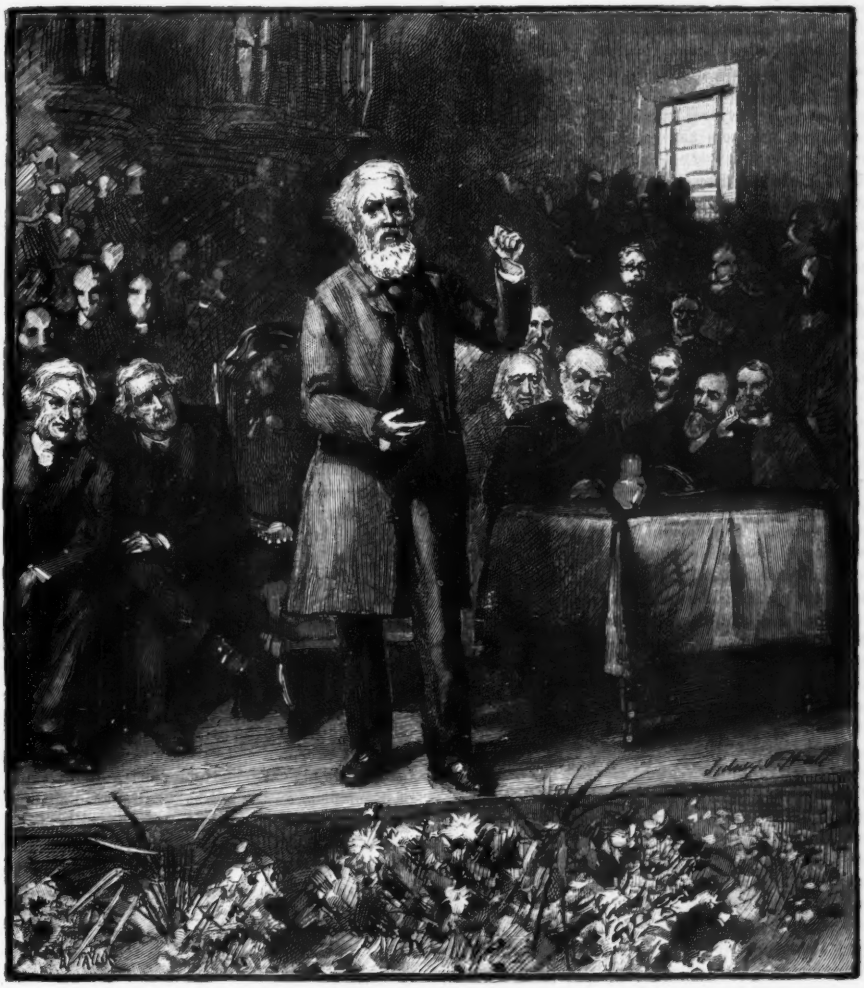
If we go back to the time of the Reformation, we find that that great movement after a time unhappily divided into two branches that were anything but eminent for love to one another. Those who adhered to the doctrine and discipline of Calvin came to be known as "the Reformed;" those who accepted the teaching of Luther, as "Lutherans." The "Reformed" were the predominant Protestant Church in many countries of Europe—in France, Calvin's native land, and in Switzerland, the country of his adoption; in Holland, in parts of Germany, in Hungary, and Bohemia, and last, not least, in Scotland. The chief differences between the Reformed and the Lutherans were, that the Reformed adhered more firmly to the Pauline or Augustinian type of theology, as set forth anew in Calvin's Institutes; and in the government of the church they recognised no order superior to Presbyters. In worship, they were commonly marked by less of form and more of simplicity; while along the whole line they held that the sole authority to which their allegiance was due was the Word of God.

It was a great grief to Calvin, this division among Protestants. Archbishop Cranmer and he were intimate and cordial friends; and a saying of Calvin, in a letter to the English reformer, has been quoted again and again—that he would gladly cross ten seas, if thereby he might advance the cause of union.

The history of the Reformed Churches during the last three hundred years has been a singular illustration of the text, "The last shall be first, and the first last." The feeblest, and apparently the most insignificant among them all was the Reformed Church of Scotland. That "land of brown heath and shaggy wood," to which the French had given the name of "L'Écosse la Sauvage," did not probably number more than half a million of people. During the half-dozen previous reigns it had passed through a constant succession of troubles, in consequence of the minority of its kings, its civil wars, the contentions of its rival clans, and its bitter strifes with England. It had little wealth, little commerce, little learning, poor agriculture, a Church corrupt beyond all precedent, and a nobility whose great object was to raise themselves and keep down the king. Through the efforts of John Knox and his coadjutors, the Presbyterian Church obtained a remarkably firm hold of the Scottish people. Knox, while a most vehement hater of Popery and the mass, was far from bigoted on the subject of church government. He himself held office as a preacher for several years in the Church of England; he was one of the chaplains of King Edward VI., and though he refused a bishopric for himself, his sons were brought up in the Anglican communion. All the world knows the struggles and sufferings the Scotch people had to undergo for the sake of their Presbyterian Church. Its very existence in the

seventeenth century was due to the endurance of the Covenanters. If prosperity at home and great enlargement abroad can be any compensation, they have been abundantly rewarded.

For it is this least among the daughters of the Reformed Church that has proved the great means of spreading Presbyterianism over the world. Little could anyone have foreseen this result. What a different destiny the Reformed Church of France apparently had at the start from the Reformed Church of Scotland! The Church of Calvin got a very firm hold of France, and bade fair to take the lead among the Reformed Churches of Europe. What a grand country, too, France was, as compared with poor Scotland, and what splendid men, especially among the laity—Coligny, Duplessis-Mornay, and the like—gave themselves heart and soul to the cause! But France was simply overwhelmed by avalanches of persecution. Could any calamities have exceeded the massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685? It was by her refugees that France contributed to extend the Reformed Church, enriching the blood of other countries, as it were, and quickening their zeal by their very presence. In the centre of Europe, the Reformed Church was strong in Hungary, Bohemia, and other parts of the Austrian Empire; but here, too, the light was literally quenched in blood. If Holland and Germany had quieter times, they did not bestir themselves much to spread their Church. It is the Anglo-



THE PRESBYTERIAN COUNCIL IN SESSION AT EXETER HALL.

Saxon branch of the Presbyterian family that has proved the "fruitful bough, whose branches run over the wall." In her own country, the Scottish Church, which at its first General Assembly (1560) had but six or seven ministers, has now, in its various branches, about 3,000. In the seventeenth century, when the province of Ulster was re-peopled by colonists from England and Scotland, who proved a troublesome and turbulent lot, some earnest Scotch ministers went to labour among their countrymen; a great revival followed their labours, and a better stamp was put on Ulster, which it has retained ever since. This was the beginning of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, which now numbers nearly six hundred congregations.

Then Ireland became in turn a great colonising country. When its Presbyterian people spread to the United States of America, they carried their Church with them, and so did the colonists from Scotland. And in the great republic, Presbyterianism has found a very congenial home. It is essentially democratic, and the soil and climate of the United States have greatly fostered its growth. If we include Canada, the number of Presbyterian congregations in North America is probably not less than 15,000. In most of the other colonies of Great Britain it has a firm hold. The mission-fields of China, Japan, India, and Syria, all have their branches. At home, too, there have been recent extensions. At the beginning of the reign of Victoria there were but a handful of orthodox Presbyterian congregations in England; now there are three hundred. The Calvinistic Methodists of Wales have adopted the Presbyterian form; they have 1,400 congregations and 600 ministers. It has always been a point of great importance with Presbyterians to give a thorough education to their ministers. Where national universities or other public colleges exist, the undergraduate course is taken in them; but through theological institutions of its own, each Church makes provision for the theological and pastoral training of its ministers. From what has just been stated it will be seen how the twenty millions of Presbyterians are made up.

Fifty years ago, most of the Churches hardly so much as knew each other's names. It is hardly credible now what strangers they were to each other. One would have thought that surely the Scotch Churches would have kept up a friendly acquaintance with their own daughters and granddaughters; but proverbial though the Scotch are for counting kin even with their far-away cousins, they forgot to do so in the case of Churches. When Irish brethren came over to Scotland about 1842 to express their sympathy with the Church, then in great trouble owing to her collision with the civil courts, Hugh Miller remarked that it was as if they had found the lost ten tribes. As for the United States, it might have been said, in the words of Scripture, that the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. With some outstanding Continental ministers we had some slight acquaintance, chiefly through the labours of Robert Haldane, who did so much for Geneva and other places; but when men like the late Merle D'Aubigné, Frederick Monod, George Fisch, and Jean Bost began to visit Scotland, they seemed to bring with them fresh air and sunshine, and a certain sprightliness that both warmed and quickened our more sombre nature.

Still there was no actual bond of union between all these various Churches, and the want was all the more strange from the nature of the Presbyterian system. For Presbyterianism delights in order. In each country it gathers individuals into congregations, congregations into presbyteries, presbyteries into synods, and synods into general assemblies. But does not the system demand something more? Ought not the Churches in different countries to sustain some relation to one another? Ought there not to be some common organisation in which all the several branches are represented? If we be not ripe for an authoritative assembly, exercising jurisdiction over the whole, might we not have a non-official confederation where all the Churches might be represented, where they might join in counsel and in prayer, and from which a wholesome influence might go forth that would stimulate every section, and also contribute to advance the cause of co-operation and union?

Thus came into existence, about a dozen years ago, the Presbyterian Alliance. It is an alliance of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian system, Churches whose creed is in harmony with the consensus of the Reformed confessions. About once in four years it holds a general council. The members of this council are elected by the supreme court of their several Churches. They amount in number to about three hundred, and they represent some fifty or sixty Churches in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australia, and the Isles of the sea. Four councils have now been held, at Edinburgh, Philadelphia, Belfast and London; and the meetings have all excited much public interest, and been characterised by a remarkable degree of harmony and brotherly love.

Of the more practical and definite objects of the Alliance two deserve special notice. One is to encourage and cheer those small, struggling Churches, chiefly on the Continent of Europe, which still suffer from the effects of fiery persecution; or which maintain a difficult existence under the deadening influence of Romanism on the one side and Rationalism on the other. It is not the practice of the Alliance to give money aid—indeed, its ordinary revenue is barely enough to keep its machinery going. But in two instances it has deviated from this rule. Within a couple of years of its existence, some friends of the Waldensian Church were very desirous to raise a fund, the interest of which would add a little to the scanty salaries of the pastors of the valleys. If £12,000 could be raised, it would increase their incomes to about eighty pounds a year—a small figure, truly, but representing to them the difference between a hard struggle and comparative comfort. A committee of the Alliance was asked to undertake this work; it set to work with a will, and, by God's blessing the sum raised was over £13,000. Among other considerations that stimulated this undertaking, one was, that in the days when Oliver Cromwell befriended the Vaudois, and Milton thundered out his sublime ode, "Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints," the Protector had raised for

them a considerable sum of money, which Charles II., on his restoration, actually stole! When the present writer visited the Vaudois Synod in 1876, among other Churches in the Continent of Europe, to ask whether they would join the proposed Alliance of Reformed Churches, a difficulty presented itself, as they were not a *re*-formed Church, for they had never been *de*-formed! The difficulty was more amusing than real. The Vaudois have shown themselves staunch Presbyterians; for, when the late General Beckwith, one of their best and most noble friends, proposed to them to become Episcopalians, and elect a bishop, they firmly refused to alter the government which their fathers had handed down to them. And the General, who felt that it would be much easier for him to arrange matters with them through a bishop than through the *Table*—a committee which the Synod annually appoints for executive purposes—was not well pleased, and left them for a time.

The other Church on whose behalf the Alliance has deviated from its rule of not giving pecuniary aid, is that of Bohemia and Moravia. The history of this Church, too, goes far back into the past. Bohemia was the last of the countries of Europe to submit to the yoke of Rome, and the first to rebel against it. In 1415, John Huss, its first martyr and confessor, perished in the flames at Constance, in Switzerland. In 1416, his friend and follower, Jerome of Prague, followed him to heaven in a fiery chariot. From 1415 to almost the present day, the Protestant Church of Bohemia has never been out of the furnace. Its records alone might furnish materials for a Book of Martyrs, longer and not less thrilling than old John Foxe's. In particular, during the one hundred and sixty years between 1621 and 1781 the Protestant faith had been actually proscribed by many edicts in Bohemia, and fire and sword brought to bear against it in the most ruthless manner; but in spite of all the wiles and cruelty of the Jesuits, it had not been exterminated. When the Emperor Joseph II. issued his edict of toleration in 1781, the Protestants in considerable numbers seemed to arise out of the very ground. The second council of the Presbyterian Alliance, at its meeting at Philadelphia in 1880, drew attention to the fact that next year would be the one hundredth anniversary of this Edict, and proposed to raise a sum of £5,000 as a mark of sympathy and regard for a Church which had had such a history of trial. The sum actually raised already exceeds £4,000, and the greater part has been devoted to the purpose of placing on an efficient footing the Comenius Society, which supplies Christian books, tracts, magazines, and other literature for the Bohemian people. The history of the Bohemian Church is by no means so well known as that of the Waldensian, but wherever it has been made known it has excited a corresponding interest. The Moravian Brethren, so deservedly honoured for their missionary zeal, are an offshoot from the Bohemian, although, from providential causes, they are now more allied to the Lutheran cause than to the Reformed. It is to the establishment of the Free Church mission to the Jews in Prague that the interest of Scotland in the Bohemian Church in recent years may be traced. The late Professor Duncan, often called Rabbi Duncan, who was once a missionary to the Jews in those parts, used in a jocular way to claim the credit of having "discovered" the Bohemians. For many years Bohemian students of divinity have studied at the Free College in Edinburgh, and have created no little interest in themselves personally, and in their Church. Bohemia occupies a splendid position for evangelistic purposes; its people are Sclavonians, and the Sclavonian population, with hardly any evangelical Church among them, amounts to no less than a hundred millions.

The other practical object to which the Presbyterian Alliance has given a great impulse is union in the field of foreign missions. As things were going on before, there was a prospect that every separate Presbyterian Church in Britain and America carrying on mission work would perpetuate itself in heathen countries, by establishing a branch of its denomination there! This was simply awful. The efforts of the Alliance have now secured a basis on which native Churches will be consolidated into one, and the impulse thus given to the spirit of union will probably not cease with Presbyterians, but will encourage union with other denominations who may find it practicable to come to an understanding in the mission field. This impulse to the spirit of union is one of the best fruits of the movement; instead of promoting sectarianism, it will, we believe, rather tend to counteract it, and thus hasten on the time when not Presbyterians only, but all shall be one.

ONE LITTLE BIRD.

ROUNDEL.

ONE little bird upon the pathway brown
Lies dead, and scarcely by the breezes stirred;
Ah! who will miss, o'er wood and field and town,
One little bird?
With simple song, so soft and seldom heard,
To lonely forest shadows he had flown,
And sang his lay to Nature, undeterred
By prouder minstrelsy, unpraised, unknown.
Yet was there one whose loving heart preferred,
To all the bards that higher spheres can own,
One little bird.

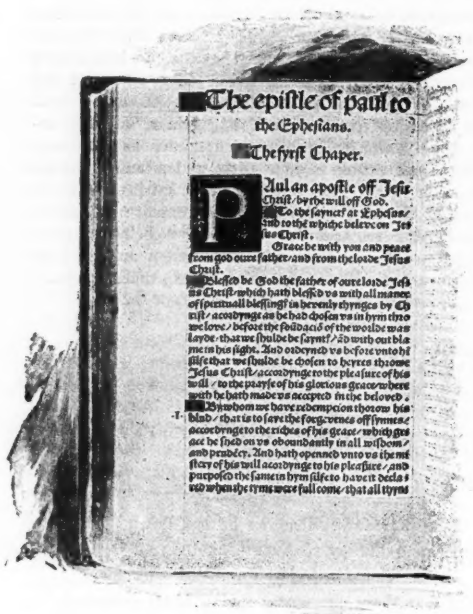
ARTHUR L. SALMON.

SOME LITTLE-KNOWN BIBLICAL TREASURES.

BY THE REV. S. A. SWAINE.—FIRST PAPER.

IN the fine old city of Bristol, in the thoroughfare called Stokes' Croft, stands a plain and modest-looking building known as "The Baptist College." Concerning the college itself—which is one of the oldest of Nonconformist theological training institutions—it is no part of my present purpose to write; I am concerned only with some of the contents of its library, few institutions in the three kingdoms being richer in old versions of the Scriptures in English than this, and none other being able to boast of possessing a perfect copy of Tyndale's New Testament, printed at Worms in 1525.

About the little octavo volume just mentioned there has been some controversy. Some have argued for its being a copy of the *first*, and others for its being a copy of the *second*, edition. A writer of thirty years ago says: "It was long considered . . . as the *first* edition; but the discovery a few years ago of a fragment of a quarto edition (now in the Grenville Library, British Museum) by Mr. Rodd has removed it to the rank of the second edition, though the dates of their issue were so near one another that Anderson in his 'Annals of the English Bible' remarks that it is difficult, if not impossible, to say which was actually the first that reached the shores of Britain." It is, however, not so clear as it might be that there was any edition, properly so-called, published by Tyndale prior to the octavo one. Thus another writer says, "The case seems to be as follows:—He had commenced printing the New Testament at Cologne, and had proceeded, probably, to the end of the Gospel of Mark, when he was discovered and put to flight by his persecutors. He proceeded to Worms, where he resumed and completed his unfinished task. There is no evidence whatever that he got beyond the Prologue and first two Gospels in his attempt at Cologne, or that more than thirty-two leaves of it were ever printed." This is quite consistent with the account given by the learned D'Aubigné. It is to be observed, however, that according to this historian the two Gospels of Matthew and Mark, translated and printed at Hamburg, and despatched to England about the end of 1524, were the first-fruits of Tyndale's great task.

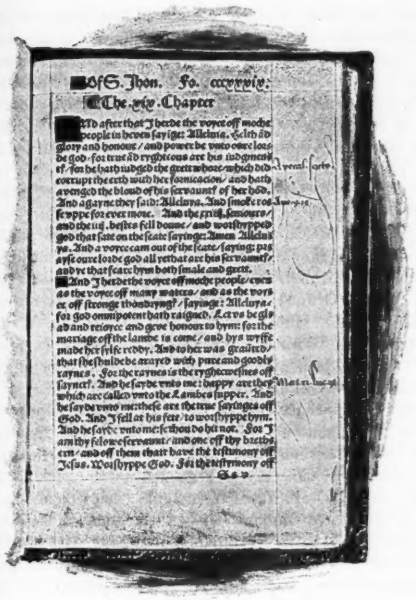

The epistle of paul to
the Ephesians.
The fyrst Chaper.
Paul an apostle off Jesu
Christ/ by the will off God.
To the sayncte/ at Ephesus/
and to the which believe on Jes
us Christ.
Grace be with you and peace
from god oure father/ and from the lorde Jesus
Christ.
Blessed be God the father of oure lorde Jes
us Christ/ which hath blessed vs with all maner
off spirituall blessinge in hevenly thynges by Ch
rist/ accordynge as he had chosen vs in hym thro
we love/ before the foudacio of the worlde was
layde/ that we shulde be sayncte/ and with out bla
mesh in his sighte. And ordeyned vs before vnto di
vision/ that we shulde be chosen to heyres thrOme
Jesus Christ/ accordynge to the pleasure of his
will/ to the prayse of his glorious grace wherew
with he hath made vs accepted in the beloved.
In whom we have redempcion thorow his
blod/ that is to save the forgevenes off synnes/
accordynge to the riches of his grace/ which gra
ce he shed on vs aboundantly in all wisdom/
and prudecy. And hath openned vnto vs the my
stery of his will accordynge to his pleasure/ and
purposed the same in hym silfe to have it decla
red when the tyme were full come/ that all tynes

A PAGE FROM TYNDALE'S NEW TESTAMENT.
(*From a Photograph.*)

It was to Hamburg that Tyndale fled with his precious MS. when driven out of England. Thence he removed to Cologne, where he hoped to be able to complete his task, and engaged and set to work a printer accordingly. Discovered here, he contrived to escape in a boat with his MS. and such sheets as had been printed, and came to Worms, where the work he had set his heart upon was completed in 1525. D'Aubigné says, "As his enemies would have marked the edition, some few sheets of it having fallen into their hands, he took steps to mislead the inquisitors, and began a new edition, striking out the Prologue and the Notes, and substituting the more portable *octavo* form for the *quarto*. . . . The two editions were quietly completed about the end of the year 1525." Thus the *quarto* edition (a fragment of a copy of which Mr. Rodd discovered, and which is now in the British Museum) was that first begun, but probably not the first completed, the work having been interrupted by the discovery of Tyndale at Cologne. The *octavo* edition was that begun and completed at Worms, printed on smaller sheets without the Prologue and Notes, in order to mislead the inquisitors; and to this edition the volume at Bristol belongs.

The Grenville fragment in the British Museum, which the writer has had an opportunity of carefully inspecting, contains the "Prologue," extending to fourteen pages; a contents table, extending to about a page; and the Gospel of St. Matthew as far as the twenty-second chapter, breaking off at the words, "And spyed there a man which had not on a weddinge garment, and sayde unto him: frede, how camyst thou in hydder? and——"

Inserted in the beginning of the volume which contains the fragment are MS. notes by Rodd, and two MS. letters of Sir Henry Ellis, for some time chief librarian at the Museum—one of which is transcribed here, as giving that distinguished bibliographer's view of this literary curiosity and treasure:—



A PAGE OF THE APOCALYPSE.
(From a Photograph.)

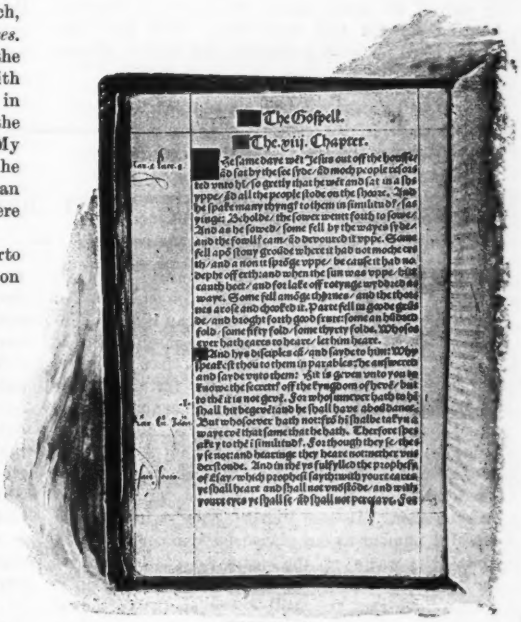
"BRITISH MUSEUM, November 18th, 1844.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I beg to thank you for the loan of your curious and, I feel confident, unique fragment of Tyndale's first Testament—that edition which, exclusive of his text, he had prepared *with glosses*. Cochlæus, you remember, after he had plied the compositors in P. Quintell's office at Cologne with drink, learned from them that they had proceeded in the execution of their task no farther than the quaternion K. Your fragment goes to H only. My strong belief is that Cochlæus disclosed the secret he had extorted from the printers so rapidly to Herman Rink, and he to the Senate of Cologne, that there could not have been time for further progress.

"We have a document in the Museum, hitherto unnoticed, which, I think, throws a curious light on your fragment. It is a letter from Richard Rawlins, Bishop of St. Davids, to Archbishop Warham, dated June 14th, 1527, from which we learn that Warham bought up 'the books of the New Testament, translated into English, and printed beyond the sea, *as well those with the glosses joined unto them* as the other without the glosses, by means of exchange, to the sum of £66 9s. 4d.' If the first Testaments had been completed, this would have been a most inadequate sum for the purchase. I think it is Cochlæus who mentions the number of the impression of the first Testament prepared as reaching to three thousand, which, at 2s. apiece, would make £300. . . . It might not be so easy, when they got to Worms, to find another printer, and I suspect it was there that Archbishop Warham negotiated the purchase of the unfinished work. However, here follows a copy of the letter, and you shall pass your own judgment upon it. I intend to insert this in a third series of 'Historical Letters' which I am slowly preparing, and intend this heading for it—'Richard, Bishop of St. Davids, to Archbishop Warham, offering his Contribution toward the Sum paid by the Archbishop for buying up the Copies of Tyndale's Translation of the Testament' [MS. Cotton., Vitellius B. ix., fol. 117, Orig.] :—

"'In right humble maner I commende me unto your goode Lordeshippe, doyinge the same t'undrestande that I lately receyved your Lettres, dated at your Manor of Lambethe, the xxvi daie of the Monethe of May; by the which I do perceyve that your grace hath lately goten into your handes all the boks of the Newe Testamente, translated into Englisshe, and pryented beyond the See, as well those with the gloses joyned unto them as thoder without the gloses, by means of exchaunge by you made therfore to the somme of lxvi£ ix*s* iiij*d*.

"'Surely in myn opynion, you have done therin a graciouse and a blessed dede, and God, I doubt not, shall highly rewarde you therfore. And where in your said Letters ye write that in so moche as this mater and the daunger therof, if remedie had not be provyded, shulde not only have towched you, but all the Busshopes within your province; and that it is no reason that the holle charge and coste therof shulde reste only in you; but that they and every of theym, for their parte, shulde avaunce and contribute certain sommes of money towarde the same; I, for my parte, wulbe contented to avaunce in this behalve, and to



THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.
(From a Photograph.)

make paymente therof unto Maister William Potkyn, your servaunte.

"'Pleaseth it you t'undrestande that I am right well contented to yeue and avaunce in this behalve ten marks, and shall cause the same to be delywred unto the said Maister Potkyn shortely, the which somme I think sufficient for my parte, if every Busshopp within your said Provynce make like contribution and avauncemente after the rate and substaunce of their benefices. Never the lesse, if your grace think this somme of ten marks not sufficient for my parte in this mater, your furdre pleasure knowen, I shalbe as gladde to conform myself ther unto in this or any other mater concernynge the Churche as any your subgict within your Provynce, as knowes Almighty God, who longe preserve you to his moste pleasure and your hert's desire.

"'At Hoxne in Suff., the xiiij daie of Junii, 1527.

"'Yor. humble obediencier and baidman,

"'R. MENUEN.

"'I wold be as gladd to wayte upon your Lordeshipp and do my dutie unto you as any man lyvinge, but I thinke I can not so do this somer. I pray God I may have some tyme for to do it.'

"The fact of Archbishop Warham buying up Tyndale's Testaments at his own cost in the first instance is, I believe, entirely new.—I am, my dear sir, with much and sincere respect, your faithful servant,

"HENRY ELLIS.

"The Rt. Honble. Thos. Grenville, etc., etc., etc."

The precious volume at Bristol, worth many times its weight in gold, was originally in the Harleian collection. It was obtained for the Earl of Oxford by one of the many agents whom he employed in hunting for old and rare books. The Earl had long wished for such a treasure, and was so pleased when he found himself in actual possession of it that he bestowed upon the fortunate finder an annuity of £20. This annuity was continued for fourteen years, so that his lordship paid for the book the sum of £280, besides what he gave in the first place for it. It is stated that Osborne, the bookseller, purchased the Harleian Library for less than the Earl had spent on the bindings, and that, to insure a speedy sale, he catalogued all the books at an exceedingly low figure. Not recognising the value of this particular book, he priced it at fifteen shillings. It passed into the hands of the antiquary J. Ames, and at his death into the hands of a Mr. White, who gave fourteen guineas for it. To Dr. Gifford, an eminent Baptist minister and bibliographer, who was a friend of his, Mr. White parted with it for twenty guineas. Before he died Dr. Gifford presented it to the college at Bristol, in whose possession it now is.

As the only remaining perfect copy of the first printed New Testament to be circulated in Great Britain, *the book is, without doubt, the most interesting book in our language.* It may be regarded as the pioneer of the millions of New Testaments that have since been circulated amongst us—of the tens of millions which have been scattered throughout the world. Francis Fry, the well-known Bristol antiquary and book-collector, has admirably reproduced it in facsimile. "Fitting it is," says a writer to whom I am indebted for many of the foregoing facts, "that this book, *so priceless*, should be preserved in that city in which the martyr often preached, and in the vicinity of which he formed the design of placing the Bible within the reach of all; and fitting, too, that by a secret attraction, around it should be grouped so rich a collection of English Bibles, scarcely second to that in our National Museum."

A WORD ABOUT RED-LETTER DAYS.

AN almanack is a common but never a commonplace convenience. No two people can scan it with identical interest. Not only does it wear a different face to youth and age—having for the former the gay glow of sunrise on its leaves, and for the latter solemn eventide shadows—but it also has its secret smile or frown for the individual. Some days are entered upon its tablets in red ink for each and every reader. Mistress Memory puts us in glad and grateful humour as our glance falls on certain dates. Across the waste of the years we catch even yet the subsiding cadence of the joy-bells. But it is for us alone that the spell exists at the particular line in the calendar. To others the entry is in plain black type, winning hardly a moment's attention.

The whole Christian world—East and West—has its red-letter days, though its dates somewhat differ. They are the birthday of its King, and the anniversary of the glorious morn when the Redeemer rose from the grave a victorious Deliverer.

Nations and races of men have their memorial marks in the pointing of the years, days ever to be remembered with delight, seasons when every pulse beats the faster for an accession of patriotic pride, or through the recollection of Providential mercy displayed to the community. Such to our American readers is Independence Day, July 4th; and such to the coloured brother in their midst is surely the 1st of January, for on that day, 1863 slavery was abolished by the deed of noble President Lincoln, over the area of the United States of America. Similar national red-letter days exist for New Italy in the anniversary of her hard-won recognition as a kingdom, which event took place on the last day of March, 1861; and for New

Germany in the anniversary of the proclamation of the empire, at Versailles, January 18th, 1871. Again, France refuses to forget the date of the taking of the Bastille; a part of Ireland, the relief of Londonderry on the 30th of July, 1689; and a large section of the English people, the date of the opportune discovery of the Gunpowder Plot.

But it is not the purpose of the present paper to present a list of these generally familiar celebrations, or to dwell at any length on what may be termed the public side of the subject. The red-letter days we have mainly in mind are not everybody's red-letter days—as are the great dates of which all almanacks take note—but those of the family and the unit.

The boys of the household have theirs—the day at the end of the school year, when, amidst the vociferous plaudits of vanquished but magnanimous competitors, the top prize was carried back under the arm from the Doctor's desk; the day when the great cricket-match was won by the home team, with the sequel of a presentation on the field to the gallant young player whose prowess had chiefly achieved that satisfactory result. The young man has his red-letter day, that on which the news reaches him that he is first in the race for a valuable scholarship; or that, after all, guardians have relented, and he is to follow the profession that is his fancy. She who stands—

> "With reluctant feet,
> Where the brook and river meet,"

the sweet and winsome maid who is the light of home to loving kinsfolk: she is sure to have her red-letter day—that when the strange new portent flashes on the horizon and with tremulous bewilderment she hears or reads a girl's first offer of marriage. Should she say this wooer nay, it is likely to be but a reprieve for those who look to lose her from under the dear familiar roof-tree. In due season the red line will stand in the maiden's diary, and set by itself as a day apart to the very end—the day on which *he* came who was rightful lord of affection and of life.

All true husbands and wives, to whom marriage, whatever of care and conflict has come in its wake, has been no failure, but a bond of peace and mutual help, keep as a red-letter day, radiant always with sunny and sacred memories, the anniversary of the indissoluble joining of hands. The flight of time dims not this lustre. There is a world of pathos and of beauty in the answering light that even the stranger shall sometimes see beaming from wrinkled face to wrinkled face. Ah, a red-letter day yet, though half a century may be past! And the pathos is doubled if one is consciously, visibly fading, drawing near to the narrow strait between time and eternity, and if the look on the one side says dumbly what Browning shapes into the poetic speech of "any wife to any husband":—

> "My love, this is the bitterest, that thou—
> Who art all truth, and who dost love me now
> As thine eyes say, as thy voice breaks to say—
> Shouldst love so truly, and couldst love me still
> A whole long life through, had but love its will,
> Would death, that leads me from thee, brook delay."

No artist could do justice to the theme, either with pen or brush.

And men and women walking very diverse paths, dissimilar in rank, in calling, in ambition, in attainments, are alike in this, that they all have their several red-letter days, the recurrence of which revivifies, for at least a few brief hours, ancient happiness and bygone triumphs. Is it not inevitably a red-letter day to the statesman when, for the first time, he is summoned to join in the councils of his Sovereign; to the engineer, when his first important plan is adopted; to the surgeon, when by common consent in a leading hospital an unusually difficult and critical case is first entrusted to his care; to the painter, or sculptor, when his earliest influential patron appears; to the journalist, when he sees for the first time a "leader" produced by the sweat of his own brain challenging attention in the mid-sheet of a great newspaper? Does not Charles Dickens refer to a red-letter day when, in the preface to "The Pickwick Papers," he tells us how, having purchased an early copy of the magazine in which his first effusion appeared, he walked down to Westminster Hall and turned into it for half an hour, because his eyes "were so dimmed with joy and pride, that they could not bear the street, and were not fit to be seen there"?

Things are not always what they seem. We sometimes mistake adversity for prosperity, loss for gain, and *vice versâ*. There are red-letter days in many lives which we only slowly—and perhaps against our will—come to see in their true character. At first we were inclined to consider them anything rather than seasons to look back upon with joy and thankfulness, and to put a sinister mark in the diary against such disappointing dates. It was when a fond plan was frustrated, when a door which we believed to conduct into a larger room closed in our face, when a heavy decision had to be made.

But the months and the years have rolled on and have taught us the lesson that beyond all question these painful experiences were blessings in disguise. Our plan fulfilled would have been a costly vanity; we were in error as to the worth of the opportunity which eluded our grasp; the decision which we took with saddened heart, under the relentless stress of circumstances, has proved in its issues the grand success of our career. Of how many who have come into more than the heritage of their brightest hopes is the saying true: They were led by a way that they knew not! Many instances might be quoted. Dr. John Kitto, who from lowliest rank rose to deserved eminence as a scholar, a traveller, and an illustrator of Biblical manners and customs, met with an accident in boyhood which totally destroyed his sense of hearing. In his consequent loneliness he took to study as a solace, and inch by inch mastered what to him were new worlds of knowledge. Could he possibly in life's meridian look back on that early physical disaster as a loss without a much more than compensating gain? We think not.

There was a day which for a season looked dark and altogether unsatisfactory in the career of M. de Lesseps. As a French diplomat, he had not pleased his fickle masters, and he was recalled from a mission to a foreign Court. The world and his own fame have been the gainers, for in the leisure which ensued M. de Lesseps conceived the mighty project of the Suez Canal.

Very similar, though in a different sphere of activity, was the experience of Nathaniel Hawthorne. In the delightful gossiping chapter—"The Custom-House"—introductory to the "Scarlet Letter," he has related something of how that marvellous story came to be written. Hawthorne held the appointment of Surveyor in the United States Customs at Salem. But on the election of General Taylor to the Presidency, there was the far-reaching change of officials—"the spoils to the victors"—which is apt even yet with each change of administration to temporarily disorganise public and semi-public life in America. Hawthorne's sympathies were with the party which had suffered defeat, and he lost his post. Thereupon, making "an investment in ink, paper, and steel pens," he "opened his long disused writing-desk," and conquered fame with the book which is now an American classic.

Even the date when riches took to themselves wings and flew away has again and again come to be regarded in after time as a red-letter day. Out of the furnace the gold of manliness, sturdy resolve, indomitable perseverance, has emerged. Trial has again led to triumph. As all students of English literature know, it was loss of fortune which made Thackeray definitely a man of letters, and gave the Anglo-Saxon-speaking world the priceless possessions of "Vanity Fair" and "Esmond." And it is not impossible that a day widely known as the Black Friday of 1866—the time of the Overend and Gurney bank crisis—came in the long run to be looked upon by himself as a red-letter day in a sombre and forbidding mask by the indefatigable astronomer who recently fell a victim to yellow fever in Florida. Richard A. Proctor is said to have been ruined by that huge collapse. He descended from affluence to poverty. And from those dark hours dated his rise to literary and scientific eminence. He was greater than untoward events, and, touched by the sharp spur of necessity, he made full proof of the powers that were in him. As wider and ever wider fame crowned his efforts, it may be reasonably doubted if he did not cease regretting the catastrophe that had brought his shoulder to the yoke of systematic toil and persistent purpose.

Red-letter days have their lessons. One is on the surface at the point now reached. If in numberless lives the dark line in the almanack has been transmuted into a bright one by patient and plodding endeavour, may not we likewise change our supposed failures and defeats into gains and triumphs? Shadows may predominate on the picture of the present; let us labour to flood it ultimately with happy sunshine. The ruins of the past are precious, as more poets than Longfellow have taught, if we make of them a platform to rise to something nobler.

Then, the red-letter day which is always acknowledged as such is a remembrancer of the duty of thankfulness. Do we indeed believe that from our Father in Heaven cometh every good and perfect gift? and shall not our heart sing its song of praise and gratitude on the anniversary of the season when our cup of blessings ran over, or when in our time of utmost need a great deliverance came, or when it came about in the ordering of God's providence that our life-path turned abruptly into a pleasant and safe way? Yes, verily, we will lift to the steadfast stars faces that shine with reverent, thankful joy. We feel at these seasons that life is not a hopeless maze, whatever the pessimist may urge. It is ours to be glad in the possession of personal evidence that controverts the slander.

Lastly, it seems to the writer that the frequent coming of private and individual red-letter days, based very often on claims to consideration which have not been mentioned in this paper—claims arising not seldom through deep moral and spiritual experiences—ought to touch to ever keener and more loving sympathy, ought to increase the spirit of mutual helpfulness. It is a narrow and poor gratitude that sheds no radiance around. Our joys are surely planned to lead to the lightening of our neighbours' sorrows. Here is an easy test of sincerity, and, by the witness of the Master's "Inasmuch as ye did it . . . Inasmuch as ye did it not," the one test that abides to the end, and is final and supreme: a red-letter day will be doubly blessed if in the strength of its happy recollections some aid is offered to the weak, the sinning or the suffering, and it will be still better deserving of its title.

FELIX FERRY.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

List of contributions received from October 24th, 1888, up to and including November 23rd, 1888. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month:—

J. D., Hammersmith, 1s.; Harry, Bristol, 2s.; Bill, Rugby, 3s. 6d.; J. Tall, Hull, £1 1s.; A Tenth, Warwick, 5s.; A Mite for Jesus' Sake, 2s.; L. A. W., Bristol, 2s. 6d.; B. N., 2s. 6d.; Lover of THE QUIVER, Kilburn, 5s.; Miss KNOX, Castlemartyr, £1; Reader of THE QUIVER, 6d.; T. Sutcliff, Thornton-in-Craven, 10s.; M. L., Kensington, 1s.; J. J. E., Govan (thirteenth donation), 5s.; Mrs. Whelert, Stroud Green, 2s. 6d.; A. Jarvis, Betchworth, 5s.; N. M. B., Dublin, 1s.; Miss Harris, Banbury, £1; Paul, Carlisle, 1s.; Virginia, Carlisle, 2s. 6d.; P. A. J., L. J., T. A. J., Wolverhampton, 2s. 6d.

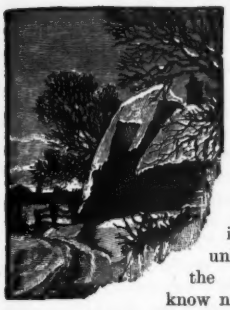
SPECIAL NOTE.—To those of our readers who have helped us so far in this work we tender our grateful thanks on behalf of the Waifs. But much remains to be done; and we invite our friends who have thought for the homeless little ones to make a collection on their behalf at their own happy Christmas or New Year's gathering. And surely the holiday would then be to them a season of far greater rejoicing, in that they had done something to make other lives brighter, happier, and fuller of blessing.

XUM

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

THE NEW YEAR PATH.



IN a Welsh guide-book there is mention of a motto inscribed on the front of a mansion, the meaning of which is, "Without God, without all; with God, *enough*." "*My grace is sufficient for thee*"—the promise is comfort, help, and inspiration through the unknown path we enter with the dawning of 1889. We know nothing of its changes, its losses, its thorns —but "with God, enough;" we need fear no evil, since He Who makes no mistakes appoints each hour, is present everywhere, and knows the path that we take. "God has been our Father a great while," was the simple reply of a Swiss peasant, when a passer-by expressed a fear lest the frost should spoil the flowers of his care. The past witnesses our Father's loving-kindness, and to Him we can trustfully commend ourselves at the changing of the years. Many of us know the solemn feeling of the silent prayer-time at the watch-night service, when the clock strikes the knell of the old year, and the bells peal out, and hundreds of voices take up a hymn of faith and praise; but whether we can manage to join a midnight service or not, we can with equal trust and love put this dawning year into God's keeping, and feel we are perfectly safe, whether 1889 shall close for us on earth or in heaven. It may be this year contains for us the merciful answer to many a waiting prayer; we may be very sure the days will be garlanded with bounty and blessing, and that many a good and perfect gift will be revealed to us amid the deepening light of Christian progress. Yes, let *Progress* be our watchword day by day; we cannot stand still in the Christian life. When the new year wanes, we shall assuredly be nearer our Master or further from His side than we are now. May He help us to go onward, so that "yesterday's goal shall be the starting-point of to-morrow," and, whatever may be the special lessons the new year shall teach us by brier or by blossom, may we praise and thank and cleave to our Master the whole year through.

> "For us, whatever's undergone,
> *Thou* knowest, willest what is done.
> Grief may be joy misunderstood,
> Only the Good discerns the good.
> I trust Thee while my days go on."

THE BOYS' HOME AT REGENT'S PARK.

The Bishop of London is president of this industrial school for destitute lads not convicted of crime; the report tells us that punishments are here reduced to a minimum, by offering boys encouragement for good conduct and work, and by the personal influence of the teachers. In 1858 this Home was first started, in the Euston Road, and hundreds have gone forth from the Institute's sheltering care to their life-work at home and abroad, many of them being "centres of far-reaching influence for good," while other shelters have sprung out of the original refuge. At the present building, in Regent's Park Road, the boys learn tailoring, needlework, shoemaking; and the carpenter's workshop is described as a "bower of pleasure," for the lads delight in using chisel and saw, and "the bench" is their cherished aspiration. They also deal



THE BOYS' HOME AT REGENT'S PARK.

in firewood, undertake housework, and are quite expert young bakers; the members of the band are in request among the regimental bands of the army. The chapel is a quiet spot, where special sermons are preached to the young, and the children of rich and poor alike are catechised, and lift their fresh young voices in hymns of praise. "Old boys" far away, hold the Home in grateful, loving memory—so much so that one even writes, "Give my love to the blankets and sheets, the dear old copper-sticks and washing-tubs!" We are reminded by the workers in this Home that Lord Macaulay tells of a beautiful church-window made out of pieces of glass rejected as waste material; how far more glorious is the effort to seek out society's "waifs and strays," and lead them to the beauty of holiness!

A PRACTICAL PLEA.

Passing through a narrow, squalid street in Shanghai (a missionary writes), I saw an old meanly dressed Chinese woman asking alms from house to house: on her back was an inscription in large red Chinese characters. My companion told me she was a Buddhist nun, collecting money for the repair of a temple, the name of which was given in the aforesaid inscription, which further declared that "money thus bestowed would be transformed into the sacred structure." It seemed to me that our heathen neighbours had here laid hold of a striking, suggestive, stimulating view as to gifts of charity, from which we Christians well might profit: far more marvellous and infinitely more enriching is such transformation of our poor "lendings to the Lord" into heavenly treasure, than would be the turning into gold of our earthly all by the far-famed philosopher's stone.

"HERE AM I; SEND ME."

At a public meeting a remarkable instance of Divine guidance into special service was given by a missionary, drawn from his personal experience. At one time he was the only believer in his family, and, being greatly attached to his relations, this fact filled him with much concern, while he passed through the course of preparation for entering the Church. Later on, he was asked to unite with other clergymen at a special prayer meeting on behalf of missionary efforts, and it was notified to him that the subject of prayer was to be the definite one of procuring a suitable worker for Persia; help was much wanted there, and the matter was to be laid before God at this prayer meeting. The clergyman attended the service, and prayed earnestly for the success of missions, and that a volunteer might be found for Persia. As he was leaving the building, a friend touched him on the arm and said earnestly, "Do you think you may be the right man to go out to Persia?" Such an idea startled his hearer, who had not dreamed of leaving the associations familiar to him, and who felt his mission-work lay in bringing his dear ones first of all to the Saviour's feet. Still, that solemn question, coming after the earnest petitions of the prayer meeting, haunted his heart: and he became so disturbed and perplexed, that he could do nothing else save leave the bewilderment at the throne of God, and simply pray that he might be plainly guided to a right decision. And the Lord then, as ever, honoured prayer and faith. It is a wondrous testimony, but with God nothing is impossible: in the course of a few weeks the tidings came from a younger sister, and then from another, and at last from the father and mother, that to them also the Saviour had become precious, and they had resolved to follow Him openly henceforth. So the shadows of doubt were lifted swiftly and brightly; and with a heart full of awe and thanksgiving, he who had pleaded for light and guidance discerned the way into which he was led, and came forward for earnest service in the cause that had been the subject of the special prayer meeting. It is true that not all of us are called to Persia, or to the mission-fields abroad, but there is a suggestive story of some Christian people who tried a week's practice instead of prayer meetings. But the only true method is when prayer and practice go hand in hand, and the prayer meeting stirs in those that pray and listen the inspiration to go forth and accomplish the great blessings for which the great Master has been besought.

TEACHERS' HELPS.

Teachers, whether in the pulpit or in the class, will find much to help them in "Christ and His People" (Hodder and Stoughton), a series of thirteen sermons, which have been preached from time to time by such well-known divines as the Bishop of Liverpool, the Dean of Ripon, Canon Hoare, the Rev. H. C. G. Moule, and the Rev. George Everard, more than one of whom is known to our readers from contributions to our own pages.—Another work, this time entirely from the pen of the last-named writer, the Rev. George Everard, is published by Messrs. Nisbet under the title of "In the Morning," and consists of a Scripture prayer and meditation for each morning in the month. Some of the meditations are very suggestive indeed.—The latest addition to Messrs. Nisbet's "Men of the Bible" series is "Jeremiah, his Life and Times," by Professor T. K. Cheyne, D.D., whose work is a worthy successor and companion to the valuable volumes which have preceded it in this most excellent series.—Another volume of meditations from the same publishers is Dr. J. R. Macduff's "Ripples in the Starlight," a collection of very short, independent thoughts which should be helpful to many a struggling Christian.—A more ordered and connected work of a similar nature, and from the same publishers, is Dr. George Matheson's "Voices of the Spirit," in which each meditation occupies only about two pages, but will be found full of helpful and suggestive thought.—"How to Help" (Nisbet) is a series of republished papers, by Mrs. G. S. Reaney, upon life and work in the East End of London, where she toiled so long and so faithfully with her husband. This work should prove very useful indeed to teachers who are anxious to enlist the sympathies of more favoured scholars in the lives and aspirations of the toiling masses whose lot is cast in less happy surroundings.—"Through the Shadows" (Elliot Stock), by Erskine Moir, is a somewhat strange story, marred by too sad an ending.

XUM

which leaves the reader dissatisfied with the lot of the heroine. The story deals almost too largely with religious "difficulties," which we think are better dealt with directly, than in a form where the slightest misstatement may work incalculable harm.—From the same publisher comes a little volume of essays by E. Hughes, under the title of "Some Aspects of Humanity," in which, to our mind, the first one, on "Patient People," is the most suggestive, though "Children and Flowers" is another very striking paper.—"The Disciples' Prayer," also published by Mr. Elliot Stock, is made up of notes of sermons on the Lord's Prayer, by the Rev. J. M. Gibbon, which we have not space to more than briefly mention and commend to the attention of our readers.—Travellers' tales of the Holy Land and the adjacent countries have often been told, but perhaps teachers may find something new in a recently issued volume of memories of Eastern travel, entitled "Heart and Thought," published by Mr. G. W. Gledsdale, of Bolton, and from the pen of Mr. T. Holmes. The book is a simple record of extended travel, and as such is perhaps more interesting than an elaborate and speculative work.

A CAIRN OF KINDLINESS.

It has been well said, "The cairn is heaped high by each one flinging a pebble," and there are so many ways of bringing pebbles just now to the cairn of kindliness, that the humblest and weakest among us may assist in causing the structure to arise like an altar of thanksgiving to Heaven. Miss Constance Sargent, 20, Castellain Road, Maida Vale, in writing to acknowledge increased interest in her "Spare Minute Club," through our reference to its work in THE QUIVER, asks us to mention the Ladies' Samaritan Society, of which she is also hon. secretary. Subscriptions even of five shillings annually would mean many more deserving cases assisted. This Society is attached to the Royal Hospital for Chest Diseases, City Road, and it sends patients to convalescent homes, pays fares and rent, procures tools, and in every beneficent way relieves the needs of patients. Ladies take it in turn to visit the wards and ascertain the kind of help most urgently required. Miss Sargent writes that at present the income they have to work with is only about £60 a year. There are many simple but loving, helpful agencies at work in connection with the United Kingdom Beneficent Association. Some ladies undertake to correspond with annuitants and candidates and look after their general well-being, sending little comforts and dainties sometimes—in no spirit of patronage, but in Christian sympathy and kindness. "They appear to know my very wants," writes one of those thus aided; "surely, it must be a loving Father that puts it into their hearts." Clothes, food, books, flowers, material—all these find a place amid these quiet, gracious ministries. Mrs. Berry, the Rosery, Dean Park, Bournemouth, is hon. secretary of the "Busy Bees Society," which provides underclothing and knitted articles for candidates and annuitants; and Miss C. Dodgson, 2, Upper George Street, Bryanston Square, W., looks after the "Nourishing Dainties Society" for the benefit of the sick, poor, and aged. Contributions of non-perishable articles, such as good black tea, cocoa, and extract of beef, are much appreciated, and special arrangements could be made as concerns perishable foods, which could go direct to suitable recipients.

IN THE HEAVENLY RECORD.

The story is told of Irving, when co-pastor of Dr. Chalmers, that his friends once found him walking on with a heavy burden on his back, and a poor, worn-out Irishman limping beside him. People laughed, but Irving's simple, noble reply to their questioning was only, "His countrymen were kind to me." Are there any of the kindred of the Lord Himself, whose burdens we can lift because of His mercy and compassion unto *us?* If, for His sake, we are helping His brethren and His sisters, let us be very sure no kindly word is spoken, no deed of compassion is wrought, but Christ Himself keeps the record, for He seeth in secret. One of the martyrs told how the words he uttered were taken down by a secret pen, writing behind a curtain, and the knowledge of this made him earnest and careful when he opened his lips; is there not a heavenly record, unseen by us, that takes account even of what we deem trivial words and trifling deeds, and shall not things done in secret be revealed on the housetops at last? We heard an eloquent preacher tell of the wonders of the phonograph—how it reproduces single voices or voices strangely mingling, how the operator laughed into it, or wept, and how each sob or burst of laughter was heard distinctly again, and how the sounds of music or human accents can be stored for years and then be clearly reproduced. And he reminded his hearers of that great future when the past will stand forth again more clearly, more wondrously than science dreams: many that are last shall then indeed be first, for there are true, humble, faithful souls in lowly places that are doing Christlike service, prized by the angels, but so circumstanced that men notice them little. With what honour will Heaven requite them, then! It was said by Hooker that there will come a time when three words uttered in charity and meekness shall receive a far more blessed recompense "than three thousand volumes of disdainful wit."

A SEASIDE HOME AT HERNE BAY.

For the past nine years a good work has been carried on quietly and unobtrusively at Herne Bay, in Kent: a "Bird's Nest" and Seaside Home for delicate children needing change and sea air. Founded in a very small way indeed, this Home has recently removed to new quarters—two newly built houses, communicating with each other. There are beds at present for ten children, gathered from all parts, but chiefly from the close and crowded courts and slums of the Metropolis, and from the squalid haunts around Drury Lane Theatre. There is also a small accommodation for "resters"—young women in business needing change of air. During the past summer, forty-two children and fifteen "resters" have been received, nine of the children having been taken absolutely free of charge. Hitherto, from want

of funds, the Home has been closed each year from November till May; but, notwithstanding the death of some of its chief supporters, a strenuous effort is now being made to extend its usefulness by continuing it through the winter, and by providing a few beds for mothers with their infants, and other occasional cases sorely in need of rest and nourishment, but ineligible for most other homes. Will any of our readers help in the good work of bringing health and strength back to many a little one to whom the sea and green fields and fresh air are at present but meaningless terms? Annual subscribers of a guinea may send a child for three weeks free of charge. Subscriptions and gifts will be most thankfully received, and all inquiries will be answered by Miss Charlotte S. Abbey, in charge of "The Bird's Nest," Herne Bay.

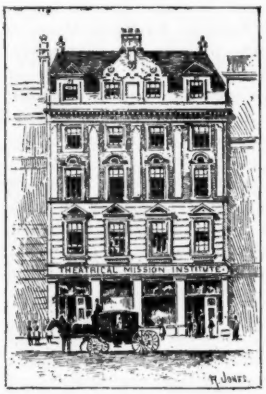
THREE USEFUL BOOKS.

The studies in the lives and times of Biblical characters which the Rev. F. B. Meyer has from time to time issued during the last few years, have been marked by great care in preparation, and a suggestiveness that has made them very acceptable to preachers and teachers. This is no less true of his latest work—"Abraham, or the Obedience of Faith"(Morgan and Scott), than of its predecessors. Perhaps the finest chapter in the work is that treating of the supremely pathetic story of Abraham's great trial, of which Mr. Meyer truly says: "So long as men live in the world, they will turn to this story with unwearying interest. There is only one scene in history by which it is surpassed—that where the great Father gave His Isaac to a death from which there was no deliverance."—Useful in another direction than Mr. Meyer's work is "The Five Talents of Women," which has just been published by Mr. Fisher Unwin. The author is the Rev. E. J. Hardy, whose papers in THE QUIVER all our readers must remember, and who deals with his subject in his well-known anecdotal style. The book is addressed to girls and women, and is divided into a number of chapters, each one of which could well be read apart from the others, and contains a distinct and valuable lesson. Every part of a woman's life is carefully dealt with through a range of topics which reaches its highest point in the chapter on "A Girl's Religion," which, in its earnest appeal to girls not to waste their opportunities, surpasses in power any other chapter in this most interesting and useful work.—The volumes in Messrs. Longmans' "Epochs of Church History" are always useful, and certainly the Rev. W. Hunt's "History of the English Church in the Middle Ages," which is the latest volume of the series, is no exception. It deals with a period of English Church History which is full of interest, though we need hardly say that it behoves the reader to be very cautious in the study of so disturbed and unsettled a period.

AMBASSADORS FOR GOD.

Andrew Fuller truly said, "Only One could ever declare, when He died, '*It is finished.*'" The noblest workers have felt, when all was accomplished, that much beyond their failing powers remained to be done, and that, after all, their best has been but little, their efforts have been frail. Little and frail in their own mortal estimation, perhaps; but God knows which of us do our *best* in His warfare against evil—angels themselves can do no *more*. God's workers die, His work goes on—Joshua arises when Moses rests. Be it ours to pray and strive that somewhere in the host of workers *we* have our place, our part, and that the world somehow is better for our example and our lives, so that "good and faithful servant" shall be the Divine welcome to our souls, when other standard-bearers shall step into our place. Duncan Matheson related a story of a chaplain who consulted a Scotch sergeant as to the best method of work, and the sergeant showed him the preparations for battle, for it was in the time of the Crimea. "We are all in earnest here, sir," he said; "it is a life and death struggle. And an earnest man ever wins the way; to do good, *be in earnest.*" When the Congregational Union met last autumn at Nottingham, Professor Elmslie sounded a clarion-call to every heart that has come in contact with the living God, and beheld some vision of His glory, and realised His redemption. There was no presumption, no self-assertion, he said, in Isaiah, when he sprang forward, invoking God's attention on himself, and before all Heaven, asking to be God's ambassador. No, he had utterly forgotten self, and was conscious only of God, and he yearned "with resistless longing to do something for that God Who had shown such grace to him." *Something!* Though everyone cannot be an Isaiah, everyone may in very deed do something; and our own special work can be decided only between our own prayerful, praiseful, overflowing hearts and the living, loving God.

THE CHILDREN OF THE STAGE



MACREADY HOUSE.

Are befriended at Macready House, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, where temporal and spiritual benefits exist on behalf of *employés* at various places of amusement. A young professional practically exemplified the esteem in which the refreshment-buffet is held by showing a visitor a well-cooked steak, the price of which he decided would be a shilling: "No, sir," said the girl, "steak and mashed for fourpence-halfpenny," and she added that it had been cooked by "a brick of a matron!" Besides the creature comforts, here is rest for tired performers, and friendly sympathy is spreading around a gentle Christian influence; how many of those

who smile upon the stage have needy homes and weary hearts, and at Macready House confidences are outpoured to friends who care alike for soul, and mind, and body. There are evangelistic meetings for boys, and a gymnasium and Mutual Improvement Society. A lad about nine years old proposed a gift to Her Majesty of a cardboard model of a yacht, but the children of Macready House made their offering in a different form—they sent the Queen a footstool on which they had worked in beads the Victoria Regina Lily. Quite a throng of little performers now entertain the public—some are but eight and nine, some only four: they would be much better sheltered under Christian care, but, alas! the demand for children as performers is increasing, and to these little ones the help of Macready House is invaluable. All the children who played "Alice in Wonderland" frequented the Institute, from "Alice" herself to the "Glowworm," a child of four; "and dear, intelligent children they were," say the workers in the Home. The upper part of Macready House will be devoted to an orphanage for destitute theatrical children. A noteworthy feature of this mission is the endeavour to place each girl and child in communication with a lady, who undertakes to write her a letter every month. Many foreigners have shared in the benefits of this much-needed Institute—we read of an Arab, employed in the Hippodrome, who unwound his turban, and with clasped hands cried out to God to bless the Theatrical Mission—and the hospitality shown to foreigners has resulted in the desire that the mission may spread out branches to Paris, Berlin, Switzerland, and Italy.



THEATRICAL CHILDREN AT THE INSTITUTE.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

A scientific writer tells us, concerning the "fork-tailed date-shell," that it bores into the hardest stones and shells, and has one prevailing instinct—namely, to bore its way through everything. Most thoroughly does it succeed in getting "onwards, ever onwards;" but the writer adds that there is no particular credit due to the fork-tailed date-shell, which only carries out a constitutional trait. There *is* honour due, however, to those heroic souls who, often unnoticed by mankind, are working away with everything against them; they seem to have nothing in their favour except patience and faith, but "patience is grit," and faith moves the Hand that moves heaven and earth. God's children have learnt that one secret of success is self-denial; are there not cultured and educated lives working to-day amid the most lonely surroundings, and have not some even gone forth to share the daily existence of foreign tribes as brethren and kinsmen? In our own sphere, each of us will reach success as a Christian labourer by remembering that even Christ pleased not Himself, by keeping faithfully on at our task for Him, and, above all, by working on our *knees*. And if at last the success seem still withheld, and we seem to miss credit, and honour, and encouragement, and fruitage, let us be comforted in the knowledge that "failure is often deferred success," that no *real* failure is possible to him on whose behalf God's hand is lifted up, and that "He who honour best bestows" will show us the successes when our brief day's work is ended.

LIVES WITH LESSONS.

The lives of Robert and Mary Moffat have certainly many lessons to teach us all of unwearied continuance in well-doing and faithfulness in striving to spread the knowledge of the Kingdom, the work in which Dr. Moffat spent so many long and arduous years in

Africa. We are glad, therefore, to see a cheap edition, issued by Mr. Fisher Unwin, of a biography of the veteran missionary and his wife, ably written by their son. The work should now be within the reach of all Sunday-school libraries which do not already possess it.—The same may be said of the life of Samuel Morley, by Mr. Edwin Hodder, of which another and cheaper edition has just been issued by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. Our readers will remember our appreciative reference to this work on its first appearance, and a further acquaintance with the book in no way detracts from our estimation of it.—Dr. W. M. Taylor, of New York, contributes to a collection of historical and biographical essays by the late Professor William Graham, D.D., a few very interesting personal reminiscences of their writer, who must have been a man singularly well worth knowing, for he was not only eloquent in the pulpit and a powerful writer, but in private life was the idol of his friends, and particularly of the little ones among them. It is said that on the occasion of a preaching visit, when Dr. Graham was to have spent the night at their house and was obliged to send a substitute at the last minute, one of his little friends spontaneously added to his usual evening prayer these two petitions: "Please God bring Mr. —— safely here, and may he be as funny as the Doctor." This shows us the man, and gives us some idea of how he endeared himself to old and young alike. The essays on Wycliffe, Milton, and Calvin are perhaps the most striking in the series. The work is published by Messrs. Nisbet and Co.—From the same publishers comes "The Home of a Naturalist," in which are woven together some interesting sketches with both pen and pencil of Dr. Lawrence Edmonston and his home and work at Balta Sound, on the most northerly island of the Shetland group, written by two of his children. Some of the chapters on the folk-lore of these northern islands are very interesting.—Another cheaper issue of a popular biography is before us in the life of the Rev. George M. Murphy, by Annie Taylor (Elliot Stock). This new edition ought to be within the reach even of many of those among whom Mr. Murphy laboured so faithfully and so long in the south of London.

FOR BAND AND DRUMMER BOYS.

Some people openly confess they do not like boys, others by their avoidance of the species betray distrust and timidity concerning them; certain venturesome spirits, however, have discovered "what an honest nature lurks beneath that Puck's countenance," and they go so far as to say they would rather deal with the boys than the girls, and find it easier work. Now "comparisons are odious," and our young folks of both sexes need Christian thought and supervision; but we believe that those who entertain dread of boys and object to their vicinity do not really know how boys "pay" for love and care; and to those who have been inclined to ignore their claims we would say, "If the army of Christ is to be reinforced, if our country is to increase in goodness and glory, we cannot afford to overlook the boys of to-day, with their restless energy, their trustfulness, their ambition, and their strength." Would that wherever societies and institutes for young men are flourishing, there might be some sort of provision for the evening leisure of the boys, who, as a rule, have grown accustomed to hear such and such a meeting is "not for boys," but who crowd heartily within the doors that stand open to beckon them from street corners. A lady has sent us particulars of efforts put forth in four garrisons on behalf of the lads in the band, some of whom are orphans and friendless, and all of whom are exposed to temptations, and are deeply susceptible to gentle, helpful influences. The band-masters report improvement in manners, talk, and docility, as a consequence of the social evenings for boys, held from October to April, when instruction is given in knitting, netting, frame-making, drawing, and other interesting occupations. The boys choose the closing hymn, and many a frank, loving letter testifies to their appreciation of the interest taken by the ladies in their welfare. Further information as to this good work can be had by sending a stamped addressed envelope to "C. G. C. M.," The Birkenward, Skelmorlie, N.B.

"THE CABMEN'S BISHOP."

Liverpool is poorer to-day for the loss of Mr. Edward Sumners, "the cabmen's bishop." He was held in the highest esteem and respect by all ranks and conditions of men, and his cheery presence was as welcome in the mansion of the merchant prince as in the cellar of the starving outcast. As a young man, employed at Fawcett's Foundry, he devoted his leisure time, notably his Sundays, to hard drinking and pugilistic encounters. Through the influence of some Christian fellow-workmen, he was induced to go one Sunday morning to Wesley Chapel, Upper Stanhope Street, and what he there heard, arousing his interest, led him to renew the strange experiences. These chapel attendances were in the years 1832—33. By God's grace the strong man was broken down in penitence and prayer, and it was not long before he found deliverance. He would at this time be about twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age, and could neither read nor write. Mr. Lovett taught him the alphabet, and he derived great assistance at this initial stage in his true life-work from his faithful and surviving friend, Mr. Eastwood—whose son is an old contributor to the THE QUIVER. His only class-book was the Bible. Appointed as an agent of the Liverpool Town Mission in 1838, he zealously laboured in the cause of his Master for forty-eight years, during that long period bringing light and joy into multitudes of sorrowful and benighted hearts. Possessed of a splendid physique and abounding energy, he was remarkable for his bright and buoyant disposition, evidenced in his gracious winning looks and warm and loving hand-grip. His face positively shone. These characteristics gained for him the familiar *sobriquet* of "Happy Ned." His most noble and philanthropic work among the Liverpool cabmen, providing—for he was a prime mover in this direction—"shelters" for their bodies, as well as refreshment

for their souls, needs no comment here. It is recorded in heaven. He was called to his reward at the ripe age of seventy-nine, being discovered early one morning, still and cold, kneeling at his bedside in the attitude of prayer. Fifteen hundred cabmen and omnibus drivers tied their whips with crape on the day of his funeral. The vast procession, representing



"THE CABMEN'S BISHOP."
(From a Photograph by Brown, Barnes, and Bell, Royal Studio, Liverpool.)

all classes, and over a mile long, which followed his body to the grave through thirty thousand mournful spectators, bore witness to the veneration in which this humble servant of Christ was universally held. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

SOME BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Stories for boys and girls are always more in demand at this season of the year than at any other. Parents and guardians are on the look-out for seasonable gifts, and superintendents and teachers for prizes with which to reward regular attendance and good conduct during the year which is closed. "By a Way She Knew Not" (Hodder and Stoughton) is a very well-written story suitable for elder girls, by Margaret M. Robertson, author of "Christie Redfern's Troubles" and other popular stories.—Another book from the same publishers is by Dr. Gordon Stables, and is entitled "Wild Life in the Land of the Giants." There is plenty of life in the work, but it is not carried to such excess of vividness as to be unsuitable for its young readers.—"The Mother's Friend" (Hodder and Stoughton), edited by Mrs. G. S. Reaney, is primarily intended as a magazine for mothers' meetings, but the admirable series of papers which it contains, entitled "Mother's Sunday Hour with her Children," makes it particularly suitable for mention in this connection. "Avondale Priory; or, She hath Done what She Could," is a temperance story by Mrs. Lucas Shadwell, published at the National Temperance Publication Depôt. The story is a simple one, but we can heartily commend it to leaders of Bands of Hope.—"A Song o' Sixpence" is a quaint fairy tale by the Rev. J. Jackson Wray, whose stories in the past have delighted so many hundreds and thousands of children and older folk. This quaint story is published by Messrs. Nisbet and Co., who also issue "Ready, Aye, Ready," and "The Trivial Round." The former, by Agnes Giberne, is well suited for girls and boys who are not very far advanced in their reading, but who have still got beyond books for very little ones. The latter is more suited for elder girls, to whom we think it is likely to prove very attractive.—"Our Own Picture Book" (same publishers) is, as its title implies, a collection of pictures more or less attractive, with accompanying letterpress suitable for very little children. Of "The Middy and the Moors" we need say no more to recommend it to boys than that it is written by Mr. R. M. Ballantyne. The scene of the story is laid in Algeria, and the wild life among the Moors is well described.—Of "Her Life's Work," by Lady Dunboyne, which, like Mr. Ballantyne's story, is published by Messrs. Nisbet, and two other stories entitled "Freemen or Slaves," and "Our Neighbour, Widow Yates," we have not space to say more than that they are well worthy of the attention of Sunday-school librarians, and that the last is written by Grace Stebbing.—The "Swallow" series of books for little children (Cassell) comprises quite a number of little works, very prettily bound and abundantly illustrated in a style well fitted to endear them to the young readers in the nursery. Even those little ones who cannot read will enjoy these books, the very titles of which, such as "Daisy's Story Book," "A Nest of Stories," "Little Chimes for All Times," and "Tiny Tales," would make them popular.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE READING SOCIETY.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FROM JANUARY 1 TO FEBRUARY 3.

(Bearing on the International Lessons.)

JAN.	MORNING.	EVENING.
1.	St. Matthew iii., to ver. 10.	St. Matthew iii., from ver. 11.
2.	St. Luke iii. 12—22.	Acts xxii. 7—16.
3.	St. John i. 22—34.	St. Matthew xi. 7—15.
4.	St. John xvi. 7—13; Acts ii., to ver. 8.	Joel ii., from ver. 26.
5.	Isaiah xl., to ver. 11.	Malachi iii., to ver. iv.; iv.
6.	St. Mark i., to ver. 11.	St. Mark i. 21—34.
7.	St. Luke iv. 31—44.	St. Matthew viii. 14—18; xii. 22—28.
8.	St. Matthew iv. 12—17; ix. 32—35.	Psalm lxxxix., to ver. 14.

JAN.	MORNING.	EVENING.
9.	St. James ii., from ver. 14.	Acts xvi. 16—25.
10.	St. John x. 32—38; vi., from ver. 66.	Isaiah liii.
11.	St. Matthew xii., 10—21.	St. Matthew xii. 22—30.
12.	St. Luke vi. 6—19.	St. Mark iii. 10—15; also 22—30.
13.	St. Mark i. 21—34.	St. Mark i. 35—45.
14.	St. Matthew viii., to ver. 13.	St. Luke v. 12—17.
15.	Isaiah lxi.	Psalm li.
16.	2 Kings v., to ver. 14.	Leviticus xiv., vers. 4, 10, and 21—29.
17.	St. John xvi., from ver. 28; xvii., to ver. 6.	Hebrews iv., from ver. 14; v., to ver. 10.
18.	Luke xvii. 11—19.	Psalm xxxiii., to ver. 9.
19.	Hebrews ii., from ver. 10.	St. John xiv. 7—14.
20.	St. Mark i. 35—45.	St. Mark ii., to ver. 17.
21.	Psalm ciii., to ver. 14.	Ephesians ii., to ver. 9.
22.	St. Matthew ix., to ver. 13.	St. Luke v. 18—32.
23.	Psalm xxxii.	St. Luke xv., to ver. 10.
24.	Colossians i. 12—22.	Acts xiv., to ver. 10.
25.	Isaiah xliii. 15—25.	St. Matthew xviii. 10—14; also 23—33.
26.	St. Luke xix., to ver. 10.	Revelation iii., from ver. 14.
27.	St. Mark ii., to ver. 17.	St. Mark iv., to ver. 20.
28.	St. Matthew xiii., to ver. 12.	St. Matthew xiii., 13—23.
29.	St. Luke viii. 4—15.	2 St. Peter i., to ver. 11.
30.	Ezekiel xxxvi. 21—30.	Colossians i., to ver. 10.
31.	Isaiah vi.	St. John xv., to ver. 11.
FEB.		
1.	Psalm l.; Ephesians iii., from ver. 16.	St. Mark x. 17—27.
2.	Galatians v., from ver. 16.	Hebrews vi., from ver. 7.
3.	St. Mark iv., 1—20.	St. Mark v., 1—20.

SPECIAL PRIZE.

In connection with THE QUIVER Bible Reading Society, two Prizes, the first of Three Guineas and the second of Two Guineas, will be awarded for the two best sets of anecdotal and other illustrations of the following texts (not more than three illustrations of any one text):—

(1) Hebrews xi. 1.
(2) Proverbs xiii. 12.
(3) Romans xiii. 10.
(4) St. John viii. 12.
(5) Genesis i. 26.
(6) James iii. 5.

The anecdotes or illustrations need not be original or unpublished, but the source must in every case be stated. Extra credit will be given for original work or research, and for anecdotes not commonly known.

The conditions upon which these prizes are issued are very few and simple:—(1) Candidates must write legibly on one side of the paper only, and must send in their MSS. addressed to the Editor of THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, E.C., *adding the words "Bible Reading Competition"* in the top left-hand corner of the envelope. (2) The latest date for receiving MSS. will be Monday, April 8, 1889. (3) Every MS. must be accompanied by the competitor's full name and postal address, not necessarily for publication, and must also have securely attached to it a declaration that the work is entirely the competitor's own, countersigned by a minister of religion. (4) The Editor reserves the right to divide either or both of the prizes should two or more MSS. be of equal merit; or to withhold either or both should no MS. be adjudged worthy of the award. (5) The Editor cannot undertake to return unsuccessful MSS., or to enter into any correspondence respecting the competition, either before or after the publication of the award.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

25. What advice does St. John the Baptist give to the publicans (or taxgatherers of his day) which shows they were generally a dishonest class?

26. What advantage did Jesus say would come to His disciples by His departure?

27. What reference is made by the prophet Isaiah to St. John the Baptist?

28. What prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled shortly after the imprisonment of St. John the Baptist, and how?

29. What was the first occasion on which the Jews took counsel to destroy Jesus?

30. What testimony did the devils give at Capernaum as to the Divinity of Christ? Quote passage.

31. What prophecy of Isaiah has special reference to the ministry of Christ on earth?

32. In what parable does Jesus set forth the necessity of a practical Christian life as the result of union with Him?

33. Why was the Church of Laodicea so severely rebuked?

34. When Jesus healed the man sick of the palsy, what special act of faith was noted by him?

35. In what way does David teach us to look upon offences done against our neighbour?

36. What charge was brought against Jesus by the Jews after He had cast out the deaf and dumb spirit?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 152.

13. Ezekiel evidently refers to his former prophecy about Jerusalem, in which he foretells its destruction. (Ezek. xliii. 3; and ix. 1—7.)

14. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. (Dan. i. 6.)

15. Dan. iv. 30—34.

16. King Darius. (Dan. vi. 16.)

17. Dan. viii. 16; and x. 13.

18. To the seven Churches of Asia. (Rev. i. 11.)

19. Rev. xxii. 19.

20. Dan. ii. 31—45.

21. Dan. vi. 10.

22. The martyr Antipas. (Rev. ii. 13.)

23. The song of Moses and of the Lamb. (Rev. xv. 3.)

24. When required to partake of the meat from the king of Babylon's table, by which he would have been defiled, he begged to be allowed to eat pulse, believing that God would sustain him in his effort to do right. (Dan. i. 8—16.)

XUM





THE LAST GOOD-NIGHT.

See p. 245.

CHRISTIAN WORK AT OXFORD.

BY AN OXFORD MAN.



IN A LODGING-HOUSE.

OXFORD and Cambridge have been called the two eyes of England; and although now, owing to university extension and other causes, they by no means occupy the position they formerly held, yet their welfare is still of deepest interest to all Englishmen; in fact, they are a sort of public property. Whether it be a boat race or a cricket match in which they are engaged, all the world, from the aristocrat down to the cabman who drives him, must wear the colours of the favourite university. It is impossible to look at the stream of young life which may be seen any day in Oxford during term time without a thrill of interest. What is to be the future of these youths? They are so bright, so free from care, so energetic, so enthusiastic, so willing to follow where they are led. Who will lead them? and whither?

No one can study the peculiarities of the two universities without perceiving the marked difference which there is between them. To touch upon one point alone, viz., their respective theological proclivities, it has been said that whilst Simeon has left his mark upon Cambridge, it is to Dr. Pusey that Oxford owes its ecclesiastical spirit. Yet we cannot forget that the Evangelical revival of the last century was mainly led by Oxford men, such as the Wesleys and George Whitfield; and it is not impossible that a time may be approaching when men who are Evangelical in doctrine, though they would not allow themselves to be called members of an Evangelical party, may be found in some posts of importance in Oxford.

In attempting to set forth the leading Evangelical influences which are being brought to bear on young men in this university, one is treading on delicate ground. There are many things which one hardly cares to allude to, and there is danger both of omitting some agencies which ought to be included, and of exaggerating the possible effects of some which are mentioned. Still, we must do the best we can in a small compass.

There are three centres of Evangelical work in Oxford. The oldest of these is St. Aldate's, where Canon Christopher has been working for about thirty years. It is hard to estimate the amount of good work he has done in days gone by, and if now circumstances have caused him to lose something of the hold which he once had over young men, he is universally loved and honoured by men of all schools of thought for his faithfulness, his warm-hearted earnestness, and his affectionate persuasiveness. Whilst he continues to hold Saturday evening meetings, and occasionally gathers fair audiences of young men, and whilst he provides endless pabulum for Evangelical men, in the

form of books, tracts, preachings, and addresses, Canon Christopher's most remarkable effort in the year is the monster breakfast-party, to which he invites all sorts and conditions of men, from "Cowley Fathers" to Wesleyan divines, on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Church Missionary Society. Hundreds are invited, and most of those who are invited come. Before breakfast is half over the host may be seen on his legs, trying to make himself heard amidst a clatter of knives and forks; then comes the speaker of the morning, well selected to give an address adapted to an academical audience; some local Church dignitary or professor closes with a word of thanks, and the mass of men are ordered out in batches without any confusion. There can be little doubt that this remarkable undertaking justifies all the expense and thought which are bestowed on it. Certainly it keeps the cause of missions and the triumphs of the Gospel before the minds of many, both young and old, who too readily forget these things, and who are too often inclined to view heathenism in a rosy light, and Christianity in somewhat sombre tints.

At the very antipodes of Oxford from St. Aldate's—in fact, in the very outskirts, and so in a position where its usefulness is considerably marred—stands Wycliffe Hall. This institution is about ten years old, and has received during that time nearly a hundred men, who have been trained there for the ministry after taking their degrees. It has supplied a very great need in Oxford, and will probably prove more and more useful in this respect as time goes on. But over and above this, which is its special work, there are held here during term Bible Readings for adults—ladies and gentlemen—Bible Classes for children in connection with the Children's Scripture Union, meetings in behalf of various missionary and philanthropic objects, and lectures on Christian evidences, Bible study, etc. Thus a good many men are reached in various ways in the Hall and in the Principal's house adjoining, where social gatherings of young men are held from time to time. The Principal, Canon Girdlestone, is also a sort of honorary adviser and chairman of the Inter-collegiate Christian Union—of which more anon—and is one of the chief supporters of the Undergraduates' Missionary Association.

Half-way between St. Aldate's and Wycliffe Hall lies the parish of St. Peter le Bailey, the rector of which—the Rev. F. J. Chavasse—is now widely known as an effective preacher. His work in Oxford is not confined to preaching. Whilst he attracts large gatherings of people from all parts of Oxford, including undergraduates, to his church, and whilst his parochial organisations are models of what can be done on Evangelical lines, the most striking feature of his work is the large Greek Testament class of about a hundred university men, held in an iron room immediately after Sunday evening service. And yet, when this is mentioned, it is not all, for there is hardly a day in which Mr. Chavasse has not to act as guide, philosopher, and friend to some inquiring undergraduate or graduate. His sympathy, his counsel, his services are lovingly and ungrudgingly laid at the disposal of young Oxford — and they are freely and gratefully used. It will be a sad day for the best interests of Oxford when Mr. Chavasse leaves it.

We now pass to other things. There is a daily prayer meeting during term time, in a room conveniently situated in the middle of the town; but it is not well attended. There is also an association to encourage missionary interest amongst undergraduates; it was founded by Bishop French, an old Oxonian, who was for a time Rector of St. Ebbe's—a devoted missionary. It has had varied ups and downs during the last ten years; and at present it is thriving. Although the wave of missionary interest, which has caught so many men at Cambridge, has not been so potent at Oxford, yet there is a decided missionary spirit at work. It must not be forgotten that there are endless calls on men's time, over and above their natural pursuits. There are Temperance and Purity Associations, Christian Socialism, Political Organisations, College Missions in North, East, and South London; also there is the Calcutta Mission and the "Central African" or Universities Mission, besides a series of local missions conducted by specially known bishops or clergy in the colonies. Oxford men are very kind-hearted, and they take interest in all these things more or less.

Amongst active operations conducted by the young men themselves should be mentioned the preaching in the open air at the Martyrs' Memorial on Sunday evenings, also visitations and addresses to the tramps in the large lodging-houses in the poorer parts of the town; then there is a fairly thriving district visiting society, which works in the villages round Oxford with the consent of the parochial clergy, and which also undertakes districts in Oxford itself; and there are some Sunday-school teachers who work in certain schools, though there is nothing here like the



celebrated Jesus Lane Sunday-school at Cambridge. Some of the more earnest men take up navvy work or the Sea-side Mission during the vacations, and for this sort of work they seem eminently fitted. We

must not forget to mention the Boys' Brigade, devised by an undergraduate from Glasgow, and officered by university men, as a means of teaching and disciplining the rowdy lads of Oxford. It is a marked success.

Lastly, we come to the Inter-collegiate Christian Workers' Union. This union was started about ten years ago, with the object of binding together the earnest men in the different colleges who were engaged in visiting, teaching, etc., or who were members of College Bible readings. When Mr. Moody visited Oxford, he produced a far-reaching impression amongst the young men, the effect of which has not yet died away. One consequence of this was the formation or re-constitution of College Bible Readings. Almost every college has its reading, some on Sundays and some on week-days, some numbering adherents by tens, and some having only two or three members. These have proved centres of great influence, and have tended to promote a true Evangelical spirit amongst the men. The union formed amongst them has proved most serviceable. The committee represents almost all the colleges, and through its means information can rapidly be spread amongst undergraduates as for any special work to which their attention ought to be called. Sometimes a large gathering of the members is held in Wycliffe Hall for devotion, and as a preparation for some special effort. This union invites down energetic mission preachers from London and elsewhere; it has succeeded lately in securing the use of the university church on Sunday evenings for special addresses; and it has more than once enabled Oxford men to have the benefit of a series of addresses by Mr. Webb Peploe. It was through this union that Professor Drummond was invited to Oxford two or three years ago. On the whole this Inter-collegiate Union is one of the most effective of organisations with an Evangelical tendency which we possess at Oxford; the men work it chiefly themselves, and throw their energy, their money, and their prayers into it. There is a similar organisation at Cambridge, and the two bodies arrange for inter-university meetings once a year.

Our readers will now understand a little of what is going on in Oxford in an Evangelical direction. Much more might be done, but there are special difficulties here which need not be entered upon. After all, the important thing is that each man who comes up as a freshman should bring with him settled convictions of truth and fixed principles of life. If a man comes up with a vague idea of Christianity, knowing little of the power of prayer or of the meaning of the Gospel of salvation, he will very likely drift away into a hollow religionism or a cold scepticism, and perhaps will become a slave to sin. Organisations and influences such as have been described above cannot be absolutely depended upon as safeguards. A man must fight his own battle with the world, the flesh, and the devil, in the strength of Christ and by His Spirit.

THE LAST GOOD-NIGHT

GLAD in their night-gowns, clean and white,
The children come to say good-night;
"Father, good-night!" says Marjory,
Climbing for kisses on my knee.

Then Ernest, Kittie, Harry next—
And baby—till I feel perplexed,
Wishing the last good-night was said,
And each and all were packed to bed.

These small folks take me unawares:
I hear them call, when safe up-stairs,
As I sit down to read or write,
"Father, we want to say good-night!"

The book or pen is laid aside:
I find them lying open-eyed—
Five rosy rebels, girls and boys,
Who greet me with tumultuous noise.

Can I be stern with such as these?
Can charming ways and looks displease?
They hold, and scarce will let me go,
And all because they love me so.

Then, in a vision, suddenly
The future seems unveiled to me!
It is my turn, though all in vain,
To long to say good-night again.

I see the years stretch on and on,
The children all grown up and gone;
No chamber echoes to their tread,
The last good-night has long been said!

And by his fireside, desolate,
An old man sits, resigned to wait,
Recalling joys that used to be,
And faces that he may not see.

Therefore, what bliss is mine that now
I still can smooth each fair young brow!
And feel the arms that clasp me tight,
The lips that kiss the last good-night!

J. R. Eastwood.

'TO THE LIONS!"

A TALE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS. BY THE REV. PROFESSOR CHURCH, M.A.

CHAPTER IX.—RHODA'S EVIDENCE.

THE Elder felt that his position, so to speak, had been turned. His silence, however skilfully justified, was useless—nay, it was worse than useless, for it had brought this daughter of the Church, one for whom they would all gladly have suffered, into terrible peril. They had escaped for the time; but at what a cost, if Rhoda was to be tortured!

He made a last effort to save her. "My lord," he said, "I withdraw my refusal to speak. Any questions that you or the prosecutor may put to me I will answer; and what I say for myself, I say also for all the accused."

"What say you to this?" asked the Governor.

There was another brief consultation between the advocate and Lucilius. Then the former rose.

"My lord, our interest, our only interest, is the truth. Our aim, and, I presume, the aim of all persons not being criminal or hostile to the State, is that the truth should be fully told, and amply confirmed. Therefore we must have the best evidence that can be procured, nor can we allow our private feelings to hinder its forthcoming. Is it not a maxim of the law that when slaves are at hand you do not use the testimony of freemen, it being agreed that the truth is more surely drawn forth by the more powerful compulsion?"

The Governor referred the point to his assessor, and that official decided, though with evident reluctance, that the contention was just.

Nothing now stood between the prisoner and her fate. The instrument of torture was sent for. Whilst it was being brought, there was a terrible pause of expectation in the court. Tacitus rose as if to leave the room, but a whispered entreaty from the Governor made him resume his seat. In the audience the agitation was extreme. Several persons fainted; many, both men and women, burst into uncontrollable weeping. The least troubled of all was the girl herself. There was something more than calm on her countenance; there was exaltation—almost, it might be said, rapture. Even as it had been with the judges of Stephen—for so we learn from the confession of one of their number—those who looked upon her saw her face "as it had been the face of an angel."

The instrument of torture was something like a rack. The savage humour which gives a half-comic name to these hideous implements of cruelty had invented for it the nickname of the "Little Horse." The resemblance lay in the four beams, projecting from a timber frame, to which the limbs of the sufferer were attached.

Before this was done the Governor ordered the court to be cleared of all persons not immediately interested in the trial. A few heartless creatures were probably disappointed that their curiosity was not to be gratified; but most of the spectators, however intense their interest, felt the order to be a relief. Bion and his wife claimed to be allowed to remain. It would break their hearts to see such a sight, but their presence might comfort the sufferer; and as she was their slave, if not their daughter, their claim was, of course, allowed. The elder Rhoda's whole thought was centred on the desire to minister to this, the child of her heart if not according to the flesh. Bion watched what was done with a set, tearless face, crushing down the wild impulse to fly to the sufferer's rescue. Most of the spectators averted their eyes; even Lucilius was seen to bury his face in a fold of his toga.

The preparations were now complete, and the executioner awaited the signal of the judge to commence his hideous task. This was given by a gesture, and the man immediately followed it up by the first turn of the dreadful instrument. No one who was present that day ever forgot the horrible creaking sound of the timbers, mingled with a groan of the sufferer, forced from her by the pain, but stifled almost as soon as uttered. There was not a heart, not even of the ruthless Lucilius, in which the blood did not curdle; not a forehead on which the cold drops of sweat did not stand.

The Governor thundered, in a voice such as had never been heard to issue from his lips before, "Hold!"

The executioner, brutalised as he was by familiarity with the horrid details of his office, was not sorry to stay his hand.

The Governor went on: "The law has so far been satisfied. The torture has been applied, and in my judgment, which in this matter is final, has been applied sufficiently. If the accused is now willing to make confession, I will hear her."

Rhoda was unfastened from the rack. The executioner assisted her to rise; but she could not stand, and the Governor directed that a seat should be provided for her. "Now," he said to the prosecutor, "put your questions."

"Are you one of the people that are called Christians?"

"I am."

"Are you accustomed to assemble together?"

"We are so accustomed."

"On what days, and at what time?"

"Once in seven days at the least, and at other times also. The hour of our assembling is before daybreak."

"And what do you at these gatherings?"

"We offer up prayers, and sing praises to God."

"To what god?"

"To God Almighty, who made the heavens and the earth, and is the Father of all men."

"Who, then, is this Christus by whose name you are called?"

"He is God."

"Then you worship two gods—the Father, of whom you speak, and Christus?"

"Nay, for Christus is the Son of the Father, and they two are one God. But ask me not to explain these matters, for I am unlearned in them."

"Is there anything else that you do when you have finished these prayers and hymns?"

"These being finished we depart to our own homes. But in the evening of the same day we meet together and have our Feast of Love."

"With what preparations do you make this feast? With what dainties in meat and drink is it furnished?"

"The preparation is of the very simplest; there is nothing, indeed, beyond bread and wine."

"Why do you take such trouble to do that which is easier done in your own homes?"

"Because it has been so commanded us by our Master, that we may remember Him, and may also show forth the love by which we are bound one to another."

"Do you, then, all sit down together at this feast?"

"Yes, we all sit down; nor is there any distinction made of rich and poor, bond and free."

"And do you bind yourselves by any oath?"

"Yes, if you will have it so, for this very feast is as an oath to us."

"And to what does this oath constrain you?"

"That we should neither kill, nor steal, nor commit uncleanness, nor break a promise, nor refuse when called upon to account for moneys committed to our charge." *

"Does this oath concern at all the Emperor and the State?"

"Only so far that we are bound to be loyal and obedient."

"Obedient in *all* things?"

"In all things that are lawful to us as followers of the Lord Christ."

"I pray you, my lord, to take a note of this reservation," said the prosecutor, addressing this observation to the Governor. He then proceeded with his examination of the prisoner. "Can you tell the names of others who were accustomed to be present at these assemblies?"

The girl hesitated for a moment when this question was put to her. Then she spoke with a firm voice—"Concerning myself I will speak the truth, nor seek to conceal anything; but of others I am not free to speak."

The Elder did not lose a moment in intervening at this point. "Permit me, my lord," he said, addressing the Governor, "to admit for myself and for all that are here present with me that we are of the people called Christians."

The prosecutor proceeded with his examination of Rhoda. "Can you tell us the names of others not here present?"

"Nay," interrupted the Governor; "on behalf of the absent, whom the magistrate is always especially bound to protect, I disallow that question."

The prosecutor then turned to the Elder: "Are you a ruler among this people?"

"Yes, if you will have it so. I am, as it were, the first among the brethren; but if they obey me it is of their own free will."

"Yet they are accustomed to follow your advice?"

"Certainly; they are so accustomed."

"Do you know that his Excellency the Governor, by command of our lord Trajan, issued an edict by which it was forbidden to hold unlawful assemblies?"

"Yes, I knew that such an edict was issued."

"Did you, therefore, cease to hold your assemblies?—though, indeed, seeing that you are here to-day, I need scarcely ask this question."

"We did not cease to hold them."

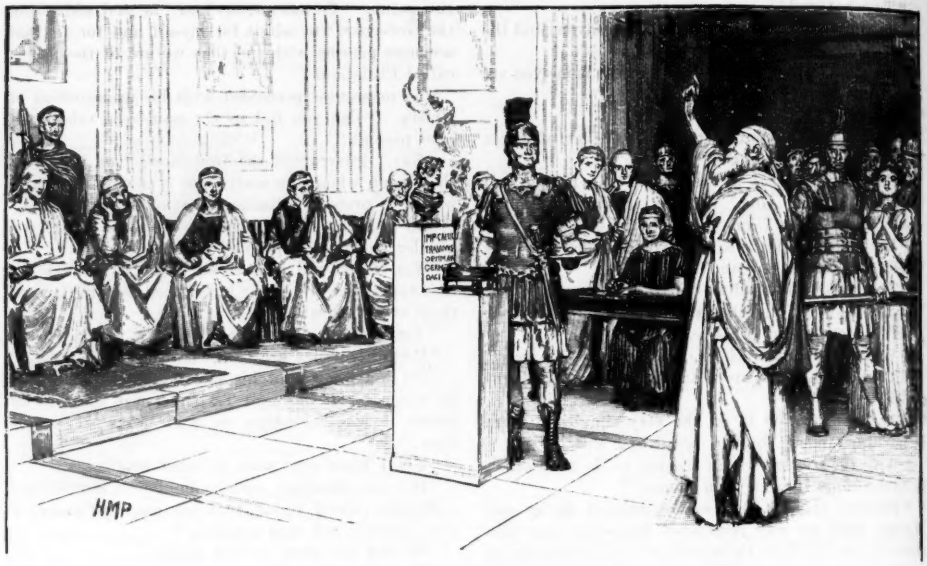
"Was the matter debated among you?"

This was a difficult question to answer. The matter had been debated, and that with considerable energy, in the Christian community. Some, of a more timorous spirit, had advised that the assemblies should cease; but Anicetus had been firm for their continuance. It would be a risk to hold them, for it might bring the Church into conflict with the law; but the spiritual danger, the danger of growing coldness, of want of faith, of laxity of practice, that would follow on their discontinuance, was, in his view, much more serious. Prudent Christian as he was, and anxious to avoid a conflict of which he could not see the end, his voice had been given without hesitation for disregarding the edict, or, at least, treating it as if it did not apply. A division had followed. Some members of the community had preferred to follow the safer course. The majority had held with Anicetus, and the assemblies had gone on without interruption. Nothing, of course, remained for him now but to speak the truth.

"It was debated. We differed in opinion. I held that the edict did not apply to us, and advised my brethren accordingly. Some thought differently, and came no more to our meetings."

This frank reply gave a very serious appearance to the whole affair. It could hardly be otherwise regarded than as an avowal of guilt, or at least of what was guilt in the eye of the Roman law. The Governor, who had begun the inquiry with a feeling of tolerance, and had become more and more favourably disposed to the accused as it proceeded, was adversely impressed by it. He seemed to see himself face to face with that invincible obstinacy of which he had been warned. Still, he would gladly have sheltered the accused if he could. His own private opinion was that the Emperor's opposition to what were called secret societies was over-strained and

* This was a very common form of fraud in ancient times. The scarcity of opportunities of investment, and the insecurity of property, made people glad to deposit sums of money in what seemed safe hands. It was deposited, not lent. It seems often to have happened that the person so trusted denied on oath the receipt of the money.



"'I refuse to burn incense.'"—*p.* 249.

excessive. No trace of loose behaviour or mischievous aims could be found in these people. He was unwilling to condemn, and yet, in view of their own admission, he could not acquit them. The only thing that remained was to postpone the trial. If a time for consideration were given, perhaps some compromise might become possible. This accordingly was the course on which he determined.

"I postpone this inquiry," he announced, "till the ides of May [the 15th]. The prisoners will be released on giving bail. The woman Rhoda will be delivered to her master Bion, who will give sufficient surety for producing her when she shall be required."

The court was then adjourned.

CHAPTER X.—THE EXAMINATION.

THE Governor's advisers did their best to deepen the adverse impression made upon his mind by the frank admission of the Elder. The philosophical Tacitus was especially urgent in his advice that this "execrable superstition," as he called it, should be rooted out. With others of the more thoughtful Roman statesmen, he saw quite plainly that this new faith was really the enemy of the old system of the Empire, and would destroy it if it were not itself destroyed. It was generally the best Emperors who were the persecutors of the Church. A weak tyrant might happen to indulge in some outbreak of caprice or cruelty; but the steady, systematic hostility—the hostility that was really dangerous—came from vigorous rulers: from such men as Aurelius, and Decius, and Diocletian. Tacitus accordingly was, even vehemently, on the side of severity; and Pliny, who always leaned on the stronger character of his friend, resolved to follow his advice.

Something like a reign of terror followed in Nicæa and the neighbourhood. A regular inquisition was made of all who were known or suspected to be Christians. The informers (who, as we know, had already been at work) became more busy than ever. Long lists of accused persons were drawn up, and, as usual at such times, private spite and malice found their opportunity. A jealous lover put down the name of a rival on the list, and a debtor thought it a good way of ridding himself of a troublesome creditor. As lists were received even without being signed, or with signatures about which no inquiry was made, scarcely anyone could consider himself safe.

It was a formidable array of prisoners that was gathered on the day of the adjourned trial in the public hall of Nicæa, no room in the Governor's palace being sufficiently large to receive them. On this occasion all spectators were excluded, and the approaches to the hall were strongly guarded with troops. Within, the arrangements for the trial were much the same as before, except that an officer of the local military force sat below the bench occupied by the Governor and his assessors, in charge of a bust of the Emperor; and that a small movable altar had been arranged in front, with a brazier full of lighted coals upon it.

Anicetus and his companions, who had been arraigned on the occasion already described, were first called to answer to their names. Their cases would, it was thought, take but little time, for they had already confessed to the fact of being Christians. The only

question was, Would they adhere to that confession or retract it?

We sometimes think that all the Christians of those early times, when the profession of the faith was never a mere matter of inheritance or fashion, were true to their Master in the face of all dangers, and under the pressure of the worst tortures. But this is a delusion. Human nature was weak then, as now. Men fell away under temptation, either because they had not a firm enough grasp of the truth which they professed, or because there was some weakness—it may be, some cherished sin—in them that sapped their strength. Sometimes, one can hardly doubt, God, for His own good purposes, suffered even His faithful servants to fall away from Him for a time. St. Paul hints as much when, describing his career as a persecutor in his defence before Festus and Agrippa, he says "he compelled" the objects of his hatred "to blaspheme."* And we know that some of the bitterest and fiercest controversies of the early Church concerned the treatment of the *lapsi*, as they were called—those who had fallen away from their profession. One would gladly draw a veil over the weakness of these unhappy creatures, but to do so would make the picture of the time less faithful.

The first prisoner called upon for his answer by the Governor was the Elder. He, at all events, did not show the faintest sign of yielding.

The Governor addressed him: "You declared when you were last brought before me that you were a Christian. Do you still abide by that declaration?"

"I do," said the old man in an unfaltering voice.

"Are you willing to burn incense to the likeness of our sovereign lord Trajan?"

"I am not willing."

* It is only right to say that St. Paul's words do not actually prove that they did blaspheme. Professor Lumby's note is that they "seem to indicate that the attempt was repeated often, and needed to be so, for it was not in some cases successful." But Dean Alford says that the word "does not imply that any *did* blaspheme Christ."

"Not when I impose upon you the duty of thus proving that you are a loyal citizen?"

"Loyal I am, nor can any man prove that I have erred in this respect; but this I refuse."

"You refuse, then, to obey the commands of the Emperor himself? Listen."

The Governor produced a parchment, from which, after kissing it, he read these words: "I enjoin on my lieutenants and governors of provinces throughout the Empire that at their discretion they demand of all who may be accused of the Christian superstition that they burn incense to my likeness, by which act they will show their respect—not indeed to me, who am not better than other men—but to the majesty of the Empire."

He then went on: "In virtue of this authority, I command that you burn incense to the divine Trajan."

"If I must choose between two masters, I cannot doubt to prefer the Master who is in heaven. I refuse to burn incense."

"You are condemned of treason out of your own mouth," said the Governor.

"Nevertheless," returned the old man, resolute, like St. Paul, in asserting all lawful rights, "nevertheless, I appeal unto Cæsar."

"The appeal is allowed," said Pliny, "though I doubt whether it will much avail you."

The next prisoner called upon to answer was the old knight Antistius. The course of questions and answers was nearly the same as that which has been already described. The courage of Antistius faltered as little as that of his teacher and spiritual guide had done. From these two the infection of courage spread to the rest. Not one of the first batch of prisoners proved weak or faithless. They were, indeed, the most zealous, the most devoted, of the community—its chiefs and leaders, and they showed themselves worthy of their place.

But when the miscellaneous multitude that had been collected on the strength of the informations sent in to the Governor came to answer for themselves,



"'You should have sent for me,' he said, 'three days ago'"—*p.* 252.

all did not meet the test as well. Some had practically ceased to belong to the Church for many years; some had been excluded from it for conduct inconsistent with their profession; others had never belonged to it except in name—some passing fancy had attracted them, but they had shrunk back from the self-denial, the discipline, the strictly temperate rule of life which had been demanded of them. These had no difficulty in performing the acts enjoined upon them by the Governor. They threw the incense on the coals that were burning in the brazier with a careless gesture, repeating indifferently as they did so the formula, "Honour and worship to the divine Trajan and to all the gods who protect the city and Empire of Rome." They were almost as indifferent when they went on to satisfy the second test imposed upon them, and to curse the name of Christ. But these careless or reckless apostates—if they are to be so called—were but few in number. Many were reluctant to perform the idolatrous acts enjoined upon them; many shrank still more from the blasphemy which they were constrained to utter. The young Phrygian slave who has been described as accusing Verus to the Church was one of those whose courage failed them in this hour of trial. His was a weak nature, which curiously exemplified the famous saying in the "Odyssey"—that he who takes from a man his freedom, takes from him also half his manhood. Perhaps a finer temper would have disdained to play the part of the informer, even though this was done neither for revenge nor gain, but simply to serve (as was thought) the cause of the Church. Whatever the cause, he had a grievous fall, which Verus, of course, watched with a malignant pleasure. At first it seemed as if his courage would hold out. When he was called upon to answer, he stood erect and answered with a firm voice, though his face was deadly pale and his limbs could be seen to tremble.

"Are you of the people who call themselves Christians?" asked the Governor.

"I am," said the young man.

"You make that answer deliberately, and after reflection? Take time to consider."

The poor creature seemed to feel that reflection would hardly serve to confirm his resolution, and he answered at once, "I do."

"The accused has confessed his crime. Let him be removed and dealt with after the manner of slaves."

When he heard these words a terrible vision of the punishment which they implied flashed across the young man's vision. He had seen a fellow-slave crucified a few days before. It was the wretched Lycus, the cupbearer whose place he had taken on the memorable occasion of the banquet at which Verus was present. Sosicles, his master, had found that he had been guilty of a long career of thefts, and, enraged because the property stolen was lost beyond recovery, had pitilessly ordered him to the cross. From early dawn till late in the evening—when a feeling of weariness, rather than of compassion, had made Sosicles put an end to his sufferings—he had hung in torture. I would not describe those long hours of agony, even if I could. The young Phrygian had witnessed them. His master had compelled him to be present during the greater part of the day. "Go and see what your accursed folly may bring you to. It was, you tell me, your Master's fate—this Christus whom you are mad enough to worship; and it will be yours unless you take good heed. Judge for yourself how you would like it."

Sosicles spoke out of a certain regard—selfish, indeed, but still genuine—for the young man. He was diligent, sober, honest, and it would, he thought, be a grievous pity to lose him for some hare-brained fancy; and lose him he would to a certainty if this threatened movement against the Christians should come to anything.

It seemed now as if his worldly wisdom was not to fail of its effect. The terror of that thought, the horrors of the scene—every one of which memory seemed to bring up before him in a moment, and that with a hideous fidelity—overpowered him. "Hold, my lord," he cried, "I have reconsidered; I will obey your Excellency's command and offer the incense."

He took the pinch of incense from the plate and threw it on the fire, muttering as he did so the prescribed formula of words.

"You are wise in time," said the Governor; "you may stand down. Take heed that you do not repeat this folly, or it will not go so easily with you."

"May I speak, my lord?" said Verus, who saw with rage and disgust that his promised revenge was slipping out of his grasp.

"Speak on," said Pliny, who loathed the man, but could not refuse his request.

"Your lordship is aware that many who do not refuse to burn incense are unwilling to curse the name of their Master, as they call Him. I submit that the more effectual test should be applied to the accused."

"Let it be so," said the Governor.

One of the clerks of the court read out a formula which the wretched young man was to repeat after him. He began—

"I, having been accused of impiety and of neglect of the ancient gods, and of following after strange superstitions, hereby curse as a malefactor and deceiver——"

He had gone so far, and had now come to the holy name. Then he halted. In an agony of fear and doubt he looked round the court. All eyes were upon him. Stern reproach was in the looks of those who had witnessed their confession and had not failed. No face wore a sterner regard than that of Rhoda. It was pale and wasted; for the shock of the torture, though this had not been carried to any grievous extent, had sorely tried her sensitive frame. But this gave a more terrible fierceness to the fire of righteous indignation which seemed almost literally to blaze from her eyes. As the young Phrygian shrank from this scorching gaze, he met the gentle, pitying, appealing look of Cleoné. The girl was not one of those who are insensible to fear. Rhoda was an enthusiast who, as we sometimes read of martyrs of the more heroic mould, would have found a positive rapture of pleasure in the pain endured for conscience' sake. Cleoné was a delicate, sensitive woman, who had a natural shrinking from pain, but yet could nerve

herself to bear it. She could sympathise with the poor young Phrygian's dread. Though she had never seen a sufferer on the cross, her vivid imagination helped her to realise its agony, and she pitied more than she abhorred the weakness which made him shrink from it. That look of pity saved him.

"Ah!" he thought to himself, "that was the way in which the Master looked at Peter when he had denied Him. I have denied Him, too; but Peter found a place of repentance, and so may I."

He turned boldly to the Governor. "No! I will not curse Him who has blessed me so often. I have sinned grievously in burning incense to that idol" —and he pointed as he spoke to the image of the Emperor—"but I will not add to my sin the burden of this intolerable iniquity."

"Ah!" whispered Tacitus to the Governor, "I have always heard that the genuine Christian stops short at this."

"Let the law have its course with the accused," said the Governor.

"Ah! my friend," said Verus to himself in a savage whisper, "you will not go interfering again with a gentleman's amusements."

"A curse on the obstinate villain!" muttered Sosicles, his master; "there go twenty-five minæ as good as lost, except I can get some compensation out of the Government. What business is it of theirs what the man believes? He belongs to me."

The young Phrygian's repentance seemed to give new boldness to all that remained to be examined. There were no more cases of apostasy.

The result of the day's proceedings was the condemnation of a crowd so numerous that the Governor was fairly staggered by the difficulty of having to deal with it. A few who could plead Roman citizenship were reserved for the judgment of the Emperor; but there remained many—both free persons and slaves—with whom it was his own duty to deal. To execute them all would be to order something like a massacre. Such severity might defeat its own object, for it might cause a reaction in favour of the Christians. Pliny's caution, not to speak of his humanity, made him shrink from incurring such a risk. He resolved to consult the Emperor by letter on the course which he ought to pursue. Till the answer should arrive, the condemned were to be shut in prison. The common gaol of Nicæa was not large enough to receive so many inmates, and many of the prisoners had to be sent to private houses, whose owners were to be held responsible for their safe custody. Rhoda and Cleoné were among those who were thus disposed of. The Governor was too humane and right-feeling to allow two young women so carefully nurtured to be exposed to the horrors of a gaol. They were committed to the care of Lucilius, whom the reader will remember to have been one of the conspirators who set on foot the movement against the Christians. The man, though hard and greedy for money, had a fair character for respectability; and his wife, as the Governor happened to know, was an amiable woman—much too good for her miserly husband.

CHAPTER XI.—THE HOUSE OF LUCILIUS.

IT was a house of trouble into which the two sisters were thus brought. The only child of Lucilius was prostrated with a fever which had for some time been epidemic in Nicæa. He was a promising lad of sixteen, whose fine, generous temper curiously contrasted with the mean and ignoble character of his father. For the last year or so, indeed—since he had begun to be aware of what the outside world thought about the man whom as a son he was bound to respect—this contrast had troubled him much; and he had felt acutely the unhappiness of his home. His mother—sweet-tempered and gentle as she was, and carrying wifely obedience to the very verge of what duty enjoined—had a conscience that would not allow her to see wrong done without a protest. She would put up with any privation for herself; but to see her child stinted in what was necessary for his health, or the household slaves starved or half-poisoned with unwholesome food, was a thing that she could not endure in silence. Painful scenes became, in consequence, more and more frequent in the family. Lucilius's miserly habits grew upon him, as such habits will grow; and the gentle protests of his wife were met with furious anger, sometimes even with actual violence. These experiences were nothing less than agony to the son's sensitive temper. He loved his mother with his whole heart; he would fain have loved his father. In the old days, before the ruling passion had so mastered the man's being, his child was the one thing for which he cared; and even now the feeling was not wholly lost. If the miser had a soft spot in his heart—one not quite crusted over with the hardness of avarice—it was in his regard for his only child. Now and then he would show some tenderness for the boy; once or twice, by some tremendous effort of the will, he would even loosen his purse-strings to buy something that would please him. It was curiously characteristic of the man's ruling vice that he found it easier to purchase for him some useless ornament than to relax the niggardly rules of his household expenditure. He would give the lad a costly jewel, and yet allow him to pine for the want of good and sufficient food. Possibly this kind of gift gratified his vanity; it may be—for there are no depths of meanness to which avarice will not descend—he could not help remembering that the good food was a perishable commodity, while the jewel represented a permanent value, and, in fact, was only property in another shape.

It can easily be imagined that these causes told, directly and indirectly, upon a constitution that had never been very strong, and that the fever found in the younger Lucilius a victim dangerously ready to succumb to its attack. The early symptoms of the disease had not passed unnoticed by the mother, and she had implored her husband to call in at once the assistance of a physician. Of course he refused. He had trained himself not to believe in the existence of anything that necessitated the expenditure of money, and he wilfully shut his eyes to indications which were manifest enough to everyone else. In two or three days' time this self-deception ceased to be possible. The

father had refused to notice—though not, we may believe, without some stifled misgivings—the flushed cheeks, the frequent cough, and the failing appetite; but when the lad could not rise from his bed, and when the ravings of delirium were heard outside the door of the boy's chamber, he could not ignore any longer the presence of disease. Then the physician was sent for in hot haste.

Dioscorides was a Greek who claimed to belong to what may be called the physician caste of the ancient world, the Asclepiads, who traced their descent to Æsculapius, the god of healing, himself. For nearly fifty years he had had the principal practice of Nicæa; his experience was vast, his skill and readiness of resource never failed him. It was these—rather than any traditionary secrets of methods and remedies, such as popular report credited him with—that made him extraordinarily successful. He was an old man, whose face seemed to show at once much firmness and much benevolence. To his patients he was kindness and gentleness itself. He neglected nothing that could please, or even humour them. A modern practitioner of the healing art would perhaps smile at the extraordinary care with which he would prepare himself for a visit to a patient. His long white hair was always carefully combed and delicately perfumed; his robes were beautifully clean. "We must please," he would say, "a sick man's senses as much as we can. Nothing ought to be neglected that can minister to that end."

But while he was gentle, he was firm when firmness was needed. Pretences of every kind met with no sort of mercy from him. If a fine lady, whose only real malady was indolence, sent for him, she was sure to hear the truth without any attempt at disguise. He was no fashionable physician, making a profit out of the whims and fancies of idleness and luxury. "You work too little; you eat and drink too much," was the homely formula with which he described the ailments of these imaginary invalids. If they dismissed him, as they were apt to do in the first annoyance of hearing an unwelcome truth, he accepted the dismissal with a smile. His practice was too large and lucrative to make him care for the loss of this or that patient; and he knew perfectly well that, when any serious cause occurred, he would be sent for again.

Lucilius, whose character and habits were perfectly well known to him, was, of course, not going to escape without hearing some truth from his lips.



"'You,' she cried, 'you offer sacrifice!'"—*p.* 253.

"You should have sent for me," he said, "three days ago."

"I did not think that there was any need," said the father in a faltering voice. His conscience had begun to prick him; and he knew, too, that all disguises would be useless with the clear-sighted, plain-speaking Dioscorides.

"Nonsense, man!" answered the physician sharply. "You can see, you can hear! You must have heard the lad cough; you must have seen him wasting before your eyes! Don't tell me you didn't think there was any need. The truth is that you shut your eyes and ears because you were afraid of the fees. Now I am very much afraid that it is too late!"

"Oh! sir, don't say so," cried the wretched man, whose heart, hardened as it was with the most deadening of all vices, was touched by the danger of his son

—"don't say so. I will spare nothing; save him, and you shall name your own fee."

"Not all the gold in the world," returned the physician, "can purchase the three days that have been lost; but I will do all I can for the lad and his mother. Only the gods in heaven know," he added in a half-audible aside, "how such a woman came to marry such a mean hound—only there is no knowing the follies of women—and how such a father came to have such a son." He went on, turning to Lucilius, "The only chance for the boy now is the best of nursing. His mother is not strong enough; besides, she is too anxious. As a rule I don't believe in mothers' nursing; they are apt to lose their heads. And hired nursing is seldom much good either," went on the old man, talking to himself; "just what's in the letter of the bond, and no more;* must have their so many hours' rest, and so forth; all for themselves and nothing for the patient. Of course there are exceptions, but I can't think of anyone who is available just at this moment. Now, if you could get one of those two young women, Rhoda or Cleoné, or both of them—for it will be more than one can well manage—it would be perfect; they would do the thing for love, and yet not be too anxious. But then they have been mixed up in this foolish business of the Christians, and there is no getting at them, I suppose."

"By good fortune, sir," Lucilius interrupted at this moment, "the two young women are to be put in my keeping, pending the arrival of the Emperor's letter."

"Thank the gods for your good fortune," cried the old physician in his delight; "if anything can save the lad, it will be their nursing. I have had some opportunities for observing it, and it is simply perfect. When do they come?"

"I had notice that they would be delivered into my hands at noon," answered Lucilius.

"That will give me time," said the physician, "to visit two or three other patients. I will return and give them my instructions; and, mind, in case I should not see you again, they must have everything they ask for."

This, then, was the state of things which the two prisoners found on their arrival at the house of Lucilius. They threw themselves into the duty which they found so strangely ready to their hand with wonderful energy, though Rhoda was more fit to be nursed than to nurse. With a touching humility and sacrifice of personal feeling, the mother gave up her charge into their hands. To be allowed to help, to do something for the darling of her heart, was all that she asked. Even this consolation she was ready to give up if she thought that the service it was such a delight to render was better given by another.

But when all their efforts seemed unavailing, when the lad grew weaker every day, and the delirium left fewer and fewer lucid intervals, the behaviour of the mother underwent a curious change—all the more curious when it was contrasted with the altered demeanour of her husband. Something had found its way at last to the cold heart of the miser; disappointed ambition had something to do with it. He had wanted to give his family such rank as could be acquired by wealth, and wealth had about as much power in Bithynia in the days of Trajan as it has in London in the days of Victoria. But what if the son for whom he was saving—and he constantly salved his conscience for mean or unprincipled acts by repeating to himself that all his savings were for his son—what if this son should die? Curiously mixed up with this meaner motive was a genuine love for his child. For the time, at least, the man's hard nature was broken through. His purse was opened now without reluctance to purchase anything that the sick lad could need. He would wait with humble patience outside the door of the sick-chamber for the latest news. The sisters naturally thought that this manifest softening of the heart would have brought him nearer to his wife; but they were astonished to see that the woman, for all the gentleness of her nature, shrank more and more from him, and seemed to feel no comfort in his sympathy, and not to be touched by his manifest grief. Rhoda was the unwilling witness of a painful scene in which this growing alienation seemed to culminate. Made desperate by the increasing peril which threatened his son's life—and, indeed, Dioscorides himself, the most hopeful as he was the most skilful of his profession, had begun to give up hope—the wretched man turned, by way of a last resource, to the help of heavenly powers. He tried to persuade himself that it might not be altogether unavailing; he could anyhow believe that it would do no harm to appeal to it. This idea he communicated to his wife in the presence of the elder of the two sisters. The physician was paying one of his visits, and Cleoné was in the room to hear his instructions as to what was to be done till he should come again. Lucilius and his wife, with Rhoda, were in an adjoining chamber.

"Shall we offer a sacrifice for our poor boy?" he asked.

Then the gentle woman's wrath fairly blazed out. Rhoda watched the explosion with such astonishment as one might feel were a lamb to show the ferocity of a tiger.

"You," she cried, "you offer sacrifice! Will the righteous gods listen to you? Will you even dare to touch their altars with your murderous hands? This is their judgment upon you. I knew that it would come sooner or later. I had hoped that it would not be till I had got my release from the horrible bond that ties me to you. But the gods do not suffer me to escape, for I, too, am guilty. And now the stroke has fallen on you and on me!"

A terrible fascination seemed to keep the girl's eyes fixed on the face of Lucilius as the woman, who seemed positively transfigured by her rage, poured out this stream of reproaches on him. At first it expressed keen astonishment, then a dreadful look of fear seemed to creep over it. Once and again he opened his lips, as if he would have spoken, but no sound came forth from them.

"Be silent—be silent," at last he managed to utter, and so turned and staggered out of the room.

(To be continued.)

* To avoid misconception, I must remind my readers that the old physician is speaking of paid nurses as they were in Bithynia some seventeen centuries ago, but not as we may hope they are in England after all that has been done by Miss Nightingale and others to raise the profession of nursing.

THIRSTING FOR GOD.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.

"My soul is athirst for God."—PSALM xlii. 2.

THERE are many curious questions floating about the world, which no doubt from time to time have highly interested you. And there will be other such which will interest you also; but there is one very curious question, which I dare say you never troubled yourselves about at all, although it is of the highest interest to you, and that practical interest too. That question is, "*What is my real self?*"

Now that is a question which you will never be able fully to answer. Some trashy philosopher may content himself by telling you that you are a scrap of protoplasm—perhaps a millionth part as much as would rest on the point of a needle. But we may leave him and his protoplasm for the present, and say at once that what is the secret of your real self is known to God alone—and moreover that with Him that secret will rest for ever.

And yet it is of the highest possible practical use that you should think into this subject of your real self, and get to know as much of it as you can—at any rate, that you should believe and realise that you have a real "self." It is not the mouth with which you eat, or the hands with which you touch, or the ears with which you hear—perhaps you come a little nearer to it when you say, "Is it the brain with which I think?" or yet nearer, if you ask, is it that with which I love and hate—for the want of a better word, what we call "the heart"—and yet we are not at it even now. What we want to get at is what the Romans called the "ego"—the "I"—who am I?—what is my very "self"?

Now, I cannot tell you what is your very "self." I do not know what is my very self. But I want you to believe and to feel, as I feel, that you have a very "self," which stands alone—distinct from all other "selves." It is your very entity—your being—what may make use of your eyes and hands and ears, but what is distinct from them, and would exist even if you had not these at all. I talk of you as "he" or "she," *i.e.*, as I know you in the outer world, but you must realise yourself—each one of you for himself or herself—as an "I" in a way that no one else can know you—none but God.

Do not suppose that I am going to try and dabble in philosophy or speculation, and that therefore this sermon has nothing to say to you. It is with the earnest hope of doing you and myself too some practical good—good in high and subtle spiritual regions, no doubt, but in practical, homely, work-a-day regions too, that I bring this subject before you at all.

1. What is it that we want to get at?
2. Why do we want to get at it?
3. What will come of our getting at it?
4. What are we to do when we get at it?

(1.) What we want to get at, or to get at as nearly as we can, is the knowledge of what our real self is; or, to pitch it lower, the feeling that we have a real self. I want to sit alone with no one near me—to shut my eyes—to retreat inward from all earthly relationship and interest—from sight, and touch, and sound—inward from everything that has to do with sense at all, and realise that I have a "being," a God-given being, which may indeed do this and that, become this or that; but which, for my present purpose, I look at only as a "being"—I, irrespective of everything and everyone else that God has made, am a Being. The more lone and solitary you can feel, the better.

Perhaps you smile, and say, "You know it well enough," yet try and do intently what I am telling you, and you shall find how little you know about it; you will find yourself, if you are doing it honestly, for the first time in a region, an atmosphere quite different from any you have breathed when you connected yourself with any person or anything of earth; you have come as near, perhaps, to the conception of "spirit," of the origin of life, as you can; you have made the nearest approach that was possible to pure spirit intercourse with God, *i.e.*, intercourse without the help of the Holy Ghost.

But if you will try honestly, intently, and seek the help of the Holy Spirit, you will find that gradually you will be able to attain more and more to the knowledge of the awful mystery, that, even stripped of all relationship to human life, you exist—a being, and a being in relationship with God.

I only want you to realise, "I have a very self"; I don't want you to try and understand, only to realise; and that realisation, simple as it seems, if you can feel it in its awfulness, will change the whole tenor of your life if you be not God's; and if you be God's, will bring you closer to Him than ever you were before. Unless, indeed—which is too horrible to suppose—you attained to this intense realisation of your being, and then deliberately apostatised with it from God, and handed it over into communion with and obedience to the devil.

Now, then—

(2.) Why is it that I want to get at this intense consciousness that I have a "being" far back, behind all earthly relationships and things, a very "self," a something which asserts itself dimly, and sometimes perhaps even more than dimly, whether I pursue an inquiry about it or no; a "something" which, though I know it not, if I think over the matter, is that which was unsatisfied, and had cravings

and longings, even after all earthly desires had been fulfilled.

I want you to feel that you have an inmost self, that you may give it to God—distinctly, specifically give it to God. How can you give it to Him, unless you have realised its existence, and know that you have it to give?

I feel that I have that behind all earthly relationships and interests which exists, which is "myself," and I want that to be God's. I feel that I have that which must hunger and thirst and crave; for, after I have had all of earth, I do hunger and thirst and crave. And I want to know what is that hungering and thirsting and craving, and why and how all this can be met? Ah! it is my innermost, far-back, real self, and I want it to be God's. I want Thee, O God, to have whatever is my real self, and I want to believe in a real self in order that Thou mayest have it.

We feel sadly how we are continually slipping into the perfunctory, the unreal, the mere routine, the name—how we are having to do with "the things of God," and not with "God himself." We are continually dropping down into being creatures of religious habits; our selves are not in our acts. I want to live in the realisation of having a real living "self," living far back behind these *things* of God, using these things as expressive acts, as outcomes of its life, but living its very "self" before God and with God.

Such of us as allow ourselves to think, realise the craving of a life within us: it is ourself—our "self" pure and simple, as considered without reference to sin, or anything else, craving a union with life; our spirit, our very "self," making itself heard and craving union with the Divine Spirit.

And we feel that nothing, nothing here, will satisfy the real "I," but God himself; all outer things, all outer persons are in this view mere excrescences; the man who realises that he has this "being," this self, is insatiable; he wants God, he is hungry and thirsty for God, he cannot do without God. He must bring this "self" up close to God. He says sometimes, almost in an agony of mind, "O God, I cannot get at it. What is it? What am I? What is it that makes 'myself'? Whatever it is, oh take it, take it! Dost Thou call it 'my soul,' then 'my soul' is athirst for God, for the living God. Dost Thou call it 'my heart,' then I want to love Thee according to Thy first great commandment, with 'all my heart, and with all my strength.'"

(3.) Next. What will come of my getting at this conception and consciousness of a very "self," so far as this can be done? I answer, the whole power of practical spiritual life will flow out of it. This attainment which you are perhaps inclined to think so transcendental, so visionary, will make you a good father and friend, and touch you for good in every relationship of life; your inner self will come out for being close with God, and will work through your affections and thoughts, and your mouth and eyes and ears and your mental and moral and physical being. Your inner God-pervaded "self" will shine through the lantern of your mind and body as a light does through a glass. For you shall have power externally for power internal. Close self-life with God will never tolerate close self-life with sin. A man will hate and flee the baseness, the lie, the lust that he has realised clinging to his very self; and he cannot bear the idea of bringing it into his close self union with his God.

Another benefit that you will get is the power to rightly place all human love, all human things. Much of the bitterness of life's disappointments and bereavements proceeds from the ill placing of right things. Money is ill placed in our estimation—the enthusiasm of earthly love—the objects of life. We have that which cannot be fed on this food; it is this real "self" which sooner or later will assert itself, and which God alone (by His own everlasting construction of all things) can feed, quenching its thirst, and giving it rest.

Yes! this will come of this true realisation of our real "self:" we shall live an inner life with God, we shall be able to gather ourselves in from the world, we shall be able to let ourselves out to God, we shall get up into an atmosphere above our difficulties which may indeed remain still the same; but, pain-stricken, bankrupt, disappointed, bereaved, with a threadbare coat and an unbuttered crust myself, I, my real self, may be with God. I have found out that I have a "self" which these things cannot touch, and it is with God.

How sure will you be of your reality, if you can work up into the idea of your naked self pure and simple, and know that it lives with God! Your very agonies of effort to get at this, and to keep it, and not to allow these things which would accrete to it, and stick to it, to do so, will be your witness that you know Him that is a Spirit, and are worshipping Him and are His in spirit and in truth.

And there will be nothing between you and God in death. That is the time when, if men are conscious, they waken up to the realisation of the possession of a "self" with which "things" and "people" have nothing to do, and yet they find those things and people between themselves and God, *i.e.*, between their very, very self and God.

Now, now is the time to gather your whole being in to Him; to sow the seed which will be a harvest of calm communion in the last sickness, in the dying hour.

Moreover, see the comfort from the witness that you are and must be true; it comes from the consciousness that you can go no farther back than you are doing; you are holding nothing back from God; the very root of your "being"—your very "self"—you are giving to Him

You can say, when all of the body and outer life falls off, "God will have—for He has had—my real 'self.'"

You can always dwell with the consciousness of

your own imperishableness, and there will be stability and comfort for you amid all the changes and chances and discomforts and perishings of this mortal life.

It will be "yourself" and God's self, irrespective of all circumstances and things.

We sometimes long for elevation, something to lift us up. Here it is, in the absolute certainty that our very self is God's; and who, if we might so speak, is so "deserving" of our innermost being as He who gave the very innermost of Himself, the Son who lay in the bosom of the Father, and who only could declare Him—gave Him up freely for us all?

And I will tell you two other benefits which you will have. You will have an ever-present and ready retreating-place of life and thought. Where can your very inner self retreat to here? How can you find rest when you do not know what it is that is seeking rest, and where only the one suited to it can be found? Myself—my God—myself made one with Christ; and therefore only acceptable to God, and able to abide with God—there with God my real self can live and think.

And all around will assume their true position. What are "things" to my real self, whether in name or in fact? What have they to do with what is practically this unclothed spirit and its spirit life? These have to do with me in my lower relationships on earth; but what I am wanting to do is to show you that there is a life higher than earth's; that you have an innermost which earth cannot touch, and with which I want you to live to God.

(4.) Now, lastly, what are we to do?

These are the things which you ought to do.

You are not to be content with any merely outward religion whatever. It may be faultless in its regularity and beauty, but you yourself may not tarry in it.

You must have seasons of thought, cultivating the sense of your intense individuality, and its relationship to God. Do not be afraid; this is one of the many things which you may do through Christ which strengtheneth you—you may "appear before God."

Bring your individuality, your very "self," close up to God's. He is your Father. Christ says He is the Way; as no one cometh unto the Father but by Him, so by Him may they freely come. To think of doing this would be a fearful thought if there were no Christ; but now it is not only possible, but necessary—close up to the Father should be the very self of the child.

Seek the pervading of the inner self by the Holy Ghost: if He come to you, you will be able to do all. Don't say for a moment, "Such knowledge is too high for me; I cannot attain unto it." You can, if you will; and if you have never known your real "selves" up to to-day, and attain to this knowledge now, you will be different men from what you have ever been before.

There will be nothing between you and God to hinder His action on you; it will be the action of Being upon "pure being," without the intervention, and perhaps obstruction, of faculties at all, which may be in themselves but miserably dull; it will be the nearest approach to union with God which can be made on earth.

I have put you to-day in the way of realising your selfdom; and in doing so, of attaining the nearest possible communion with God; ay, and of attaining the greatest possible holiness in yourselves and usefulness to your fellow-men: for he who comes in the very "self" close to God will catch the very image of God, and try to be like God; and as God is good and doeth good, so will he be good and do good too.

The "self" that comes out from the presence of God will be like God's own self—a self for others: and to this "self" selfishness will gradually become unknown.

AWAY TO THE HILLS.

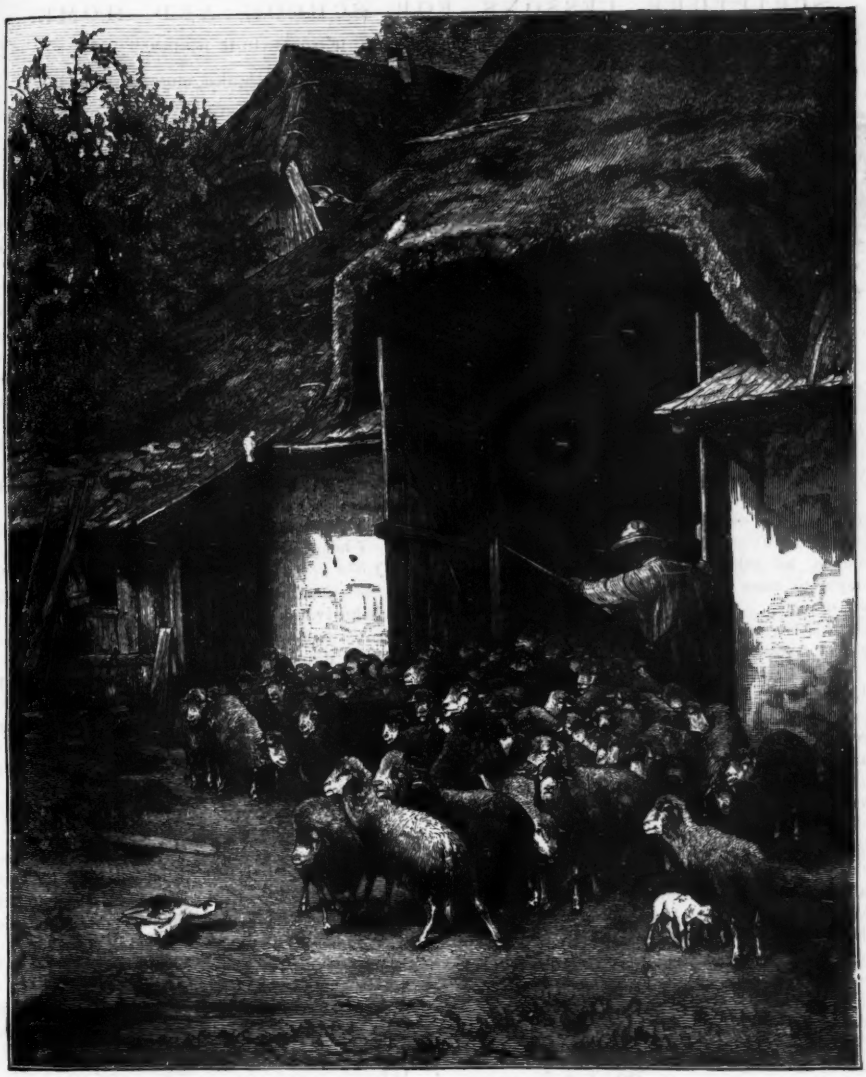
A SONG OF THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP.

1

IN the west the stars are dying, and the dusky night is flying
Fast before the coruscating arrows of the archer, Dawn:
On the sward the dew lies pearly, and his flock doth Colin early,
Flinging wide the ponderous barn-doors, summon to the upland lawn.

2.

Huddling on the threshold thickly, frisking, leaping, bleating quickly,
Rams and ewes and tender lambkins, forth into the light they fare:
From the roof the pigeon greets them, but the surly gander meets them,
Grudging them the thymy pastures, wishful with a hiss to scare.



"Flinging wide the ponderous barn-doors."—*p.* 256.

3.

Skyward far the lav'rock soaring sweetest orisons is pouring
For the blissful benediction of the calm and cloudless day:
Haste, then, shepherd, stay no longer, rest has made your weanlings stronger,
Morning breaks, the sun arises! To the hills away! away!

4.

So, methinks, when Time is ended, fade its dreary shadows, blended
In the new and living splendours of our Father's Home in light;
Christ our Shepherd, kind, protecting, shall bring forth His flock, directing
To the rich and pleasant pastures of the everlasting Height.

JOHN H. DAVIES, M.A.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.—FEBRUARY 10 TO MARCH 10, 1889.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10.—SATAN CONQUERED.

To read—St. Mark v. 1—20. *Golden Text—Verse* 19.

THE POWER OF SATAN. (1—10.) Pass over now to east side of Lake of Galilee. Christ just shown His power over nature. Had been great storm in night—stilled by Christ's power. (iv. 41.) He and disciples come into country of Gadarenes—place abounding in rocks—met by a man with unclean spirit. Notice—

(*a*) *His body*—diseased, naked (St. Luke viii. 27)—fierce.

(*b*) *His mind*—afflicted with evil spirits.

(*c*) *His soul*—knew Christ; called Him by name. Worshipped Christ—believing in His power (James ii. 19)—prayed to Christ not to torment him—conscious of his own sin.

(*d*) *His condition*—homeless, dwelling in tombs—friendless, all others afraid of him—helpless, all attempts to tame him had failed—miserable, true object of pity.

All this the result of Satan's influence—in some way had "possessed" the man—need not ask how, the fact bad enough.

II. THE POWER OF CHRIST. (11—20.) Had Himself met the devil in the wilderness, been tempted, had overcome. Therefore able to feel for others under Satan's power. (Heb. ii. 18.) What did He do?

(*a*) *Spake* with authority—"Come out of the man."

(*b*) *Acted* with power—the devils came out.

(*c*) *Diverted* the devils into the herd of swine.

Notice the effects of this on two sets of people.

(*a*) *The Gadarenes.* Afraid of Christ, conscious of sin and His power of punishing, asked Him to depart.

(*b*) *The man healed.* At once cured in body, is clothed, respectable; cured in mind, is calm, quiet, natural. Cured in soul, is eager to follow Christ but is not allowed to do so. What is he to do?

Go home to his friends—show his changed life.

Tell of Christ—bring others to Him.

III. LESSONS. This miracle a parable of man's state and his cure.

(*a*) *Possessed by the devil.* Under the bondage of sin—*e.g.*, temper, lust, drink, sloth, bad habits. Gets into sad condition.

Body—sickly, weak, diseased.

Mind—debased, cares not for higher things. (Phil. iii. 19.)

Soul—depraved—at enmity with God. (Rom. viii. 7.)

Is miserable, helpless. cannot cure himself. (Hos. xiii. 9.)

(*b*) *Cured by Christ.* Must come to Christ as this man did. (St. Matt. xi. 28.)

Must pray to Christ—cast himself on His mercy.

When pardoned, healed, must work for Christ—tell others of Him.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17.—THE TIMID WOMAN'S TOUCH.

To read—St. Mark v. 25—34. *Golden Text—Verse* 36.

I. THE WOMAN'S NEED. (25—28.) Once more Christ crosses the lake of Galilee—Gadarenes had asked Him to depart—He had done so, and returns to Capernaum, where was always welcome. There He found work waiting for Him—Jairus, ruler of the synagogue, in trouble because his little girl ill. Jesus starts for his house. Great crowd follow—people throng round Christ—sometimes so near as to touch Him. He does not mind that, but presently He feels a touch He does notice. Whose was it? A woman—her name unknown, but we can see—

(*a*) *She was sick*—been so for twelve long years—chronic sufferer.

(*b*) *She was rich*—been able to try one doctor after another.

(*c*) *She was getting worse*—her case becoming hopeless. What could she do?

(*d*) *She heard of Christ*—perhaps from the nobleman at Capernaum whose son had been healed. (St. John iv. 53.)

(*e*) *She came to Christ.* Her state made her so eager she did not mind the crowd.

(*f*) *She tried Christ*—touched the "fringe" of His garment (Num. xv. 37), and was made whole.

II. THE POWER OF CHRIST. (29—34.) Notice how she was healed.

(*a*) *Immediately.* The moment she touched she was made whole.

(*b*) *Completely.* No traces of her sickness left.

Now notice what Christ felt, did, and said.

(*a*) *He knew her.* Knew of her sickness, modesty, retirement. Yet asked who touched Him. Why?

(*b*) *He tested her.* She must not be a secret disciple—she must come and confess Him openly before men. So she did. What followed?

(*c*) *He blessed her.* Her body is healed.

Her soul receives blessing of peace.

III. LESSONS. 1. *Faith.* See on one side the woman's sickness—on the other Christ's almighty power. What were the connecting links?

(*a*) The woman's faith; brought her to Christ.

(*b*) The woman's touch, the result of faith.

Therefore she was blessed and made whole.

Such faith must be ours too. Is there anyone not diseased with sin? For ten, twelve, fourteen, twenty years "whole head sick." (Isa. i. 5.) May have heard of Christ; but no use unless go to Him—tell Him the tale—touch Him by faith, lay hold of something outside ourselves, accept His promises of pardon. "Your sins will I remember no more."

2. *Confession.* She wanted to keep hid, but not allowed. So also Nicodemus came by night. (St. John iii. 2.) But Christ expects all to confess Him before men—to take up cross boldly and follow Him.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24.—THE GREAT TEACHER AND HIS TWELVE DISCIPLES.

To read—St. Mark vi. 1—13. *Golden Text—ver.* 12.

I. THE GREAT TEACHER. (1—6.) Jesus revisits His old home. There had spent first thirty years of His life. (St. Luke ii. 51.) But there had been rejected on His first visit after His baptism. (St. Luke iv. 29.) Now goes again; probably stays at old home with His mother and brethren. On week-days would revisit old friends—on Sabbath Day goes to the village synagogue. What did He do there?

(*a*) Worshipped God with prayers and psalms.

(*b*) Read the lessons when asked by the ruler.

(*c*) Taught and explained the Scriptures. (See Acts xiii. 15.)

What effect did this have on the congregation?—

Joy to His mother, who had kept remembrance of the angel's message.

Astonishment to those who only knew Him as a carpenter.

Offence to those who despised His lowly origin.

And so they rejected His message!

How did Christ take their rejection? With calm dignity; quotes familiar proverb—turns away to other villages—heals few sick, but does no mighty work because of their unbelief. Christ the Lord with them, but they regarded Him not.

LESSONS. We too hear Christ's words each Sabbath Day. How do we receive them? as the words of man, or the voice of God? "Take heed how ye hear."

II. THE TWELVE DISCIPLES. (7—13.) Called by Christ Himself to begin their work—chosen out from all the disciples (*learners*) (Acts i. 21)—to be Apostles (*missionaries*), sent out for special work among villages of Galilee. Sent out in pairs, for mutual comfort, counsel, and help. Notice their work—

(*a*) *To preach* Gospel or good news of Christ's Kingdom. He, the King, had come: men must repent of sin if would have Christ's pardon.

(*b*) *To work miracles* as proof of their mission; even the evil spirits would be subject to them.

(*c*) *To be simple.* To take no food—Eastern hospitality never failing. To take smallest amount of clothing wanted for their absolute needs. To stay in one place in each village—not gossiping from house to house or seeking more comfortable quarters.

(*d*) *To take a high tone.* Were God's messengers; if people rejected them would be rejecting God.

Sodom and Gomorrha had no warning to repent.

These cities now have warning.

Therefore, if not repentant, their punishment worse.

Started in this order. (*See* St. Matt. x. 1—4.)

Peter (impetuous) and Andrew (meditative).

James and John (brothers in nature and grace).

Philip and Bartholomew (of the same village).

Thomas (doubter) and Matthew (strong in faith).

James and Thaddæus (kinsmen of Christ).

Simon and Judas (the traitor).

What a blessed work to preach Christ's Gospel!

But one, though a preacher, became a castaway.

LESSON. "Be not high-minded, but fear."

MARCH 3.—JESUS THE MESSIAH.

To read St. Mark viii. 27—*ix.* 1. *Golden Text—ver.* 34.

I. ST. PETER'S CONFESSION. (27—33.) Christ now with disciples left the villages on Sea of Galilee—turned north through coast and villages of Cæsarea Philippi. (See map of Palestine.) Beautiful country, watered by springs of River Jordan, Mount Hermon in the distance. As they went He seized the opportunity for quiet intercourse with disciples. They had been with Him two years—had left Him for a time to do missionary work by themselves—had had opportunities of hearing what people thought of Him and His work. So He asks what is general opinion of Him. What is the answer?

Some (*e.g.*, Herod) thought He was John the Baptist risen from the dead. (St. Matt. xiv. 2.)

Some thought Him Elijah come back from heaven. (2 Kings ii. 11.)

Some thought Him "one of the prophets."

None realised that He was the promised Messiah. Why not?

(*a*) They expected a great prince—not a simple peasant.

(*b*) They expected one who should deliver them from the Romans.

So Christ tested the faith of His disciples. Whom do *they* think Him?

St. Peter acts as spokesman. He is the Christ—the Anointed One of God.

(*a*) When was Christ anointed? At His baptism. (St. Matt. iii. 17.)

(*b*) With what was He anointed? The Holy Ghost and power. (Acts x. 38.)

(*c*) Why? As Prophet, Priest, and King.

But this is not to be made public at present. He must first suffer.

Men will reject—persecute—kill Him.

But after three days He will rise again.

How did St. Peter take this news?

(*a*) He refused to believe it.

(*b*) He tried to persuade Christ it would not be. (St. Matt. xvi. 22.)

Christ sternly rebuked him. Uses same words to him as to Satan at the temptation. (St. Matt. iv. 10.)

How was St. Peter wrong?

(*a*) *Misunderstanding* nature of Christ's mission.

(*b*) *Tempting* Christ to turn aside from His duty.

So Christ spoke to the disciples and all the people very plainly—as follows—

II. CHRIST'S REQUIREMENTS. (viii. 34—ix. i.) Of what does the Christian life consist?

(*a*) *Self-denial* — giving up things lawful and pleasant for Christ's sake; *e.g.*, Disciples left their homes and all. (St. Matt. iv. 20.)

(*b*) *Cross-bearing*—doing unpleasant things cheerfully and patiently; *e.g.*, St. Paul beaten, stoned, etc. (2 Cor. xi. 25.)

Three inducements offered by Christ.

1. Loss of earthly life for His sake ensures eternal life; *e.g.*, St. Stephen the first Martyr. (Acts vii. 55.)

2. This world nothing in comparison with value of the soul; *e.g.*, Judas got his money, went to perdition.

3. Open confession of Christ now ensures His

acknowledgment hereafter. Some of them would soon see a foretaste of Christ's glory.

LESSON. Christ's requirements still the same. No cross—no crown. Can we bear them?

MARCH 10.—THE CHILD-LIKE SPIRIT.

To read—St. Mark ix. 33—45. *Golden Text—St. Mark x.* 15.

I. HUMILITY. (33—37.) Disciples been hearing about Christ's Kingdom; three of them seen partial glory in Transfiguration. (ix. 2.) So begin discussing who shall be greatest in this new Kingdom.

What makes people great in this world?

(*a*) *Birth*—heir to kingdom or great estate.

(*b*) *Wealth*—giving command over others.

(*c*) *Intellect*—able to gain people's admiration, etc.

But in Christ's Kingdom just the opposite. True greatness not in commanding, but serving—being willing to take lowest place. Example—a little child. (Perhaps one of St. Peter's, being at his house.) What are the qualities of a child?

(*a*) *Obedience.* Child obeys naturally — easily trained to do as he is told.

(*b*) *Meekness.* Child esteems elders better than himself.

(*c*) *Sympathy.* Child easily moved by others' pleasure or pain.

Therefore children are to be—

Copied in their humility.

Received as having nature of Christ.

II. FORBEARANCE. (38—41.) See what belonging to Christ can do.

(*a*) Enable this man to work miracles.

(*b*) Teach kindly acts of mercy. (ver. 41.)

(*c*) Obtain Christ's approval and reward.

Many ways of doing Christ's service. Same spirit of love to Him animates all. Therefore must bear with all who are Christ's, though they follow not with us.

III. OFFENCES. (42—45.) To offend is to cause anyone to stumble, *i.e.*, sin. How is this done?

(*a*) *Bad example; e.g.*, Israelites copying idolatrous heathen. (Judges ii. 12.)

(*b*) *Desire to please*; *e.g.*, Solomon building temples for his wives' gods. (1 Kings xi. 4.)

(*c*) *Influence.* Jezebel corrupting Ahab and his people. (1 Kings xvi. 31.)

If want to avoid making others, to sin must cut it off in ourselves.

Hand—ministers to sin when used in anger; *e.g.*, Cain killing Abel. (Gen. iv. 8.)

Foot—when leads into unholy places.

Better to cut off occasion of sin than to sin.

Bad enough to sin ourselves. Worse to lead others to sin.

Worst of all to lead children to sin.

Punishment must follow sin unless repented of, and punishment is eternal.

LESSON. Avoid the beginnings of sin.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE READING SOCIETY.

DAILY READINGS BEARING ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

FEBRUARY 4TH—MARCH 10TH.

FEB.	MORNING.	EVENING.
4	St. Matthew viii. 28—34; 1 John iii. 5—10.	Leviticus xi. 7, 8; Isaiah lxvi. to ver. 6, and vers. 13—16.
5.	St Luke viii. 26—40.	Job. i., from ver. 6.
6.	Ephesians iv., from ver. 27; vi. 10—18.	Psalm cxviii. 16—23; St. Luke ix. 51—56.
7.	Rev. ii., to ver. 10; xii. 7—11.	St. John i. 35—46.
8.	Job. xxi. 7—18.	Psalm lxvi.
9.	Philippians ii., to ver. 13.	1 Peter v.
10.	St. Mark v. 1—20.	St. Mark v. 25—34.
11.	Psalm cviii.	St. Luke vi. 17—21; viii. 43—48.
12.	St. Matthew ix. 20—22; St. Mark x., from ver. 46.	Jeremiah xxx. 10—22.
13.	Psalm lxii.	Numbers xv. 37—41; St. Mark vi., from ver. 48.
14.	Psalm xxx.	Romans x. 4—13.
15.	St. Luke vii., from ver. 36.	2 Corinthians iv., from ver. 6.
16.	Lamentations iii. 49—58; St. John v., to ver. 9.	St. Matthew xiv., from ver. 23.
17.	St. Mark v. 25—34.	St. Mark vi. 1—13.
18.	Hebrews iii.	St. Matthew xiii., from ver. 51; Luke iv. 16—24.
19.	St. Matthew x., to ver. 16.	St. Matthew x. 17—31.
20.	St. Luke ix., to ver. 6; 2 Timothy i., to ver. 11.	St. Luke xxii. 25—38.
21.	Acts xiii., from ver. 38.	Romans ii. 4—16.
22.	Hebrews x., from ver. 28.	Acts iii., from ver. 19.
23.	Acts xx. 16, 17.	Acts iii., to ver. 16.
24.	St. Mark vi. 1—13.	St. Mark viii. 27, to chap. ix. ver. 1.
25.	St. Matthew xvi. 13—28.	St. Luke ix. 18—27.
26.	1 John v., to ver. 13.	St. John vi., from ver. 58.
27.	Hebrews i.	St. Matthew xxvi., from ver. 63.
28.	St. Luke xxiv., to ver. 16.	St. Luke xxiv. 17—32.
MARCH.		
1.	1 Peter i., to ver. 9, and from ver. 18.	Psalm xlix.
2.	Revelation vii., from ver. 9.	Galatians vi.
3.	St. Mark viii. 27, to chap. ix. ver. 1.	St. Mark ix. 33—45.
4.	St. Matthew xviii., to ver. 14.	St. Mark x. 35—45.
5.	St. Matthew xx. 20—28; St. Luke ix. 46—50.	Psalm cxxxi.; Isaiah lvii., from ver. 15.
6.	Micah vi., to ver. 11.	James iv.
7.	1 Corinthians xii., to ver. 14.	Philippians i. 9—21.
8.	Romans viii., to ver. 13.	St. Matthew v., to ver. 10 and 29, 30.
9.	St. Matthew xxv., from ver. 34.	1 Peter v.
10.	St. Mark ix. 33—45.	St. Mark x. 13—22.

GRANNY'S JUBILEE.



"'Poor Granny! What is a Bible jubilee?'"—*p.* 262.

CHAPTER I.

THERE was a skeleton in the cupboard at Briarly Farm, and a turned picture, very like to what we hear and read of in the houses of the rich and proud. Abel Manly was proud enough for any aristocrat, though only going about in the homely grey suit of a yeoman; for pride, be it known, is not always confined to those in high places. No! pride is everywhere, seen or not seen, and when unseen mayhap it is the worst pride of all, the hardest to uproot; and *such* an uprooting when it does take place! But to our story.

It has to do with the Jubilee lately celebrated, and with Christmas time as well. Oh! a mix-medley story it is—I hardly know where to begin. Here is a good place.

On a fair April morning, when the Lent-lilies were dancing in the flower-bed outside Briarly Farm, and sweet, glinting sunbeams streaming in over the floor of the hall-like front passage from the open door, like a voiceless something pleading for better things than skeletons in cupboards, pride, and the like, good Mrs. Manly and her spouse, Abel, stood in this same sunny hall. At least, she stood in sunshine, her husband in shade, and these are the words they were saying—

"I had hoped that, with this Jubilee coming on, you might have done so."

"Jubilee—what have jubilees to do with it?"

Such a stalwart giant was Abel Manly, with the dignity of his sixty years.

"You know, 'Every man unto his possession, every man unto his family,' is how the Bible puts it."* A sweet, tender, blue-eyed woman was she who pleaded,

* See Levit. xxv. 10.

long past the prime of her days; the light in these same blue eyes quenched, and patience written on every line of her yet comely face, for those who had eyes to see—ay, patience, submission, and long-suffering, long-waiting love.

This was the story of her beautiful, quivering face, as she stood by her lord and master, Sarah-like, looking up to him as such, but mayhap with more than Sarah-like meekness. Ay, and if a wanderer had gone out from the farm, as in those old patriarchal days, it was not by her sending.

"That may be, but the Bible times are not our times, and, if they were, it would make no difference."

Abel Manly was a hard, proud, unbending man; even his love was cased about with this "touch-me-not" crust of his, which hid away his better nature, as it were, few seeing or knowing him as he was. But Anne, the wife of his bosom, knew him to be a man of strong affection—or Annie, as he called her in his tenderest moods: but that was not to-day.

"No, Anne, I forbid you, as an obedient wife, to broach the subject again." These were his words, and away he tramped out into the sunshine among the Lent-lilies, and round to the yard, not heeding how the faded blue eyes of the little woman filled with tears, how hand clasped over hand, and disappointment well-nigh erased the patience and submission of her tell-tale face.

"What is it, Granny?"

A little mite of a fluffy, fair-haired girl of seven, just Granny herself in miniature, with all the joy and the mirth of childhood about her, came dancing out from somewhere among the shadows lurking in the hall: such personages often being where they are not supposed to be on certain occasions, hearing what they are not intended to hear, and, at the best, *de trop*, as the French would say. Thus was it this morning.

"What is it, Granny?" inquired the midge, in that silvery voice which the echoes of the old house loved so well.

"Nothing, Nance. Then you've been playing little pitcher again?" Granny's tone belied her reproving words, and Nance noted it. Yes, she was Nance, the daughter of another Nance, who married, went out from her home, and, dying, sent her friendless child to nestle in the old nest which had sheltered her, to revel in the love in which she had revelled—another Nance to fill the void in the old farm-house. It was sweet to Mrs. Manly's ears to hear the echoes catch the old name, and toss it hither and thither along the gusty passages, to repeat the dancing footsteps till they sounded like the tread of two pairs of childish feet; but she craved to hear that other name twining with Nance's. Nance and Jack—so it had been in the old days; now the little child was all that remained, save a turned picture, the memory of a wrong, a sin committed, a wanderer gone out, disowned, as it were, by his father, and a mother's heart craving in undefined agony over an undefined fear. Terribly real would the fear become to her at dead of night, lying wakeful on her bed, thinking of her wanderer, thirsting, not like that other disowned one, of Bible story, for a drink of water, but for love—someone to care for him, for his well-being, for his soul. Ay, the picture grew so vivid at times, that, in spirit, she was fain to cry like that other lone mother, "Let me not see the death of the child!"

"I wasn't playing pitcher, Granny; but I heard," replied wee Nance. "And, Granny, what is a jubilee?" she asked, as Mrs. Manly stood, looking out through the front door at the Lent-lilies and the April gladness.

Beyond in the meadows were the lambs playing among the buttercups and daisies, and the distant hills crowned with glory.

"A jubilee, dear? That's what's coming to the Queen."

"And do you want to be like the Queen?" inquired the child, linking her hand in Granny's.

"No, dear, not that—the Queen is a happier woman than I shall ever be." Granny's gaze still strayed among the Lent-lilies, and away over the meadows to the distant hills.

"Well, yes, she has lots and lots of fine things, hasn't she, and a crown?"

"She has lots and lots of good children, as can come to see her, and make her happy." There was a touch of resentment in Granny's gentle tones.

"Yes, and her husband is dead, isn't he?"

Children do draw a bow at a venture sometimes; so did Nance now. The words of Elkanah rang through Mrs. Manly's Bible-stored mind—

"Am not I to thee better than ten sons?"

"Oh, God, forgive me, and help me to bear my yoke, though 't isn't youth with me, and my heart is sore with longing," she murmured, her nervous hands twining one over the other.

"What, Granny?—what did you say?"

"Nothing, Nance, nothing," was the reply; and Nance wondered did Granny know she was telling a story? For she did say something.

"Granny, are jubilees only for queens, or do people have them?" asked the young prattler, a moment afterwards.

"Yes, child; people have them sometimes; the people will take part in this one coming, as well as the Queen."

"And did you want to take part in this one? and did Grandfather say no?"

"I wanted to have a Bible jubilee, and—and, child, it was denied me." Granny's tears fell fast now like rain, quietly and steadily as in autumn-time.

"Poor Granny! What is a Bible jubilee?" She reached up, and twined her arms as well as she could round the little woman's waist; the tears came dripping down upon her shining hair, and her sweet daisy face upturned in her half-pity.

"I can't tell you, dear, but you can see it all in your Bible."

Yes, Nance had a Bible, a nice new one, that Granny gave her on her seventh birthday; Grandfather had written her name in it, Nance Danton, and Granny's name and his own. And she could read it, too—she often read it on Sundays, only dancing across to Granny now and then when a hard word puzzled her. She would read it now, search for the jubilee, for she did not think Granny would give her any lessons this morning; she never did when she cried and had a headache,

"I'd not cry, Granny, or you 'll have your headache. And perhaps the Queen's Jubilee 'll be a Bible Jubilee, and perhaps Grandfather 'll let you take part in that," said the wise little woman, reaching up till Granny stooped down and kissed her; then she rushed away for her Bible, and as it was a busy day in the kitchen, she stole with it into the parlour. Here she sat with Granny and Grandfather on Sunday afternoons, in summer-time, looking out through folding glass doors upon the sweet-williams, white lilies, snap-dragons,



"Here she sat on her own low stool, searching her Bible."

and the like, with the bee-hives at the end of the walk, under the old elm tree, and hard by the summer-house. Here, sitting down by the sunny glass doors, one just a little ajar, because she liked to hear the birds sing and the bees hum among the dancing Lent-lilies—never such a woman as Granny for Lent-lilies, and other common flowers—here she sat on her own low stool, searching her Bible—very like looking for a needle in a bottle of hay—for the description of a Bible jubilee and the way of keeping it. Chapter after chapter—such a bewildering maze for a child. But she had a good stock of patience, as well as plenty of time, sitting there alone through the long sunshiny morning; and, anon, as by haphazard, she alighted on the very chapter she sought.

Verse by verse she read it through—oh! very bewildering was it all. Which was Granny's part? Not about the bondservants, nor yet about not sowing and tilling the land. No; folk did not have bondservants nowadays, and folk did not let the fields go a long, long year without ploughing and sowing them. At least, Grandfather did not, for he had once told her, he and she walking over the fields together, that he had ploughed, and sown, and reaped over that land for fifty years. Why, that was just the time the Bible said—fifty years. Was that what Granny wanted, and Grandfather would not allow it—to let the weeds grow, and nothing else—only the poppies, the daisies, and the weeds? How funny! Nance gave a little puzzled laugh, and, laughing, she lifted her head, and saw a shadow by the door. It was her grandfather looking in at her.

CHAPTER II.

"Well, little maid, laughing over the Bible? I didn't know 't were a book to laugh over;" so he accosted her, pushing open the door a little wider.

"No, Grandfather, not over the Bible, but over Granny's jubilee."

"Ha! what do you know about Granny's jubilee?"

"She said she wanted a Bible jubilee, and I've found it. Shall I read it out, or do you know about it, Grandfather?" spoke unconscious Nance.

"No, I don't know about it exactly, but I don't think 't is anything to laugh at—at least, Granny didn't laugh about it a while ago, little Nance."

"No, she cried; but that was beca ıse — because——" Nance knew she was treading on dangerous ground, and wisely stopped.

"Well?" Abel Manly's brow darkened, if the child had seen it, but, deep in her book, she asked—

"Are you busy, Grandfather, or shall I read it?"

"Ay, read away."

Nance was dear to Abel as the apple of his eye; she was the sweet living echo of the past and gone.

"'A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you; ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it, of thy vine undressed,'" read the sweet, silvery tongue.

"That isn't Granny's jubilee, child," spoke Grandfather, with a comical smile.

"Is it this, about bondservants?"

"No, not about bondservants."

"Nor yet this, 'And ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family;' because we are all at home, in our family, and nobody away."

"If any are away, they will stay away; they don't deserve a jubilee"—Grandfather's voice was husky.

"Who do you mean, Grandfather?"

But Abel never answered her, only said, "Hark! that's Granny calling you to dinner."

And so she was: "Nance, Nance," rang in to her like a strain of welcome music; so, linking her hand in her grandfather's, she tripped away with him, round by the summer-house and the bees, and round by the back into the kitchen.

Was Grandfather angry with anyone? she wondered, as she ate her dinner and noted the cloud on his brow. No, not with her: he heaped her plate with just what she liked; nor yet with Granny, for he called her Annie more than once, and that was a sign of just the contrary; and there was no one else, except Jane, their one servant. No, nor was it Jane, for she heard him call her Jenny, as he went out through the back kitchen. No, but still the cloud was there.

"Is Grandfather angry with anyone, Jane?" she questioned of the good-natured servant, while Granny went to don her hood and shawl before going out to feed the two motherless lambs in the shed, whither her little granddaughter always accompanied her.

"Ay, Miss Nance, he's always angry with——" The woman paused, and wiped up a plate or two in silence.

"Yes—who, Jane, who is he angry with?" was the eager question.

"Not with you."

"Yes—but who? Don't tease, Jane." The child's hand was laid on her arm.

"Well, you know the turned picture up atop the front stairs, in the dark corner?"

"Yes, my Uncle Jack's; but he isn't agry with him, he's only vexed. The father in the Bible wasn't angry with his son who went away, same"—Grandfather himself came dangerously near the back door, so his little granddaughter lowered her voice to a whisper—"same as Grandfather—he mustn't hear, 'cause it hurts him."

"Well, I calls it angry, and I pities poor mistress, I do. Now, that's a work for you, Miss Nance, to pray for——"

"Now, Nance, come." Here was gentle-eyed Mrs. Manly, in hood and shawl, and Nance skipped away at her side till the shed was reached.

"We haven't named them, Granny," said she, as she stroked the gentle creatures, while Mrs. Manly held the feeder to their mouths.

"No, dear—what shall we call them?" replied Granny.

"Nance and Jack—that's for mamma and Uncle Jack. Granny, why is Grandfather angry with Uncle Jack?"

"Hush, dear"—Grandfather was passing; he seemed everywhere to-day, his granddaughter thought. "He isn't cross; he's vexed," said Granny under her breath.

"Is your jubilee that you want about him?"

"Yes, child, 't is;" Granny trembled as she said it.

"Why don't you pray for it?" lisped Nance, thinking of what Jane had said.

"I have—these ten years."

"Ten years?—that's three years before I was born—what a long time! Granny, shall I pray too?" asked the prattler, after a silence.

"Yes, dear, if you like;" but Granny's thoughts seemed wool-gathering.

"Praying always gets things, Granny." A happy thought seemed to strike the little maiden. "You and me pray together, because don't you know what the Bible says?—'If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven"—that was my text for Sunday. And, Granny," Nance drew Mrs. Manly's head down, "I think I'll ask Grandfather to pray; you know the end of the text, 'Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.' I think three would be better than two," she whispered into her ear.

"Oh! Nance, he'd be cross," said affrighted Granny. "But come, dear, the lambs have had their fill."

"Good-bye, Jack and Nance." The child put her daisy face to both dumb creatures, and kissed them; then she and Granny returned to the house and their afternoon needlework, sitting in the clean, comfortable kitchen, where the log fire crackled and burnt, and the kettle soon sang for tea.

A very preoccupied little maiden was Nance that afternoon; her needle did not keep time with her thoughts, so fast did they race through her busy brain; and, ere they had nearly done coming and going, it was tea-time, and Grandfather coming in for his share of the pleasant meal. When it was over, and the sunshine waxing rosy and red, Nance climbed up the front stairs, to sit on the topmost step to think. What if praying should bring Granny's jubilee—hers, and Granny's, and Grandfather's praying? She half shrank from asking Grandfather, because Granny thought he would be cross; but, no, he would not be cross with her. She could ask Jane to be the third, only it would be nicer for Grandfather to be the one; because Granny's jubilee would be Grandfather's jubilee, thought the wise little reasoner. So far had she gone in her cogitations, when Grandfather himself came tramping through the hall below. Nothing like striking while the iron is hot.

"Grandfather! Grandfather!" piped she, in her shrill treble, from above,



"She nestled on her pillow and soon fell asleep."—*p.* 266.

"Ah! little woman, are you up there?" said he, smiling up at her.

"Yes, Grandfather. You come up, too; I want to ask you something."

"How would it be if you came down to me?"

"No, Grandfather, 't is something very particular; I want to tell you up here;" and obedient Grandfather mounted up.

"Now sit by me, Grandfather; I want to lay my head in your lap."

"What a queer little puss it is!" quoth he, but he sat down—he loved her so; and down went the fluffy little head into his lap.

"Grandfather, I want you to pray for something—you, and I, and Granny."

"And what's that?" inquired Grandfather, as if he more than half guessed.

"For Granny's jubilee;" the ready little tongue seldom faltered.

"Child, did Granny tell you to ask for this?" There was a sternness creeping into Abel Manly's voice.

"No! oh, no! Granny said you'd be cross, and I said you wouldn't, and you're not cross, are you?" her daisy face was raised to scan that of the other.

"No, not just that; but I can't do it, Nance."

"Oh! Grandfather, you can—everybody can pray—you mean you won't."

"Well, perhaps *won't* is the right word."

"But you will, Grandfather, you will; 'cause I want it, and Granny wants it, and—and I think someone else wants it."

"Someone else—what—who?"

"Don't you know?—he who said, 'I will arise, and go to my father.' He must have wanted a jubilee. 'Every man unto his possession, every man unto his family.'" How the echoes caught the silvery words, and tossed them about over the wide landing, where was that turned picture, with the fair boyish face hidden.

"How dare you, Nance! how dare you!" Grandfather put her from him, and rose: such a giant he looked, up there among the gathering shadows.

"Oh! Grandfather, you're cross—cross with *me!*"—with a pathetic little plaint over that last word. "I will ask Jane." Nance leant her pretty face on the stair, and sobbed.

"Ask who you like, Nance; I can't do it."

"Oh! Grandfather, you *won't*," came like a wail between her sobs.

To this Abel returned no answer, but walked away down the stairs, and out among the Lent-lilies dancing in the light of the dying day, a lark still high in the heavens singing of a bright to-morrow.

Nance did not cry long, but stole down from the high perch to the back kitchen, where Jane was just righting up for the day, as she told her, watching her a moment ere she broached her request.

"Jane, will you pray for something along with me and Granny?"

"'Deed, I will, Miss Nance; what is it I must pray for?"

"I want you to pray for Granny's jubilee."

"Granny's jubilee! bless the child, 't isn't Granny's jubilee as is coming, but the Queen's."

"Yes, but Granny wants a jubilee all to herself—'Every man to his possession, every man to his family,' same as he who rose and came to his father," explained the little one.

"Yes, I know, Miss Nance; she 's wanted that for many a day."

"Yes, for ten years," said Nance. "And now I 'm going to pray too, for two are better than one, and three are better still, Jesus says. If you 'd time I 'd read to you in my Bible all about it, and about Granny's jubilee too."

"I 've time, Miss Nance, for I 've done.

So away skipped Nance for her Bible as briskly as if she had not sobbed on the stairs so short a time before. Kneeling on the firelit hearth she read all the jubilee chapter first, then the texts about praying together.

"Yes, dear, I 'll pray," promised Jane, when the little one shut up her book.

"I asked Grandfather," returned Nance sadly, "and he said he wouldn't."

"Bless the child! 't was a wonder he wasn't in a mighty temper," cried Jane.

"He was," affirmed Nance; "and, Jane, will you let me see my uncle's picture to-morrow?"

"No, dear, no; I 'd orders never to turn it round."

"What did he do?"

"He made an old woman of Granny, Miss Nance."

"But what?"

"I don't rightly know, but you can pray for Granny's jubilee without knowing what made her want a jubilee, Miss Nance."

"Nance, Nance!" called Abel Manly in the passage.

"Yes, Grandfather." The wee thing went speeding out to him like a newly fledged bird. Ah! there was no anger in the call.

"Here 's the dearest little white rabbit, with pink eyes, ever a little maid saw, for someone;" he held it on his hand—such a pretty white ball in the waning light.

"For me, Grandfather, for me?"

"Yes, for you."

"Thank you, Grandfather;" such a sounding kiss she gave him, as he bent over her.

"All right, little one; let by-gones be by-gones."

"Yes, Grandfather, yes"—the mite understood his meaning. "I 've asked Jane instead, and she said yes; but I'm sorry," she told him.

He made no reply to this, but led her in to show her pet to Granny.

"Oh, God, send Granny her jubilee, every man to his possession, every man to his family, for Jesus Christ's sake," was the petition Nance wove into her evening prayer that night, Granny's tears falling like rain at its close.

"He 'll hear, Granny, He 'll hear and do it, because of that about two or three gathered together, you know; He 'll do it, never fear." Those were the child's last words as she nestled on her pillow, and soon fell asleep.

(To be concluded.)

THE SEVEN LEAVES OF THE VINE.

THOUGHTS UPON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF OUR LORD UPON THE CROSS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. WILLIAM ALEXANDER, D.D., D.C.L., LORD BISHOP OF DERRY AND RAPHOE.

THE THIRD WORD FROM THE CROSS.

"When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son. Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother."—ST. JOHN xix. 26, 27.

THE narrative of St. Luke tells us that during a considerable portion of the Saviour's Passion "all His acquaintance, and the women that followed Him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things."* After now nearly three hours of awful endurance, there was a lull in the strong excitement of those who hated Him. It was felt by some of those who were dearest to Him that a possibility of approach was afforded. John and a little group of believing women—Mary the mother of Jesus, and two other Maries, the wife of Cleophas and Mary of Magdala—then for a while stood in close proximity beside the cross of Jesus.† In Gethsemane, as earth's poor sympathy is withdrawn from the agonising Saviour, an angel comes nigh to strengthen Him. He who took not on Him the nature of angels must have felt now that there was something which was still sweeter to Him in the sympathy of human love.

The two first words from the Cross—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise"—are, the first priestly, the second royal. This third

* St. Luke xxiii. 49.

† Παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ. This preposition is used of *place*, with the dative of the thing, in this passage of the New Testament only. It is worth noting that the particles μὲν, δέ (Οἱ μὲν οὖν στρατιῶται ταῦτα ἐποίησαν—ver. 24; εἰστήκεισαν δὲ—ver. 25) imply a subtle but most touching contrast between the callous cruelty of the soldiers and the tender, fearless love of John and the three Maries. Let the reader note also the delicate refinement of the Evangelist in the incidental way in which his own presence is indicated after that of the rest of the group. (Verses 25, 26.)

word expresses the true human affection of the True Man, the Son of Man.

I.

YET no refined ingenuity of current criticism rob us of the assurance that we have here a genuine saying of Jesus.

It has been said that while the whole incident is eloquent of the personality of the Evangelist, its record is a condemnation of his veracity. He is consumed with a passion for getting himself personal consideration and making himself of importance. As a matter of fact, John does certainly appear to have taken home and (so to speak) adopted the mother of Jesus. The high consideration which Mary enjoyed in the nascent Church no doubt led the Evangelist to give out that Jesus, whose favourite disciple he was always claiming to be, had, when dying, commended to such a friend that which He held most dear on earth. The presence in John's home of this precious legacy of affection assured him of a sort of presidency over the other Apostles, and stamped his doctrine with a seal of the highest authority.*

Much might be said in reply to this elaborate and disgraceful insinuation of that school of "higher criticism" which systematically takes the lowest view of the power of God and of the virtue of man.

One argument is morally sufficient. If ever any writing from a mortal pen was the mirror of a human soul, that writing is the Epistle of St. John. He who truly and deeply loves must truly and deeply hate. Upon a lie and liars the hatred of the Apostle was fixed with a terrible persistence. Through all the oracular brevity and lapidary incision of his sentences, we feel his heart thrilling with indignation even still, when he has to speak of a lie, and the tellers or doers of it!† Surely, in that awful passage about "the lake that burneth with fire," there is one touch which must have come from the hand of John. In a passage quivering, breathless, hurried with emotion, where the writer enumerates the characteristics of the lost, he runs through his fearful list—"the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and *all liars!*"‡

Yet we are asked to believe that this man of pure, generous, lofty nature—this man with his inextinguishable abomination of lies and liars—himself lies, and lies in reference to the most sacred moment of his Master's death, and lies for a personal object of the meanest and most selfish kind.

But, it is said by the same writer—"perhaps the extreme loftiness of the character of Christ does not agree with such personal tenderness as is manifested in this word from the cross to the mother and the disciple, at a crisis when He must have peculiarly felt that He was only living for humanity."

Here, again, the answer is simple, and the appeal to human and moral perceptions.

From the literary affectation of academicians—the prigs of the intellectual world—we may turn to all human beings who have had a mother, and who still have a heart. To such we may say, "You believe that Jesus, your Lord, was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. Think of Him in His dying hours. Would you feel your ideal of the perfect Manhood realised or marred, if you read that He had put by, or spoken coldly, or spoken nothing to His mother?"

In the most glorious dialogue of Plato, in musical and golden pages which the world has never forgotten, we are told of the meeting in the prison of Socrates with his friends, which was to be succeeded that very day by the long parting. The sacred ship has arrived from Delos, the chains are being struck off, and Socrates is to die that day. Xanthippe is sitting by her husband, and holding his child in her arms. History has treated her ill; and perhaps—if one of two extremes must be chosen—it may, in some aspects, be a happier thing to be the wife of certain fools than of certain philosophers. Xanthippe may have had provocations which a great idealistic biographer found it convenient to forget. But at all events she had a woman's heart, a Greek woman's passionate nature. "Socrates!" she cried, "this is the last time that either you will talk with your friends, or they with you." Then Socrates turned to a friend, and said quietly, "Let someone take her home." She is led home, sobbing wildly as she goes; and Socrates, relieved of her presence, frigidly begins a disquisition upon pleasure and pain, suggested by the blended sensations in his limb when the chain was removed—possibly not without bitter sarcasm about the loving, if imperfect, wife who mourned him so bitterly.*

Which presents the tenderer, the more exquisitely human ideal, Socrates or Christ? Let us thank God that the Saviour's heart of fire is also a heart of flesh.

II.

LOOK at the preciousness of the gifts in the three first of the seven words.

Gifts! For from the cross He rained down legacies. No showers were ever so rich in harvests as the red drops of Calvary. In each of those words are abiding and universal, as well as particular and temporary, donations.

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" That prayer was not merely for the crucifiers. Those who fastened Him to the tree, and

* Renan, "Vie de Jésus," p. 423.
† See 1 St. John i. 6; ii. 4, 21, 22; iv. 20, and *passim*.
‡ Apoc. xxi. 8.

* "The Dialogues of Plato." Jowett, vol. i., 403, 404.

drove in the nails, and, after extending Him on the cross, raised it up and fastened it rudely in the soil, were but representatives of a more widely different guilt. From those white lips the words seemed to rise, float away, and die in the distance. But they have never ceased to waken echoes since that moment. Draw near and gaze. From the midst of His agony, wounded and weary, there is One pleading for each soul amongst us. Does not He who hangs thereon give Himself wholly for us? Was not the pang at His heart, the sorrow in His soul, the darkness round Him, and the tormentors on Him, because He loved us with that eternal love stronger than death, which brought Him down from heaven, nailed Him to the cross, sent Him on through the valley of the shadow of death, and its dark waters over His sheep who were scattered? If we listen, we shall, each one, find that our name is on His lips, as He speaks the first word from the cross.

"To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." That word is precious too; it brings the promise and breath of Eden into every sick-room.

Has He, then, no special gifts for those who are nearest to Him? Gifts! He Who was so unutterably poor. The very gradation of poverty in the Psalmist's prophetic picture of the nakedness upon the cross (the outer "raiment," the inner "vesture")* is literally carried out in the fact of history. One cannot help feeling that we surprise a tender, latent thought of St. John's. As we think over the denudation (verses 23, 24), and put beside it the great legacy (verse 26), we may believe that there is an intended contrast between the divine poverty of the first and the divine exuberance of the second.

Consider the *temporary* and *particular*, the *lasting* and *larger* gift.

1. The temporary and particular gift has two characteristics.

It was just the right gift.

This passage would certainly seem to imply that Mary had no other son. He, who was so exquisitely delicate in respecting the rights of love, would have wounded that son's heart by leaving a mother—and such a mother—to another. "Having seen His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son. Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother." He gives John to Mary, and Mary to John.

Here there is a temporal provision, an earthly home, secured to the mother of Jesus. It is an unreal spirituality which affects to think little of making such loving provision as may be in our power for those who are nearest to us in blood and affection. But we cannot doubt that there was more here than food and shelter. There was provision here for moral affinities of heart, thought, character, temperament, faith. Jesus gave

"The Virgin Mother to the virgin-soul'd."

* ἱμάτια . . . χιτὼν, St. John xix. 23, and Ps. xxii. 18.

2. As Jesus gave the right gift, so He gave it at the right moment.

"There were standing by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." "Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And *from that hour** that disciple took her unto his own home." Jesus gently and with forethought spares His mother the long seismic darkness beginning to gather over the landscape, and the Eli cry. Simeon had said to Mary long ago, "A sword shall pierce through thine own soul."† The sword must pierce. But no selfish yearning for sympathy shall cause it to be turned in the wound which it has made.‡

III.

AS our Lord bestows in the third word from the cross a *temporary* and *particular* gift, so does He bequeath a *lasting* and *larger* legacy and benediction.

1. An enduring endowment was bestowed upon the Church in reference to the history of the Gospels.

False teaching probably does almost as much harm to the Church by those truths of which it makes good men suspicious, as by those which it actually corrupts or distorts. Superstitious exaggerations bring superstitious fear in the recoil. The real "glories" of Mary are forgotten in the panic produced by the extravagances of Liguori.

The long-continued abiding of Mary with John cannot have been without the most real effect in enabling the Evangelist to teach with all confidence the doctrine of the Incarnation. How naturally that he whose home was Mary's shelter should have written, "The Word became flesh"! How natural that to a Church troubled by sectarians, who proclaimed a commonplace Christ or a shadowy Christ—a Christ of mere humanity or of mist—the fourth Evangelist, who was full of thoughts derived from

* ἀπ' ἐκείνης τῆς ὥρας. There is emphasis in this. Nouns defined by the pronoun ἐκεῖνος, used as an adjective, have always the article, to call attention to the fact that an individual of a class is marked out. (Winer, Gr. Gr. 122.) This hour is singled out from all other hours, and marked as the definite beginning of a new relation between John and Mary.

† St. Luke ii. 35.

‡ "By the cross of Christ stood the holy virgin mother, upon whom old Simeon's prophecy was now verified; for now she felt 'a sword passing through her very soul.' She stood without clamour, or womanish noises, and silent, and with a modest grief deep as the waters of the abyss, but smooth as the face of a pool; full of love and patience, and sorrow and hope. Now she was put to it to make use of all those excellent discourses her holy Son had used to build up her spirit, and fortify it against this day. Now she felt the blessings and strengths of faith, and she passed from the grief of the Passion to the expectation of the Resurrection; and she rested in this death as in a sad remedy, for she knew it reconciled God with all the world."—*Taylor's "Exemplar," vol. iii., p. 353.*

companionship with the mother of Jesus, should have proclaimed with confidence, "Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God." "Many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist."* The human intellect was busy then, as it was for centuries afterwards, with the conception which we are to have of the Person of Jesus. All heresies (and in name they are numerous and perplexing) may be referred in themselves or in their consequences to one or other of these two general heads—they either *unhumanise* or *undeify* the God-Man. It is often said that the Bouddha, or the classical demi-god, affords a true counterpart of the mystery of the Incarnation. Those who make the assertion have failed to grasp the true idea of that mystery. Christ is not God masquerading for a time in human form; He is not a man deified. He is God *humanified.* With what marvellous fitness were Mary and John brought into close and constant connection. In Mary, we have the favoured instrument through whom the Incarnation was wrought out. "When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law."† In John, we have the theologian by whom the conception was defined, so far as it is capable of definition in human language.‡ The first is the living witness of the fact; the second the providential expositor of the idea.

This assistance must have been of value also for many facts recorded both in St. John's and the other Gospels. Mothers are the best biographers of their children's earliest years. They have a subtle insight, almost prophetic instincts. Who can doubt that the Annunciation, the birth, the sweet silence of the baby and boy life, form a part of Mary's contribution to the materials of the authentic Gospels? As we think of the deeply meditative nature of Mary, as we hear him with whom Mary dwelt speaking with such authority and precision of the Person of Christ, we feel that the heart of Mary has not been without influence on the hand of John.

It will not take us far from our subject if we add here two considerations.

1. By many modern unbelievers—and especially by Renan—it has been said that the author of the fourth Gospel moved in a totally different sphere of historical narration from the synoptical Evangelists; that he knew nothing of the birth in Bethlehem. For this assertion, it is urged there is something more to be alleged than the Evangelist's silence. We have a positive indication that it never occurred to him to couple Jesus with Bethlehem. For he records the objection of certain antagonists, "What! will the Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said that the Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"* Now, it is part of the tender, subtle irony of St. John to record *objections* of adversaries, which, to thoughtful and instructed Christians, were convincing *arguments.*† The record of the *objection* has for its motive the knowledge of its *futility.* If we believe that the disciple from the cross took the mother of Jesus to his own home, the question is settled.

2. The first vision of the Virgin Mother extant in ecclesiastical history, may be taken by us from the accurate pages of St. Gregory of Nyssa. "Gregory (called Thaumaturgus, from the miracles wrought by him), bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, in Pontus, was one of the most celebrated among the scholars of Origen. He was appointed to the Episcopal See of his native city, which then contained only seventeen Christians; the rest were heathens. After his consecration to the bishopric he retired for a time, in order to give himself to religious meditation and prayer; especially that he might be able to refute the errors and heresies of the time, and to hold firmly and teach clearly the true faith. When he was thus engaged, he had a vision of a venerable man, who said that he had been sent by God, in answer to his prayers, to declare to him the true faith. A woman of wondrous beauty and dignity of mien accompanied him. The venerable man, as represented in the vision, was St. John the Evangelist; the woman was the blessed Virgin Mary. The former then uttered certain words, in which he delivered a profession of faith which Gregory set down in writing. . . . 'There is one Lord; One only of One only; God of God; impress and image (εἰκὼν) of the Godhead; energising Word; Wisdom comprehensive of the system of the universe; and power, the Maker of the whole creation; very Son of very Father; invisible of invisible; incorruptible of incorruptible; immortal of immortal; eternal of eternal.

"'There is a Trinity perfect in glory, and eternity, and kingdom indivisible and unchangeable.'"‡

It will be observed that in this "vision" Mary is joined with John. How different, it must sorrowfully be added, is this simple and truly catholic creed from the strange words supposed to have been uttered on February 11th, 1858, to Bernadotte Soubirous—"I am the Immaculate Conception."

* St. John i. 14; 1 John iv. 2, 3; 2 John v. 7.

† Galatians iv. 4.

‡ "He had a name written that *no man knew, but He Himself.* . . And His name is called The Word of God." (Apoc. xix. 12, 13.)

* St. John vii. 41, 42.

† We have another instance in this very chapter (ver. 35). The Apostle who, from Ephesus, wrote to the Christians of Asia Minor and of the world, might well feel a thrill of triumph as he thought how truly his Master had "gone unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and taught the Gentiles."

‡ Bishop Wordsworth's Church History, pp. 283, 284.

XUM

IV.

LET it, lastly, be said that here is something for all who—like John and Mary—follow Jesus lovingly to His cross.

Home! The word has a magic sound. What is best in home, after all? Not the walls and roof, not the plenty and comfort which may be within, not the ivy and roses clinging to the stones—not these, but the living stones, the fibrous tendrils of clinging memories. And what are the associations of a Christian home?* The sweet tempers; the mutually adjusted natures; the steps that pace to the same round of daily duties; the associated prayers; the hands raised for the same hallowed bread; the eyes wet with the same sorrows or lit with the same joys; the hills ascended in company, and, as life advances, touched with the same westering sun; the spirits that gaze at once into the same grave, and the same golden spot in the distance. This is Christ's home-gift from the cross to all true hearts that

"Soar but never roam,
True to the kindred points of heart and home."

Christ once made a home for Mary and John, while a world hissed and yelled, and the darkness gathered round the cross. And still, over life's roaring sea, across darkening hours, He tells us of a home of hearts in the City of our God. "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*

* The original (εἰς τὰ ἴδια, St. John xix. 27), if not quite literally our word "*home*," is perhaps its nearest possible equivalent.

* St. John xiv. 2, 3.

A NEW BOOK OF MARTYRS.—II.

THE DARK NIGHT OF HUNGARY.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E., ETC. ETC.

HUNGARY is a country which has long lain hid from Anglo-Saxon eyes. It is out of our beat, out of the beat even of continental tourists, a country with which we seem to have nothing to do. But within the present generation it has forced itself into notice, and it has won the praise and admiration of all who love to see a gallant people struggling nobly in a patriotic cause. In that year of Revolution, 1848, no spectacle in Europe impressed men so favourably as that of Hungary struggling for its ancient liberties, and the eloquence of Kossuth and the triumphs of his generals were received with shouts of delight, till the interference of the Czar on the side of tyranny raised on every side a howl of execration. But crushed though the Hungarians were by sheer brute force, they had pluck enough to continue their contention in another form. Their opportunity came after the Austrian defeats of Königgratz and Sadowa; and as we have often been hearing of late, in another connection, they got back their constitution and autonomy, so that their name is incorporated in that of the Empire now known as "Austro-Hungary." These facts prepare us to learn that the ruling race of Hungary are men of no ordinary fibre, and that the history of the country—both civil and ecclesiastical—is profoundly interesting. The Magyars may have been a restless people, fond of excitement and given to war, but they have been lovers of liberty, and their contendings for the most part have been for justice and truth.

But our business is with the religious history of the Hungarian people. Our chief authority in what follows is the History of Georg Bauhoffer, the English translation of which has an elaborate introduction by Dr. Merle D'Aubigné. For six or seven hundred years, Hungarians have in some form or other been witnesses for the Gospel. So early as A.D. 1176, many who adhered to the doctrines of the Waldenses sought in Hungary an asylum from the vengeance of Rome. Many were profoundly impressed by their doctrines, and the Pope of the day did his best to rouse the King of Hungary to exterminate them, but without success. About the beginning of the fourteenth century, the number of Waldenses in Bohemia, Austria, and neighbouring counties was reckoned at eighty thousand. In Hungary they were comparatively safe; in Austria proper the case was different. In Vienna, some were publicly led to the stake, and among these we find mention made of Simeon Scaliger, a Hungarian, who is represented as an apostle and angel of the sect, and who nobly witnessed for the truth by a martyr's death.

In the fifteenth century, when the banner of truth was unfurled in the neighbouring kingdom of Bohemia by John Huss, Hungary showed no little sympathy with the movement. In 1444, a terrible calamity hove in sight: the Cardinal Julian concluded a concordat with King Uladislaus that the Hussites should be utterly destroyed. Happily or unhappily, Uladislaus was defeated by the Turks in the memorable battle of Varna, and so enraged were his enemies at him for

violating an oath he had sworn to them. that, not content with his death in battle, they carried about his head in triumph on a pike. The Cardinal Julian was killed while attempting to escape; the Hungarian Hussites might well sing the 124th Psalm.

From students who went to study at Wittenberg, the views of Luther were borne to Hungary, and met with a cordial reception. But in 1525 the Hungarian Diet ordered all Lutherans to be burnt. In spite of this, the Reformed religion spread. A few years later, the views of Calvin found wonderful favour among the Magyars, most of whom joined the "Reformed" Church, as we usually, by way of distinction, denote the followers of Calvin.

We pass over many memorable chapters of Hungarian Church history, with many scenes of persecution and noble testimony, to fix attention on the deadly persecution which desolated Hungary after the Thirty Years' War.

In alliance with the Jesuits, Louis XIV., that "most Christian King," who sought to atone for the wickedness of his licentious life by exterminating the enemies of the Church of Rome, stimulated Leopold I., King of Hungary and Emperor of Austria, to fall on all the Protestants of his Empire, and exterminate them by fire and sword. The Protestant ministers and teachers were summoned to appear before the criminal court, and the sentence of death was pronounced on all who should refuse to return to the Roman Catholic Church. The general results of this persecution have been stated thus by Professor Balogh, of Debreczen: "Many pastors, particularly Lutherans, turned Catholics, in consequence of their heavy captivity and other torments; others emigrated to foreign countries; a great part (205) resigned their office in order to save their lives and get free from their chains. However, sixty-six intrepid men resisted the cruel system, and awaited with resignation the hour of death. These venerable martyrs were then sold as galley slaves to Naples; and even eminent professors of divinity and superintendents languished in the galleys for ten months. The diplomatic intervention of Holland, and particularly the efforts of Admiral Adrian Ruyter, succeeded in setting them at liberty. But for several years after they were not allowed to return to their country."

It is of this terrible persecution we are now to give some particulars. It was in 1657, with the reign of Leopold, that what has been called the golden age of the Jesuits began. Leopold had been intended for the Church, but the death of his elder brother brought him to the throne in his seventeenth year. Cold, heartless, indolent, and procrastinating, he was a very fit tool of the Jesuits, and as, like Louis XIV., his only idea of religious duty was to uphold the Church of Rome and ruin the Protestants, the evils which he inflicted were very terrible. Hungary under Leopold was just like Scotland at the same period under Charles II. The keenness of the persecution began a few years earlier and ended a little sooner, but in Hungary the desolation was wider and the results more deadly. Traces of a covenant or bond for mutual protection we find in Hungary, but the policy of covenanting was not carried out over that country as it was in Scotland. We are quite sure that but for some such combination in Scotland it would have gone hard for the cause of the Gospel in the end. And if Hungarian Protestants had all combined in a solemn league and covenant for their protection, they might have fared better; for the policy of the Jesuits was to attack them piecemeal in all parts of the country, and wear them out by bitter and protracted sufferings. The *argumentum ad baculum* (appeal to the stick) was the only argument in the least degree effectual; they robbed, insulted, cajoled, worried the Protestants incessantly, till life became unendurable, and, save in the case of the most earnest and inflexible, pastors and people in instances innumerable at last submitted to the Church of Rome.

What the Protestants complained of in the beginning of Leopold's reign was that the laws in their favour were not observed, and that, in opposition to these laws, churches were taken from them, and wrongs and indignities without number inflicted. They petitioned the king on his ascending the throne to redress their wrongs; he put the matter off till the next meeting of the Diet, and it happened that the Diet did not meet for three years. Meanwhile the wrongs and sufferings of the Protestants continued unabated.

Here are some samples of the wrongs they had been suffering, as set forth in their petition. In seventeen counties they had been robbed of many of their churches, which had been turned from Protestant to Catholic worship. Prince Paul Esterházy had endeavoured to persuade his tenants to become Catholics, and when they refused, had sent dragoons to compel them. Count Nádasdy, once a Protestant, had driven out the Protestant inhabitants of a village by soldiers, who pursued them, and compelled all that they caught to turn Catholics. In other places he had banished the pastors and smashed the furniture of their houses. In one case he had sent for the keys of the church, got hold of a priest, and compelled the people to receive the Communion in the Romish form. He had placed men in a wood to apprehend the Protestants as they passed along; the Protestants were robbed of their clothes and sent home naked. This Nádasdy, however, was himself found guilty of rebellion, and sent by the king to the scaffold. When mounting it, he is reported to have said, "The Lord is just in all His ways," which the Protestants interpreted as denoting that he felt he was punished justly for his shameful deeds.

Stephen Pilaric was pastor of the church at Beczko. Count Nádasdy sent a military escort to bring all his books to his castle of Cseithe; he ordered a fire to be kindled, and all the property and books of the pastor, with the exception of his official gown, to be thrown into it; the Bible was put on a spit, and turned round before the fire, greatly to the amusement of the count and his friends. A puff of wind blew several of the leaves into the hall where the count was sitting, one of which was driven right on to his breast. The count read it: it was part of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah:—"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of God shall stand for ever." He rose immediately and left the hall.

In this way many churches were seized, pastors banished, congregations "converted." The process of

conversion was sometimes rather too rapid. In Mishdorf, for example, the soldiers broke into the church during divine service, and barricaded the doors till the mass was celebrated, and the congregation, having witnessed the mass, necessarily became Catholics! Sometimes the people were compelled by physical force to take the wafer. A peasant at Mijwah, being threatened with that process, cried out in the church, "I vow by the living God that if you thrust the wafer into my mouth, I will bite off your fingers!"

The conduct of Leopold in other matters led to a formidable political conspiracy against him, in which, no doubt, many Protestants joined. That it was not an affair of religion is apparent from the fact that Count Nádasdy (of whom we have just been speaking) was one of the principal conspirators, and when this was found out he was put to death. But, as might have been expected, the conspiracy became the occasion of renewed and most bitter persecution of the Protestants. More churches were seized, more pastors banished, and more congregations "converted." Sometimes a conspicuous testimony for the truth would be given, as in the case of an old man, Nicolas Drabik, who was put to death in 1671. He had been one of the "Moravian Brethren," but owing to the Bohemian persecution, had fled to Hungary.



"The Archbishop of Grán used to amuse himself and his guests after his dinner parties by summoning the Reformed pastors into his presence."—*p.* 273.

"Entirely destitute of learning, and knowing no other than the Bohemian language, he had fancied himself enlightened by the Spirit of God, and written a book full of prophecies of judgment on the House of Austria. The two Ferdinands and Leopold were covenant-breakers; the House of Austria was the House of Ahab—a cruel, perjured House, which ought to be rooted out; to the Catholics he prophesied speedy and utter desolation." For a moment the old man wavered in his allegiance to Protestantism, but immediately became ashamed of his vacillation. He

was executed on the 16th of July. "His right hand was first to be cut off, then his head; the tongue was to be taken out and nailed to a post, and his writings burned in the market-place, together with his body. Some say the tongue was torn out while he was yet alive."

But these were only the beginning of sorrows. The work of conversion was not going on fast enough to please the Jesuits, and more rigorous measures must be adopted.

The first step was taken by the Archbishop of Grán, who summoned before him thirty-three Protestant pastors from a particular part of Hungary. The indictment refuted itself by its very absurdity. They were accused of having incited the people to rebellion; of giving Roman Catholic children horrible food; of having betrayed Popish priests to Turks and rebels; of having murdered nine priests; of having despised and trodden on the sacred wafer; of having stolen the consecrated vessels; of having made flags of the priests' vestments; of having blasphemed the Virgin Mary and the saints. The charges, as any reasonable man may well believe, were pure fabrications, but the pastors were found guilty. Count Illyesházy appealed to them in their own interest to make submission, for he knew they would receive a horrible sentence; four of them would be put to the torture, have their hands cut off, and be then beheaded. The rest would have a terrible exile. The clergy did not show the courage that befitted them; one of them recanted; his name was Suhajda, which formed the anagram, "Ah, Judas!" Most of them signed a document admitting themselves rebels, agreeing to leave the country, greatly to the distress of their flocks, who were left to be trodden under foot, and who thought that if their pastors had been more firm some relief would have been accorded to them.

The success of the priests in silencing upwards of thirty pastors emboldened them to try new measures on a larger scale. The next citation summoned not fewer than two hundred and fifty, but probably nearer four hundred pastors and office-bearers, mostly of the Lutheran Church, but partly of the Reformed. The accused vindicated themselves from all charge of crime, but nevertheless sentence was pronounced against them, and the sentence was beheading, confiscation, infamy, and outlawry. The sentence of death, however, was not carried into execution. The pastors were completely in the hands of their foes; to their flocks they were as good as dead, and instead of being slain they were allowed to choose between abdicating their office and leaving their country.

Most of the Lutherans demitted their office, but others, chiefly Calvinists, were firm, and awaited the course of events. Only one Calvinist pastor and one schoolmaster signed the document; the rest refused to depose themselves from the ministry, nor did they wish to emigrate, because, being little acquainted with German, they saw no mode of usefulness for them in foreign lands. This refusal was highly provoking, and means were taken to break their spirit. They were thrust into dark and filthy cells, and exposed to the roughest treatment. Here is a description of their condition, which we find at the end of a copy of Jurieu's "Pastoral Letters": "They put irons on their feet, all filled with nails which passed through their shoes and stockings, and pierced their very flesh. The prison where they were put was dark as hell, a low stinking dungeon, full of excrements, mud, dung, rats, serpents and toads, into which they could not enter but on their hands and feet." From such dungeons they were only taken to hard labour utterly beyond their strength. "And because these martyrs (to whom they did not give of coarse black bread a quarter so much as was necessary to nourish them, and almost no water) could not lift up their hands nor set one foot before another, they were beaten with rods, staves, the butt-end of muskets, and cords moistened and full of knots." One valiant pastor, because he would not sign the paper submitted to him, was so furiously and unmercifully beaten that he died from the effects. The Archbishop of Grán, like the Philistines with Samson, used to amuse himself and his guests after his dinner-parties by summoning the Reformed pastors into his presence, loading them with insults, and sometimes descending to personal violence, because they would not sign their resignation. One of them he struck with a hammer so violently that the arm was rendered almost completely useless. The prisoners had to perform the meanest offices; in the middle of winter, with the thermometer many degrees below the freezing point, they had to remove the ice and snow with their bare hands, and clean the sewers. Though they were half-starved, it was a crime for anyone outside to give them food. Some lay in narrow cells, partially exposed to rain and snow, among thieves and murderers, who mocked them when they prayed.

We have no space to go into all the details of torture by which their persecutors sought to wear out these saints of the Most High. As we have said, there was a considerable number who resisted every attempt and endured to the end. On the 18th of March, 1675, they were ordered to Italy, to be sent to the galleys. It was an awful fate. Galley slaves were chained to the bench where they sat from year's end to year's end, obliged to sleep in that attitude as best they might, getting no relief in pain or sickness, and left to die without care or pity. When they heard of their fate, the poor men embraced each other and wept, while they pledged themselves once more not to yield. With their feet chained together, they travelled from Vienna to Trieste. At nights they lay together in stables; they scarcely obtained sufficient food; many fell sick, four died in the prison at Trieste, and other two on the road. From Trieste they proceeded to Naples. One fell on the road and died on the spot. Near the end of the journey another entered into his rest. Three succeeded in making their escape. The remainder reached Naples on the 1st of May; they were sold for thirty Spanish piastres apiece, and being divided among the boats, were chained to the benches.

In the course of a short time twenty more pastors were marched to the shores of the Adriatic, where they endured such treatment that their teeth fell out, and several of them died. Some of them, overborne

by torture and misery, at last gave way. The rest maintained their integrity to the end.

The situation of Protestants in these countries was so terrible that even Charles II. interposed on their behalf. More effectual aid was rendered by the States-General of Holland, under whose instructions Admiral Ruyter, with the Dutch fleet, went to Naples, and obtained the release of the pastors. On the 11th of February, 1676, the prisoners forsook the places of their confinement, singing the 46th, 114th, and 125th Psalms. The Admiral told them that "of all his victories, none had given him so much joy as the delivering these servants of Christ from their intolerable yoke."

Such were the effects of the "wearing-out" policy of the Jesuits in Hungary. They did not often burn their victims, for the example of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, and many more, had shown that the fire of martyrdom was apt to promote the cause of the Gospel. The Hungarian martyrs had a more trying ordeal. The fact that so many yielded only shows how hard it was to bear, and redounds all the more to the credit of those who endured. Irreparable damage was done to the Protestant churches. But there are yet three millions of Protestants in Hungary; every Christian will love them for their fathers' sakes, and will pray that God may yet give them a season of reviving, enabling them to hold forth the Word of Life, and to become once more a great Evangelical force in the dark Empire of Austria.

"AGAIN, AGAIN, AND AGAIN."

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, D.D., AUTHOR OF "ECCE VERITAS," "THE YOUNG MEN OF SCRIPTURE," ETC.

"ITERUM, *iterum, iterumque.*"—"Again, again, and again." Such was the motto wittily adopted by the English dramatist Samuel Foote, after he happily became the possessor of a third fortune, when two previous fortunes had been entirely squandered away. "Again, again, and again" he had been favoured; and placed each time in an increasingly responsible position. With each new endowment he had the experience of the past to guide him, and had less excuse to furnish for any misuse of his possessions.

Samuel Foote's motto may be adopted by every reader of this paper in relation to the mercies he has received. Not once, not twice only, has God blessed us, but "again, again, and again." It would be an interesting calculation if the reader could survey his past life and tabulate the number of mercies, in the form of meals, he has received; the number in the shape of suits of apparel, and the number in the persons of friends to cheer life's pilgrimage. Suppose you are twenty years of age, then God has placed upon your breakfast-table 7,300 refreshing repasts to fit you for the day's duties. And if you have partaken of four meals a day, then in twenty years the bountiful Giver of every good and perfect gift has provided for you no fewer than 29,200 meals. This is irrespective of the delicious fruits which He has oftentimes showered into your lap between the stated meals. Are all these mercies to be received and employed by us without acknowledgment? It is, alas! much to be feared that the frequency with which God bestows His gifts induces within us a spirit of forgetfulness. Emerson, in his first chapter on "Nature," truly writes: "If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe, and adore, and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown! But every night come out these envoys of beauty, and light the universe with their admonishing smile." And now because the dark canopy overhead is studded with these glittering orbs, it is only very occasionally that our admiration is called forth. Night after night they are there, but they are ignored by us. So day after day, night after night, week after week, month after month, year after year, God anticipates and makes provision for our necessities—"again, again, and again" the good things come to us, and we are too oblivious of the importance of the gifts, the goodness of the Giver, and the obligations of the recipient. As the ocean receives into its bosom the waters of a thousand rivers without being itself any fresher, so men take the innumerable blessings bestowed by Heaven without looking heavenward with gratitude. This ought not so to be. "Again, again, and again" should we praise the Lord, mindful of our incessant dependence upon Him. The words of thankfulness, which are but the outward expression of the inner feeling, gratitude, should be ever upon our lips, like the dewdrops which hang tremblingly upon the petals of the flower ready to fall before the first breeze that passes. It is said that in some of the old monasteries the chanting of praises never ceased, one choir taking up the duty when the other concluded. But with many of us the praise is transient, like the music we now and then produce, leaving the instrument closed and untouched for long intervals. David made thanksgiving his life-work. "As long as I live I will praise Thee." Let us say, "Again, again, and again" I will praise the Lord, Who "again, again, and again" has bountifully remembered me!

But this motto adopted by Samuel Foote should express the purpose of our life in another way. It should be the utterance of our spirit in relation to our militant duty. It should declare the dauntlessness,

the determination, the dogged perseverance of heart, with which we commence and continue our life-task. No man has climbed high and written his name on time, "as on a pedestal," without effort, repeated and prolonged effort. "Again, again, and again" he has applied himself before success crowned his toil. We do not forget how Robert Bruce, lying awake in the barn where he had fled for shelter, saw a spider climbing a beam of the roof; how that spider again and again fell, but again and again attempted to reach the roof; how on the thirteenth time the little creature succeeded; how Bruce said to himself, "This spider teaches me perseverance; twelve times have I been beaten, the thirteenth I may succeed;" and how with renewed courage Bruce rallied his followers, and was crowned king.

When the terrible American war, which gave the death-blow to slavery, was being waged, a gentleman said to President Lincoln, "Do you expect to end this war during your administration?"—"Can't say, can't say," was the reply.—"But what do you mean to do?" was the next query.—"Peg away, peg away—keep pegging away!" replied Lincoln. It was by the pegging away process that freedom was won. The Persian poet says, "To the persevering man the blessed immortals are swift." When Diogenes offered himself as a disciple of the cynic Antisthenes, he was refused. Persisting in his request, the cynic lifted a knotty stick, and threatened to strike him if he did not withdraw. "Strike," said Diogenes; "you will not find a stick hard enough to conquer my perseverance." Carey, surrounded by many volumes from his own pen, modestly said, in his old age, "I can do one thing: I can plod." Happy the man who can so speak. In business, in art, in science, in literature, and in religion, we have lost much from the lack of plodding. Little discouragements have too frequently diverted our attention from what should have been a solemn and lifelong work. We are too frequently represented by the stupid scholar who, in class, was reading with his companions the third chapter of Daniel, and could not pronounce the words, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego." A few days afterwards the master selected the same chapter, and it fell to the lot of the backward scholar to read those words again. He progressed admirably till he came to the names, when he stopped, and said, "Teacher, there 's them three names again." So we, instead of conquering the difficulty—instead of "again, again, and again" attacking the obstacle—take flight before it—"the names" are encountered with no disposition to conquer them. Shakespeare truly says—

> "He is not worthy of the honey-comb
> That shuns the hive because the bees have stings."

The tiny coral insect might be our teacher. By its minute but incessantly repeated efforts, the Pacific Ocean is being enriched with islands, which, unlike those produced suddenly by volcanic agency, will be enduring and serviceable. Patient persistence has often atoned for lack of power. Industry has achieved by a succession of efforts what another man's genius may have performed at a stroke. But genius has been defined as being "the infinite capacity for taking pains." "Again, again, and again" has been the secret of the success of all great men. Old General Blucher, though beaten almost every time he entered into battle, would in a very brief space of time re-gather his routed forces, and appear as formidable as ever. Hence the Germans call him "Marshal *Forwards*." Garibaldi could not secure the freedom of Italy at once. Disappointment and difficulty beset his career. But he worked and waited, and never wavered: re-visiting Italy now and again; but, whilst a fugitive, doing his utmost to bring every possible influence to bear in the one direction on which his heart was set. At last he triumphed. Jenny Lind, when young, lost her voice for four years, but, nothing daunted, kept at her theoretical studies. When she repaired to Paris for study, her elected teacher said, "My child, you have no voice left," and ordered her rest. Still she worked on with incomparable energy, often weeping herself to sleep when she recalled the teacher's words. But her fame soon became world-wide. It was the faithful repetition of effort, the "again, again, and again," that made her the "Swedish Nightingale."

Doubtless you have seen the manuscript copies of some of Charles Dickens' works exhibited at the South Kensington Museum. You cannot inspect them without being impressed with the amount of careful work bestowed upon each novel. "Again, again, and again" the author read, re-read, erased, interlined, corrected, and improved before the copy was given to the printer. It is said of Alma Tadema, the well-known Academician, that he sits down every day at his easel, though occasionally without enthusiasm, and paints and paints on till the inspiration seizes him. It is thus that great things are done, and positions of influence and renown reached. Wordsworth, in his "Excursion," immortalises such a case when describing a miner who toiled for twenty years in search of a given object, and found it. He

> "Alone
> Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,
> Unseconded, uncountenanced; then, as time
> Passed on, while still his lonely efforts found
> No recompense, derided."

But the poet tells of the poor man's ultimate success.

> "Conspicuous to this day
> The path remains that linked his cottage door
> To the mine's mouth: a long and slanting tract
> Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,
> Worn by his daily visits to and from
> The darksome centre of a constant hope.
> * * * * * *
> And it is named, in memory of the event,
> The *Path of Perseverance*."

The same motto, "Again, again, and again," needs to be adopted in our religious life. A Christian's career is one of constant conflict. Spiritual foes must be faced each day and every day till the end of our pilgrimage. The "sword of the Spirit" and the "shield of faith" must be used repeatedly. Every step in our onward path has to be contended for.

The throne of grace has to be incessantly visited. We must go "again, again, and again" into the audience chamber of the King of kings. The seed of the Kingdom has to be sown with unwearied heart and hand. Not once or twice has the testimony for Christ to be borne; not once or twice has the vineyard to be tended, the tender plants trained, and the weeds uprooted: "again, again, and again" we must go about our Master's service. He cries to us, "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." "Pray without ceasing, and in everything with prayer and supplication make your request known unto God." "Be thou faithful unto death."

"Come, labour on:
No time for rest, till glows the western sky,
While the long shadows o'er our pathway lie,
And a glad sound comes with the setting sun,
'Servants, well done!'

"Come, labour on:
The toil is pleasant, the reward is sure;
Blessed are those who to the end endure;
How full their joy, how deep their rest shall be,
O Lord, with Thee!"

DOWN THE COWGATE.



"Three very modern worthies."

"AND that handsome spire up the road is——"

"That is the Chalmers Memorial Church," answered Mr. Fraser in a rather important tone.

"Oh, I thought his work lay more in the Cowgate and its suburbs."

"Of course it did; but there was no actual necessity for perpetuating his memory exactly on the same spot."

"I suppose not," I said, turning round from the window to confront my host. It was the first time he had acted in that capacity, and it was also my first day in Edinburgh. "I suppose not; only one always associates his name with that famous locality. It seems somehow quite out of place in such a respectable neighbourhood. You must know all those old places well?"

"Not any more than I am obliged to; but if you would like a turn through them, I could take you down to-morrow afternoon—only it's not by any means a romantic locality now, let me tell you."

Perhaps not to him. Mr. Fraser, I had already found out, was an exceedingly practical and business-like personage; but for people generally, who had not attained to that altitude, there must still be a visible story graven into the very stones of those ancient streets.

The grey November day was already darkening down when we crossed the Grassmarket the next afternoon, and began our pilgrimage through the busy regions that once folded in such a different scene. There was a venerable house before we had taken many steps, where one could almost fancy some enthusiastic Jacobite conference was still going on, but instead of the gay gallants who ought to have thronged the pavement in front, three very modern worthies were standing with their backs against the wall, two of them holding forth with great power upon the shortcomings of one Tam



"Bagpipes mean pretty hard work"—*p.* 277.

Tampson, who appeared to have recently raised his tariff for sleeping accommodation.

"I'd no have believed it of ony ither body, but there's no a mean trick he wadna condescend to for siller; man, he told me aboot it his ain sel."

"And a miserable hoose at the price—never a blink of a decent fire; he'll no find it pay in the long run, I'm thinking. There's mair hooses than his to be had for the seeking."

The third man took no part in the discussion, he was staring dejectedly down the street, that unmistakable stamp of better days in every feature. His companions looked quite capable of standing up for their rights, real or imaginary, but he belonged to a different class, and the silent sufferers incomprehensible music that only a Scotchman ever thoroughly appreciates.

We did not help him in his efforts at a living; it would have seemed quite a liberty to interrupt him even for his own benefit. In the presence of a genuine artist one has need to be respectful.

"If you want a garment of any sort, shape, or description, ancient or modern," remarked Mr. Fraser a stage further on, stopping before a second-hand shop just lighting up, "you will be able to get it here either by exchange or for cash down. We have had occasion to deal with one or two shady transactions in connection with this same place."

The frontage was not extensive, but the back stretched away into a dim vista of wearing apparel,



"Either exchange or cash down.

are usually those who stand most in need; there was a loose shilling in my pocket, and I slipped it into his hand.

"I am afraid you are not very well; will you take that and get some hot soup or coffee."

He did take it, with an astonished face certainly, but without any attempt at thanks. Mr. Fraser hurried me on rather grimly.

"Come, come, that sort of thing won't answer in this neighbourhood. The fellow is just an idle loafer; he ought to be out looking for work instead of lounging about at this time of day. If you really want to be charitable, here is the sort of man who deserves encouragement—he is doing something for his living. Bagpipes mean pretty hard work, though you might not think it."

They belonged to a stately, dignified old pensioner slowly stalking past, his whole attention concentrated on his screeching pipes, the shouting juveniles about him, the rattle of carts, and shrill cries of fish hawkers, alike unnoticed, in the swelling, suspended from the ceiling as though the owners had with one accord committed suicide by hanging themselves. Smaller trifles in the way of shoes, bonnets, and mufflers were exhibited in bundles outside, guarded by a grim old woman on the step. A wizened, sharp-faced man in a Kilmarnock bonnet had opened negotiations for a pair of boots, and was dealing out disrespectful comments upon them with great freedom.

"And how mich wad ye have the conscience to want for them?"—after diligently pointing out their weak points.

"Twa shillings."

"Twa bawbees, ye mean."

"Twa shillings; pat them doon if ye dinna need them."

"Ma certes! I'm thinking ye'll look lang for a buyer."

Close by were standing two Highlanders, their gay uniforms making quite a dash of colour in the place. They were busy complimenting two

bare-headed girls, and offering gratuitous advice upon the boot bargain.

"Our present-day heroes," I remarked sedately to Mr. Fraser.



JESSIE'S FATHER.

"Yes," he returned as sedately; "they have both the Afghan and Egyptian medals—the big fellow has four of them, I see."

With that the conversation lapsed. The man went away in triumph with his boots; the matter had ended in a compromise on both sides; and we slowly threaded our way along the crowded pavement. It was growing rather difficult to keep up any vivid impression of the Stuart glories. There was one deep carved stone doorway, crowned with curious little pepper-caster turrets, that had doubtless been the abode of brave knights once. A sickly, broken-down man was sheltering under it now. He shuffled out a pace or two as he saw us, with a pitiful request for a copper.

"It's unco hard to git wark the noo, sir, or I'd no be asking it."

"What is your work?"

"Onything I can get, maister; carrying things hame frae the sale-rooms maistly," he explained, with a hoarse fit of coughing.

"Does that child belong to you?" demanded Mr. Fraser, suddenly.

It was a tiny, ragged damsel, further back in the doorway, watching us from under a mop of tangled dark hair.

"Aye—Jessie, mak the leddy a bit curtsy."

Jessie made her "bit curtsy," and slipped up closer behind her father, tightly clutching a battered tin can. Mr. Fraser had a tender spot somewhere in his practical composition for the bairnies, and surreptitiously dropped a sixpence and a sweetie into the tin can. He gave the father an order on some lodging-house for the night—"though I doubt you'd do better in the Infirmary," he said, as he handed it to him.

"Maybe; but I canna leave the lassie; they'll no tak her in too."

"Is there no person you could leave her with?"

He shook his head, and dragged himself back to his doorway. Mr. Fraser made one more inquiry as we left him.

"Doesn't this close lead into the High Street?"

"Aye; straight on."

Straight on, indeed! It was a veritable corkscrew, with here and there a flight of steep steps and a slippery gutter across; but it did lead us into the High Street, where a little higher up—outlined against the sky—we saw the ponderous crown of the old Scottish Cathedral, St. Giles.

And there for two hours or more, past all extension for that day, we suspended our Cowgate pilgrimage; we argued and discoursed, with a fair amount of personal one-sidedness, of that worthy but undoubtedly obstinate divine John Knox, of the great Montrose, of the "bluidy Mackenzies," and the Covenanters' struggles against the powers that were. In one of the side chapels a thinly attended service was going on, and a middle-aged man with a strong, deep voice was reading the lesson; we sat down out of sight behind a distant pillar to listen.

"Behold, a sower went forth to sow, and some seed fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured it; some fell upon stony places; some fell among thorns, which sprang up and choked it; and other fell upon good ground, and brought forth fruit, some sixty, some an hundredfold."

There the reader ended, and we went softly on to another aisle; presently the tiny congregation melted



JESSIE.

away. As the minister passed on his way to the vestry, Mr. Fraser stepped forward and greeted him as an acquaintance of his own, and a rather useful one he proved himself, taking us through parts of the building we might not have seen otherwise, and expounding its grandeur with considerable eloquence and length. When he finally let us out into the deserted Parliament Square, it was too late for any question but that of finding our way home without delay.

Still, the nearest way took in a portion of the Canongate—indeed, the cathedral windows look right down it. A brilliantly lighted public-house adorned the first corner, and a disturbance of some kind was taking place in the doorway.

"Just putting out somebody who has taken as much as is good for him," observed Mr. Fraser philosophically, as we went out into the roadway to avoid it; but either we miscalculated the distance, or affairs inside had reached an unforeseen crisis, for when we were exactly opposite the door, the offender was suddenly propelled into Mr. Fraser's arms, where he remained perfectly indifferent to his exceedingly chilly reception. Limp and helpless though he was, it struck us oddly that his face had a familiar air. Light flashed upon us both at the same moment.

"Why, that is my reduced gentleman!" I cried.

"And your shilling has helped him into this plight," returned Mr. Fraser. "Where are the police? Missing, as usual."

"Here! I'll tak the chairge of him," put in a broad voice behind; "it's no that often he gets the chance of a bit pleasure."

"Does he live with you?" demanded Mr. Fraser, cheerfully relinquishing his burden to him of the anti-Tam-Tampson league.

"Whiles, noo and again; he's no great things, ony way, puir feckless body."

We hurried on, a little downcast at the incident. A heavily laden waggon of bales and packages was lumbering along beside us down the street. Presently it tried to turn sharply off up some side opening, and whether the strain was too great for the horses to manage, or the check too sudden, we could not distinguish, but the ponderous mass quivered and slipped, the cords that held it snapped like threads, and, before anyone had time even to realise the danger, nearly the half of it had toppled over into the road.

Cries and shouts rose up on all sides. In that crowded thoroughfare many had been too close at hand to escape. I stood on a step alone, while Mr. Fraser lent all the help he could. A few minutes—though it looked long enough at the time—and he came back with a shocked, startled face.

"There are only two dangerously hurt," he said; "a man and a little child—and they are the two we spoke to in the gateway this afternoon."

"Oh, dear!" was all I could ejaculate.

"See, they are bringing them up: they will both get into the infirmary together, after all."

We watched the shutters go by in silence—the sickly father, who would never need to shelter from the November wind in any doorway again; the little ragged child, who would be quite sure of a reception in those wide wards now—and then, as silently, we walked back to the respectable neighbourhood where stands the Chalmers Memorial Church. Somehow the Stuart memories seemed a little overshadowed now by this later hero, who had fought for others—not himself.

"My shilling was lost, your ticket for that poor man's lodging was lost, possibly the child's sixpence, too," I summed up rather mournfully, as we waited for the door to open; "for any good of it, it might as well have been left undone."

"And perhaps not," was the response. "I fancy there was a lesson for us all in that parable of the sower this afternoon: he has to go on sowing all the same wherever the seed may fall—that is his part in the matter; and, with all the failures, still some did come up the right way, remember."

Months afterwards came to me a line from the old grey city: "You will be pleased, I think, to hear that little Cowgate Jessie is in one of our orphanages, and growing up a bright, bonnie lassie. Even if she should not turn out among the hundredfold, she will surely rank somewhere among the sixty-fold."

SARAH PITT.



THE END OF MY MISAPPLIED SHILLING.

THE FISHERMAN'S CHARGE.

BY F. BAYFORD HARRISON.



THOSE who work among the poor of the great city of Manchester are aware that its courts and alleys are no less squalid and no less unhealthy than similar courts and alleys in London. Indeed, the atmosphere of Manchester is far less pure than that of the metropolis, while there is less of beauty and grandeur in its buildings. The parks and squares and palaces of London, and the shipping on its mighty river, are noble sights, which are not equalled by anything in the great manufacturing town. One wonders how flowers and children can grow up in this "Cotton Capital," and, so wondering, we who dwell among them try hard to transplant the human blossoms, now and then, into fresh air and lovely scenery. We send our children to the country, kind persons paying for them on the boarding-out system.

Several children from my parish had been to the Welsh village of Llangwen; and when, last summer, I found I could take a short holiday, nothing seemed to me better than to go where the little ones had gone, and look after their welfare at the same time with my own. The railway took me within a couple of miles of Llangwen, and, with my bag in my hand, I walked on, and soon found a clean, quiet lodging in which to locate myself for the inside of a fortnight. That evening I spent lounging beside the moonlit sea, drinking in refreshment and strength from the mountain air and the sea-breeze which meet in friendly rivalry on the coast of North Wales. Next morning I went to visit the little members of my flock who were gambolling in these fresh pastures.

I had seen them all except one, and found them all well. Then I asked for the house of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Thomas, and was directed to a white-washed cottage on the hill-side above the village.

At the cottage I found an elderly woman—Rachel Thomas, as her neighbours called her—a clean, tidy, but rather sad-looking person. I told her who I was, and said that I wished to see Rose Anstead.

Mrs. Thomas's face brightened at the child's name: "Rosie is gone with my husband a little way higher up the hill. He thought maybe they might find some mushrooms to sell to the gentry visitors who come to our village."

"Up there?" I said, pointing with my stick to a faint line which meant a footpath, or perhaps only a sheep-track.

"Yes, sir, up there. You will find Rosie so fat and hearty—more like her name than when she came to us. Oh, it is a blessed deed of you clergymen and ladies to send the white-faced mites down to our fresh air!"

"Rosie has been with you a long time," I remarked: "nearly three months. We must soon think of getting her home."

"Not yet, sir—not yet," and Mrs. Thomas's eyes filled with tears; "we have got to love her so, and I do believe she loves us." With those words the good woman turned away, and I suspected that some sorrow in her heart, as well as the pleasure of a strange child's company, underlay her emotion.

"Well, I must talk to the ladies at Manchester, and see what we can afford for Rose Anstead. You know, she is not the only one; there are hundreds wanting the change as much as Rose, or more."

"Yes, very likely," said Mrs. Thomas, relapsing into her dreary manner.

I then said "Good-morning," and went up the footpath, which led out on the open hill-side. Here and there were low walls of stones loosely laid together to form enclosures for the sheep at night. Presently I saw those whom I sought—an elderly man in the garb of a fisherman, and a young child, were slowly walking about the grass with their eyes bent on the ground. As I watched them from a distance, I saw the child put her hand into the man's hand, and in response he took her up in his arms and carried her towards one of the stone walls. When I came within speaking distance, I saw that he had placed her on some pieces of rock piled at the end of a rather neatly built wall, and that she was leaning against him with loving trust.

"Why, Rosie," I called out, "have you forgotten me?"

She turned her head. "Is it the minister from Manchester?" she said, in a shrill yet refined voice.

"Yes, Rosie; I have come from Manchester to see you and all the other little children who are staying in this beautiful seaside place. I suppose this is Mr. Richard Thomas. How do you do? I hope you find Rosie a good girl."

"She is good," said Richard Thomas; "good enough to make up for the bad ones. Do you think her looking well, sir?"

The scene was a pretty one. The weather-beaten man in his picturesque garb, with a stern, serious face, only softening when he looked at the child, she a daintily dressed creature, whose delicate complexion had hardly yet been browned by the sun or reddened by the wind; the dull grey stones contrasting with the vivid grasses and wild flowers all around; on my right the fields toning brown and grey until they were merged in the blue of the mountains; on my left the wide sea, soft and shiny in the summer calm, with a line of yellow light on the horizon. We townsfolk thank God most heartily for natural beauty.

XUM



"She was leaning against him with loving trust."—*p.* 280.

"Yes," I said, "she is looking well. I wish her mother could see her."

"She is a little tired now," said Thomas, "so we will go home.—Rosie, will you pick up the basket of mushrooms?—there are not many, the weather is too dry for them—and then run down the path."

Rosie did as she was told, and led the way back to the cottage.

"I am afraid she must soon go home," said I, as we walked; "there are other children wanting change, and funds are none too abundant."

"She ought to stay a while longer," said Thomas, whose Welsh expressions I shall not attempt to reproduce; "she was very white and sickly when she came here."

"You would not wonder at that if you saw the place she came from. Her mother is a young widow with three children, Rosie the eldest. They can only afford a little back-room in a dark lane, stifling with heat in summer and with fog in winter; damp, smoky, everything that is horrible. And often, as I know, the children have not half enough to eat, and the mother even less than they."

"All the more reason," said Richard Thomas, "that Rosie should stay with us."

"It might be well," I said, "that one of the others should have a turn. It is chiefly a question of cost."

"Mrs. Anstead must have got some relations," said Thomas gruffly; "let them pay for Rosie."

I shook my head. "They will not do that, I am afraid."

He had now nearly reached the end of the footpath where it came out near the cottage.

"Look here, sir," cried the fisherman suddenly, "we'll take Rosie for less money, if you will let her stay with us."

I paused and looked full at him. His stern features were lighted up with eagerness, and his eyes grew soft as they followed Rosie, who ran on and disappeared into the cottage.

"Are you going down to the village, sir? because I'd like to walk with you. I want to speak to my mates about going out this evening, so your way is my way."

I inquired of him as to the fishing, and arranged to go with him that evening and see what sea-fishing was like. My fly-rod was little use to me while the streams were so low and the water so clear. But Thomas soon left the subject of his boat and came back to the child.

"You see, sir, my wife has grown so fond of Rosie that I am sure it would break her heart again to part with the child. She has had her heart broken once already, has my wife."

It was a curious expression. I asked, "How was that? Perhaps you will not mind telling me, as it is my business in life to comfort the sorrowful and help those in any need."

"Why—it was Martha——" There he stopped, grew very red, and dashed on again: "My wife has got a hole—an empty place in her heart, the place that Martha went out of. Maybe you have got a grown-up daughter, sir?"

I nodded.

"Think of her wanting to leave her home just that she might see the world! Such a world as it is to see, some of it! And to say she would go off with strangers before she had even asked leave of her father and mother! Not but what they were nice people; I say naught against them. But in *my* young days boys and girls did not step outside the door without saying 'May I?'"

Richard Thomas was reviving his old anger. "In these days," said I, "young people have more liberty than they used to have in our days; and I agree with you that they often take more than is good for them. But why did your daughter wish to leave home?"

"She said," answered Thomas, with a sneer, "that she wished to be off our hands, and to earn her own bread!"

"Surely that was a right feeling."

"We did not want her to go. She should have asked leave. She engaged herself as housemaid to the lady, who was a visitor, like as you may be, and then she came home and said to her mother, 'I've got a place, and I'm going to the other side of Chester, and I shall cost you no more money.' It near broke her mother's heart."

"But—but, Mr. Thomas," I put in, "why did you object to her going to a good situation?"

"I did *not* object to her going, but I objected to the way of her going. I know I'm determined in my will, and Martha took after me and was headstrong too. I got angry, and my wife got angry, and Martha was most angry of all. She said she would go, and I said she might go provided she would promise not to come back again; and so she did go, and that broke her mother down."

While the fisherman was telling me this, I was wondering at the marvellous perversity of the human heart; self-will and pride had parted parents and daughter, and, apparently, on neither side was there any hope of meeting any more in this world.

"And that is why," added Thomas, "little Rosie Anstead does my wife so much good; she fills up that gap in a sort of way." The sob which caught his breath showed that the gap in his own heart was not filled up.

He then spoke about our fishing expedition in the evening, and said no more of his daughter or of Rosie; and I said no more on either subject, though I was not without hope of bringing about a reconciliation between Richard Thomas and his Martha.

The fishing was very successful; it occupied all the night and some of the small hours of the morning, and was an exciting though rather a silent process. Afterwards I was not inclined for much more than a stroll; but the second day after it I paid a visit to Mrs. Thomas, having previously watched her husband take Rosie to the school, and then sit down to the lengthy business of mending his nets.

I soon brought the conversation with Mrs. Thomas round to the subject of the absent Martha. "Your husband has never forgiven her, I perceive."

"No, sir. She never asked for pardon. My husband is a just man, but he is very hard. Yet I know how in his heart he frets after Martha, and that is why he has taken so to Rosie; a young thing, a girl thing, does so brighten the home."

"Now, tell me, Mrs. Thomas, have you never heard from Martha since she left home?"

"Oh yes, sir, many a time. She often wrote to me, but never to her father. I used to put her letters behind that china dog on the mantle-shelf, and sometimes, when I was out washing at the back, I used to peep in at the side-window over my pot of musk, and there was Richard, on the sly like, reading Martha's letter."

"Then his heart is not so hard as he wants to make out?"

"No. But when she wrote that she was thinking of getting married, he went into a passion fit to kill himself! He would not look at her letter, and, as soon as I told him what she had written, he said that if she married without his leave he would never forgive her if she went on her knees to him."

"I am afraid," was my remark, "that he has been very much in the wrong all through this affair. Did Martha ask his leave?"

"No; she was over twenty-one. She only wrote once more after I wrote what her father said. All she put in her letter was, 'I am married and as happy as the day is long.' Dear, dear! to think that I don't even know my girl's name!"

I tried to comfort Mrs. Thomas as well as I could, and I saw that all bitterness had long ago faded from her feelings. I left her this afternoon, and said that I would come again next day. And when I did, I found Thomas and Rosie also at home.

"Well, my child," I said to the pretty creature, "do you want to see mother?"

"Yes, I want to see mother. Please take me to mother. Why is mother such a long way off?" And the lip portended a sob.

"But, Rosie, do you want to leave Mr. and Mrs. Thomas?"

She glanced from one to the other. "Oh, no; I want them all—I want them all three."

"Well, we shall see.—Now, Mr. Thomas, look here: do you like plain speaking?"

"Plain speaking or none at all." His face was rigid.

"Then, I must tell you that I have been thinking it over, and I am sure that you have been more in the wrong than your daughter, though she has been very wrong too. But she has suffered more than you have, and has bitterly repented."

"How do you know?" cried Mr. Thomas sharply.

"I am sure of it. It must have been so. Richard Thomas, will you forgive your daughter, and take her back into your heart, if she humbly asks your pardon?"

"I'll wait till she does. I'll wait till she comes to me."

From the cottage I could see the bit of wall where the fisherman had seated his little charge with all the tenderness of a father. The man's heart could not be hard all through. And I could picture coming down the path on the hill-side a ragged, starving prodigal, son or daughter. "Listen! 'While his undutiful son was yet a great way off, the father went out to meet him.' If Martha, poor and sorrowful, were there on yonder path, would you go forth to meet her and greet her?"

He went outside and looked round, and came back.

Rosie's small voice broke in—"Is mother coming here? Oh, how beautiful!"

We all were startled. Then I said, "If you will not welcome your own daughter, will you welcome Rosie's mother—a lonely widow, toil-worn, careworn, cast-off, partly through her own fault, by those who should be the first to forgive her the follies of her youth and to accept the penitence of her later years?"

The fisherman muttered, "Rosie's mother may come; she can have Martha's room."

"There are two other children," I said cautiously.

"There is Dicky—he is such a darling!" piped Rosie; "and you don't know what a beauty little Ray is, though she is as white as a daisy, and has thin arms and crooked legs, and eyes as big as yours, Mr. Thomas, and just exactly like them."

I had my own reasons for wishing to get away from the cottage before the child's prattle raised up any difficulties or opposition. So I stood in the doorway with my hat in my hand. "Then I understand you to say, Mr. Thomas, that Mrs. Anstead and Dicky and Ray may come and occupy your spare room, if I can persuade the widow to do so?"

"Yes."

"You will not go back from your word whatever may come of it?"

"No."

I put on my hat, with exultation in my heart, when, to my horror, Mrs. Thomas pushed forward and asked eagerly, "How soon will you send for Martha?"

I thought she had spoilt everything, and I made no reply.

"How soon will you send for mother?" said Rosie.

"Richard Thomas, do you go back of your word?"

"No."

"Thank God! She is a great way off, but she is coming. By this time to-morrow, I hope."

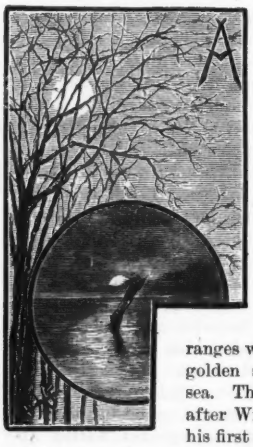
I blundered away, hardly seeing how I went, down to the post-office, whence I telegraphed directions to my curate as to the journey of Mrs. Anstead and her children. I knew that neither he nor the widow would be surprised by my telegram, for some time ago I had planned to make the attempt which now had been carried out so successfully. Indeed, my visit to Llangwen had been made with this object in chief, and others only in the second place. I also wrote by the evening post a letter which Mrs. Anstead would receive next morning.

By the 4.23 train she arrived, with the little children and a very little luggage. I had a donkey-cart for children and bags, and I walked with Mrs. Anstead within sight of her girlhood's home.

While she was yet a great way off her father perceived her, and came out, and fell upon her neck and kissed her. And I, who had no right to intermeddle with their joy, set down the babies and the bundles on the sward, and led the donkey back to the village and its stable. And I did not go again to the cottage for several days. When I did so, I said farewell to the happy party of three generations, promising to settle everything in Manchester as regarded Martha Anstead leaving that town for good, and also some other matters which would add to her comfort in her new, or rather her old home.

A WINTER PASTORAL.





A RED sun low in the horizon, a glowing, golden disc, like the shield of one of Milton's archangels. The background—if such term may be fitly applied to sky—of a deep green, rather than blue, with fleecy amber bars set here and there in those fitting intervals which Nature so deftly arranges with mystic fingers, like golden strands in an emerald sea. This is the story of a sky after Winter has just given us his first preludings with strong and honest voice. This for the sky, but what of mother earth? Now and again, of late, there have come, half daringly, from the cold east, clouds of a preternatural bluish-grey—those clouds from forth which Shakespeare says that Mars "doth pluck the masoned turrets"—spangled with hail and fringed with icicles. These, as they trailed along the western hill-tops, were sometimes illumined by the setting sun, but their borrowed glory was short-lived, and the advancing twilight changed the fringe of purple into an uncertain depth of cold, nebulous, undefinable gloom.

When a few of those sunsets have come and gone—strange intervening gleams, bearing with them memories of autumn and prophecies of winter—at last the snow comes, gently and tenderly, and often with as sweet and loving touch as that of a mother spreading the spotless coverlet over her weary and treasured child. With what strange and tender silence that mysterious snow falls! and often, too, when all the world is asleep. And when the curtain of night is lifted, as comes the new-born day, we are reminded of the exquisitely tender words of the Psalmist—"He giveth His snow like wool."

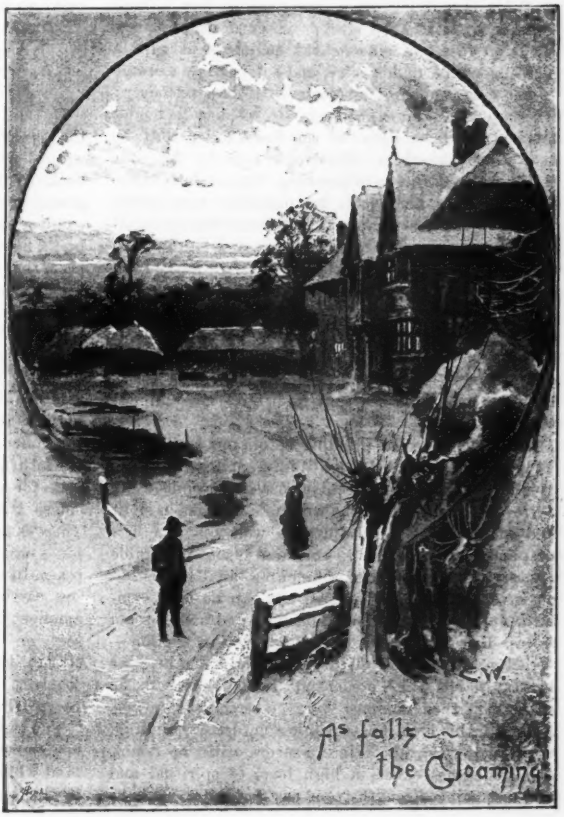
After winter has hovered around our outposts for a space, giving us preludings of his inevitable approach



in the ruddy sunset, the fierce north wind, and the stinging, merciless hail, he at last works his wondrous, though oft-repeated, miracle over all the earth. While men sleep he takes from his storehouse his drapery of snow, and when the world awakes all the land is hushed in a new mysterious silence, and clad in a virginal purity that all the other seasons could never hope to bring. There is a strange wonder of stillness on the earth. Even Night, with his calm, circling stars and his mantle of sleep, has no calmness like this.

But, though all sounds of man's labour have ceased, the earth has gained in beauty through this wondrous transformation. Nature has been dowered with a virginal spotlessness and purity which all the shining treasures of summer and autumn could never have bestowed. The earth is now clothed with a garment whose fibres have been carded and spun by the winds and the clouds, and which has been woven by unseen hands as it silently and gently fell. The forlorn and drooping relics of autumn's last hours—the tangled rose-bush, the limp, faded pansy, and the rusted marigold—are now hidden in tender kindliness, with a coverlet pure and shining as an angel's robe. All roughnesses are made smooth, and every dint and unsightly rift is rounded and toned with a skill which Phidias or Praxiteles never could approach. There is nothing harsh on earth's breast. Heaven's snowy robe, untainted as the light of the stars, has fallen on hill and dale, on thorp and town, for leagues around. The stately ancestral hall and the humble thatched cottage, the marble terrace and the sick boy's window-sill, the historic battle-field of old-world days, and the quiet, holy God's acre, are all lying peacefully under the stainless covering which the reverent soul accepts as a fresh revelation, containing in it a message alike suggestive of the beauty of holiness and the enfolding compassion of that "dear God Who made and loveth all."

If the wind has been strong over-night as the snow fell—strange that in a snowstorm even a strong wind makes little sound—it is interesting to study the snow-wreaths under the various aspects of light and shadow which the day may bring. In beauty of outline and grace of curve these wreaths are perfect. They stretch along hillside and valley, and sometimes are even formed across the highway, like waves of



spotless marble petrified into the perfection of beauty of colour and form. Their curves in variety and grace are inconceivably perfect. The gradation of tints, from the clearest transparency on the upper portion of the overhanging curve down to the hollow of the half-arched wave, is wonderful alike in modulation and compass. If seen under the glow of a strong winter sunset these tints on and under the overhanging crest—liquid green, dark blue, or rich opal—fall on the sight with a crystalline splendour which will not readily be forgotten.

We have long had the feeling that Winter, in the main, has had but poor justice done him, both by sentimentalists and folks matter-of-fact enough. Certain analogists have finally set him down as the symbol of old age and death, thinking thereby that they have settled the dear old fellow's destiny and position for all time. Not so! The keenest students of Nature find in him a mystery and a majesty which all the rosy colours and the most brilliant sunshine of the other seasons can never reveal. Spring is dainty and sweet, but fickle. Summer is rich and luscious, but has a Delilah-like fascination—the siren's gift of sleep-giving song. Autumn—to the poet, as he thinks of the seasons—is sentimental and whining, in spite of his many-tinted garments and his spasmodic appeals to us as to colour and song. We see, however, that his is a dying cause, and that he has a hard struggle even to keep *himself* in good countenance. He is, in fact, not sincere, and he leaves us with a pleading whine in his voice, and a departing message which we cannot but associate with despondency.

Not so with Winter, however. He, too, has his tender touches and sensibilities of the finest order, only he does not make them offensive to you by for ever thrusting them into your presence. Painter he is of the highest order; no sunsets, for matchless blue, ruddy tint, and amber bars, can match those of Winter, in all the rolling year. Sculptor he is too, and works with material whiter than marble, and to finer issues than ever were given us in the masterpieces of Greece or Rome. Artist is he in all things, and that in the grandest and most dramatic order. What music is so solemn as his, as there rolls the breath of his hurricane through leagues of swaying pines, giving forth, to those who have the soul to listen, the sublimest psalms?

In this little bit of pleading before our readers, we happen to hold the brief for Winter, and we mean to give him our modest yet chivalrous defence, made up by reverie, analogy, and the wondrous mercies in sight and sound which Nature can so well bestow. His first and lasting dignity in our mind is his unalterable honesty. It is thorough, unflinching, final. He is not an inventor of genial phrases, nor can he turn compliments well; he knows nothing of drawing-room attire. He has, however, one grand, glorious quality—veracity. This is his signet-ring; and when he, year by year, hands us his credentials, sealed therewith, he expects neither nonsense nor *un*-veracity from us. After all, this is an unspeakable comfort to thinking, truth-loving mortals. He is a severe critic, no doubt, and sometimes exacts a high level of spiritual and self-sacrificing strength from us; but, after we have come out of the transaction—it may be duty, it may be sacrifice—are we not all the richer for it through the remaining varied music of our lives?

Winter has another grand point in his character, he never flatters you by any servile condescension; he may be gruff, but he is never rude, according to the vulgar acceptation of the term. Only the cold cynic who knows nothing of the charms of Nature or the love of human hearts would call him unkind; for has not his rugged generosity brought us for centuries the ever-recurring joys of the Yule-log? and does he not bring to us that exquisite angel-song at every Christmas-tide, that glorious chorus of heavenly minstrelsy which shall be the loftiest Christian idyll for all time: "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men"?

The man who thinks that the beauty of the earth has passed away when the last russet leaves have fallen from the rugged oak and the "lingering ash" knows little of nature. If he should go abroad in the early day—on the condition that his soul could see and receive the message—he will find the east flecked with rosy cloudlets which summer at no time has ever seen. And it is only a peaceful winter morning—after a cold, petrifying frost has stilled earth and air overnight—that can reveal to perfection that calm cloudland scene, an example of slow but graceful movement so beautifully sketched by the poet:—

> "Underneath the young grey dawn
> A multitude of dense white fleecy clouds
> Were wandering in thick flocks along the mountains,
> Shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind."

By-and-by, just ere the sun rises from over the pine-fringed eastern hills, the low horizon—against which the firs stand black and weird—is all flecked with amber bars. They have not the rugged grandeur of those battalion-like clouds of a sultry summer day, but stretch along in thinnest fleece, each belt a floating cirrus of transparent gold. Here and there they lie in the low east above the awakening hills, like league-long shining strands on the rim of emerald seas. Then mounts the lordly sun in fiery scintillations, making at once a subtle change in cloudland. The spectrum bars fade away into dim yellow-white flecks of mist, while high in the zenith, where, till this magic moment, there seemed to be nothing but the deep azure of infinity, there suddenly start into our sight the most exquisite fleeces of pulsing warmth and glory. Then, and only then, strange to say—for all has hitherto been still as the grave—there comes the awakening breeze of a winter morning. There is now a long-continued and cold *sough* from the pines on the hill-side yonder, a sound which you hear psalm-like and solemn as you stand on the yet dreaming earth. Overhead the awakened breeze rustles amongst the stripped branches, and there fall at your feet, or flutter hard and crisp over to the frozen stream, in deep maroon or pale yellow, the stray, stubborn leaves of the gnarled oak and the stately beech which have outlived their fellows.

The earth now lies in the morning sunshine fair in her snowy dress. There is not an object in all the land which is not pleasing to the eye and refreshing to the soul. In our newly quickened wonder we do

not seem to miss the thousand colours of our garden mosaics or the ebb and swell on the wind-swept fields of golden grain. This is not desolation, far less is it death, but only a wondrous robe of purity thrown over the sleeping earth, a beauteous revelation, making all things graceful, pure, and sweet.

Nor do the dwellings of men suffer from this new-born transformation. The solid, reputable farm-house, surrounded by the trim, cosy cots of its servants, is more homely and warmer-looking than ever it was at summertide; and, as the gloaming falls, one can see gleaming through all the windows the ruddy glow of cheerful fires. All natural sounds are sharper, as the air is crisp and clear. The lowing of the kine, as they slowly wend their way from the byre to the spring to drink, is fuller and richer; the cackling of the hens is more aggressive to the ear, while the cock's clarion has a brazen sound; the maiden's laugh is cheerier and more trustful, while the ploughman hums, with richer warmth, some dear old fireside song of love. All the sounds of life around the homestead seem to be inspired by human love and tenderness, either in possession or in sympathetic relationship. The vitreous treble of the robin has a ring of trusting joy in it as he pipes from his perch on the plough-handle to the pigeons cooing drowsily by the open barn door. All human sounds are healthier and more gladsome, and human hearts are nearer in touch; and in the eventide one can hear the merry jest and gleesome laugh from these open cottage doors; and maidens' faces beam in the ruddy glow of the firelight, and soft eyes respond to loving looks —for are they not drinking the pure joys of love in the fleeting hour and in the presence of the shepherd lads who have come to woo them, from over the dividing hills?

Some of our poets, as we all know, have left us charming pictures of winter. We all remember, and not without affection, the quiet, tender words of the bard of Olney:—

> "Oh, Winter, ruler of the inverted year,
> Thy scattered hair with sleet-like ashes filled,
> Thy breath congealed upon thy lips, thy cheeks
> Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
> Than those of age, thy forehead wrapt in clouds,
> A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
> A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
> But urged by storms along its slippery way,—
> I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
> And dreaded as thou art!"

This, it is true, is not magnificent writing—Cowper never aspired to be dramatic—but it is *truth*, and in such sweet, homely array!

The Scottish poet Grahame paints a winter picture of a rural churchyard, as seen by the passer-by, which, in equal scope, could not be surpassed:—

> "High-ridged, the whirled drift has almost reached
> The powdered keystone of the churchyard porch;
> Mute hangs the hooded bell; the tombs lie buried."

Wordsworth has a most delightful and homely touch in connection with the contrast he draws between the cosiness within and the chill without during a snowstorm at night:—

> "How touching, when, at midnight, sweep
> Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,
> To hear—and sink again to sleep."

And now, even though perchance it may be mid-winter, let us, like Memnon, be children of Aurora. The winter sunrise has in it music equal to that which the richest meadows of summer have ever waited for in luxurious trance. The winds, at intervals, from out their caves of darkness, may sweep around our dwellings with rough voice, but they are the same winds which have made, and to solemn issues, the pine trees their harps, and which have sent their music deep into the hearts of all men who have chosen to hear. Those winds, snow-laden though they be, come to us fresh from Olympus. In their loud song and their mysterious ebbing and flowing they remind us of the rise and fall which give the majestic swing to the rolling hexameters of the Odyssey and the Iliad, and lead us to feel that the poem of Creation goes on with an uninterrupted grandeur, ever nearing the central, compassing music of the eternities.

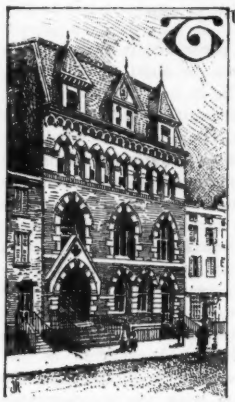
And now, ere we are, for the time, sundered from each other, in this our mutual winter musing, might it not be well that each of us should part tenderly with the genial, warm-hearted, though brusque old man? In many things he has given us exquisite delight, and that even in the midst of his gruff, frank honesty. And if he should suggest during his reign, and by his prescriptive right per calendar, the appropriateness of a heaven-arranged time of sleep for all the wearied earth, do not his final sunsets blend with the fresh, glowing prophecy of a new spring, with its faint pulsations of awakening life? If, in his stay with us, hail and snow are, at intervals, born of his breath, or if the diapason of his hurricane appals for hours the poor mortals of a moonless, storm-wrapped land, still, the dramatic splendour with which he clothes his every action and influence, however grand or subtle, makes us richer in wisdom and stronger in true strength. And, on his passing away, a departure not unmingled with pathos, we are led to feel that in contact with him we have received a new, mysterious, yet strong force, the force which the rugged grandeur of opposition and adversity brings. Nor is his going away unaccompanied by tenderness and forward-looking thoughts of hope; for his departing footsteps keep time to the first strains of the far-off music coming from the Eastern hills, and the early flickerings of spring give us the golden prophecy of the time "when the shadows shall flee away."

ALEXANDER LAMONT.

"THE CONSCIENCE OF THE STATES."

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE REV. JOHN HALL, D.D., NEW YORK.

BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.



FIFTH AVENUE CHURCH MISSION.

TURNING out of Broadway, in New York, and looking up Fifth Avenue, one sees nothing but mansions and church spires. Fifth Avenue might be called "Church Row." There are the "Brick Church," the "Church of Heavenly Rest," the "Church of the Divine Paternity," and others. There, too, are the Saracenic Synagogue of the Jews, and the large white marble cathedral of the Roman Catholics. There, too, rises the lofty spire and the open iron-work spirelette of the solid brown-stone Gothic church where Dr. John Hall ministers. It is said to have cost a million dollars, and that amount was readily subscribed by the wealthy Presbyterians. It is said that men representing four hundred millions attend that church, so that it would be easy for them to pay for such a holding.

Inside, the place is most commodious. The massive oaken pews are invitingly comfortable. Light falls through windows of faintly stained glass, the patterns of which it must be, alas! confessed, are too much derived from the turning of the kaleidoscope. The glare of the gas is toned by being placed behind ground glass in circular niches below each window, and the bad air is carried off by tubes above. A gradual slope leads from the entrance along the aisles to the rostrum. This is of carved oak, with a reading-desk. Over it is an elaborate Gothic canopy, which forms the seat of the organist and of the precentor, who, by his dark-coated prominence, somewhat detracts from the attention which should be given to the minister.

Strains of music so soft as scarcely to be heard are played preliminary to the coming of the venerated pastor.

Here comes Dr. Hall. Arrayed in Genevan gown, and carrying a small Bible in his hand, he ascends the pulpit. His rounded face and benevolent expression draw irresistibly your attention. With hands slowly and gracefully clasped, he seems to bow at once all hearts in prayer. The prayer is calm and devout—real prayer, and not made prayer.

The service on one Sunday afternoon when I was present was the Observance of the Lord's Supper. Before the celebration the minister read a list of thirty names of new members. Among them was a Chinese, Che Wung, who had been baptised during the week in the presence of a number of his fellow-countrymen at the mission building.



DR. HALL'S STUDY.



THE REV. JOHN HALL, D.D.
(From a Photograph by G. G. Rockwood, New York.)

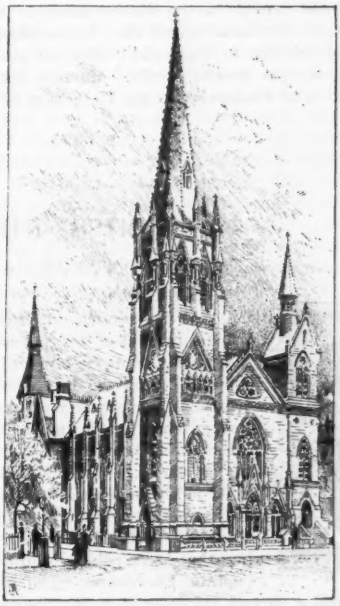
Tenderly and earnestly Dr. Hall spoke of the uses the ordinance was intended to serve, of the opportunity it gave God's people to pledge themselves afresh to His service, and of the strength to faith which might be gained by its observance. He spoke of how, apart from knowledge of its meaning, its observance might be but a piece of formalism, of how love and obedience were implied, and of how it behoved us in every way to yield ourselves to the will of Christ. "Have there not been," he said, "some of us who have passed through the winter of the soul? All seemed blank and dead. Now let us have the springtide of joy and gladness." His words to the onlookers were pathetic and persuasive. There was no straining after effect, but the putting forth of chastened power and natural eloquence.

Overpowering was the effect of the uprising of the twelve hundred communicants singing, "According to Thy gracious Word, In meek humility." Very orderly and reverently were the sacred emblems distributed, and then, after more singing and prayer, we separated. I have attended several other services at that church, but none have been so impressive as that I have just mentioned.

On another occasion I heard Dr. Hall utter words that may well be cherished: "The memory of some men is like a message from Heaven! . . . When the indelible seal of character is set for eternity, it is too late to think of what our lives may speak in the memories of survivors!"

I have, on a former visit to New York, had the pleasure of dining with Dr. Hall, and seeing him in the freeness of home life; but on my recent visit I found him in a new home, far better furnished, and more artistic, quaint, and convenient than the old. A plot of ground was vacant, and likely to be used as a site for a store; but the trustees of the church purchased it. The old manse was sold, and a new one built next to the church. Had this not been done, a painfully plain and tall warehouse-looking building might have been erected, which would have been an eyesore, as well as effectual in dwarfing the tasteful Gothic church. Thirteen thousand pounds were paid for the land, and another twelve thousand expended on the manse. It is indeed a model of taste and convenience, and it ought to be for that amount. The entrance hall is diversified with broad twisted stairway. A little room at the foot of the stairs is the dining-room, and again in the cosy study I had talks with Dr. Hall on various topics. The study is not large, but is fitted with an *annexe* that can hold a number of volumes. The form of the fireplace would delight, I think, even Ruskin. I told Dr. Hall I wanted to sketch it, and he kindly left me for a time that I might do so uninterruptedly.

He showed me also, in the dining-room, how a recess had been built into which he could perfectly fit a sideboard, which had been a gift from his former congregation at Armagh, in Ireland. He brought out also a picture of wild deer sniffing the air: a picture which had been presented to him by an artist—Bierstadt—who had painted it under the inspiration of hearing a sermon of his: "As the hart panteth after the



FIFTH AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

water-brooks," etc. The artist said, "You painted in words the picture; so to you, Dr. Hall, it belongs."

Through the kindness of Dr. Hall, I was enabled to attend the unveiling of the statue of the Pilgrim in the Central Park. He gave me his own ticket, and so I heard at close quarters Mr. George W. Curtis, the great political lawyer, deliver an oration which made my British blood tingle and thrill with admiring response.

Dr. Hall is of Scoto-Irish descent. His birthplace was County Armagh, Ireland. He was in Belfast College at the age of thirteen. Spite of his extreme youth, he was repeatedly Hebrew prize-man. As soon as he was licensed to preach—at the age of twenty—he was chosen as "students' missionary" in the west of Ireland. There he wrought well, and gained invaluable experience. Then he was chosen to be pastor of the first Presbyterian church in Armagh. A few years after he was called to the Church of Mary's Abbey, now Rutland Square, in Dublin. Here he became very popular, and pursued earnestly his studies. He became also editor of the *Evangelical Witness*, and he received from the Queen the honorary appointment of Commissioner of Education for Ireland. In 1867 he was a delegate from the General Assembly of the Church in Ireland to the Presbyterian Churches of the United States. He was earnestly welcomed, and his eloquent addresses were greatly approved.

After his return to Ireland, he received by telegram a call to the church where he now ministers. He had great difficulty in breaking away from his people. I was witness in Dublin of the intense affection in which he was held. He entered upon a wider sphere, and has filled it with honour to himself and benefit to the denomination to which he belongs. He has delivered the "Lyman-Beecher" course of lectures to theological students at Yale, and has written several works. He also occupies the position of Chancellor to the University of New York, and Chairman of the Board of Home Missions, and discharges the duties with regularity. He has several missions also under his care. Some of them might "run alone;" but they prefer to be cemented still with the parent-church. He goes in his schoolroom also every Sunday twenty minutes before service, and so encourages teachers and scholars.

Speaking of his work, Dr. Hall said, "I call on my people twice a year at their homes. I do not like preaching to people unknown to me. They, moreover, will not get so much good from my sermons as if they knew me. I am not a great preacher, and I know it; but my people know and love me, therefore they profit by hearing me. If a man comes out here and does something abnormal, or says something outrageous, it gets into the papers and he becomes notorious; but not if he goes on his way calmly preaching the Gospel.

"Various reports are circulated concerning my wealth, but I am not a rich man."

I smiled at this, as reports had been recently put in the papers that even his marriage fees amounted in six months to thirty thousand dollars, and that young ladies often stipulate with those to whom they promise their hands that they shall be married by the millionaire preacher.

Whether rich or poor, one cannot but feel that in any position of life Dr. Hall would have come to the front. He is so true, and humble, and persistent that he must have succeeded. People say of him now that "he is the conscience of the States." What he says is quoted, and taken almost as Gospel.

"Mind the steps," he said, as I left him and leapt down the massive, ornate flight into the great Avenue. It was brilliant with its lines of electric light, but I felt I had left a greater light by far within that quiet manse of the fashionable portion of New York, and one could only pray that he might long be preserved to lift up Christ as the true Light and Hope of the sinful and eager multitudes of this great gateway to the West.

MISS HILARY'S SUITORS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WILFUL YOUNG WOMAN," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER X.

GREAT was the amazement, tremendous the turmoil of tongues among the strictly domestic circle of Abbotswick, when the late mistress's disposal of her property was known among them. And known it was before the dethroned heiress quitted the old house. While Mr. Milroy stood in the porch waiting for his dog-cart, taciturn and thoughtful, Mr. Bevis within had been revealing the extraordinary tidings to Captain Cavenham. The young lawyer had a shrewd suspicion as to why the gallant officer hung about so anxiously, and, being himself neither over-generous nor over-sympathetic, he was uncommonly amused at the horror which overspread his listener's features. Even Wilkins, who was serving them with coffee, preserved his outward composure better, though for one second he felt as if down must go his tray—best china and all. Five minutes afterwards, when he had solemnly bowed poor crestfallen Captain Cavenham off the premises, he declared in the servants' hall that he had felt "struck entirely all of a heap; and as for what that Mr. Bevis had said, he couldn't bring himself to "believe it no ways"; and all his hearers agreed the news was incredible, and *must* be false.

But then had come a rousing peal of the drawing-room bell, and Mr. St. John's order, given in a voice husky with rage, for brougham and waggonette

immediately. Mrs. St. John, flustered out of all reticence—never a strong point with her—had invoked Joyce's aid in a hurried packing-up, and confided to her, with torrents of tears, that poor Miss Hilary was going, never to return. "Miss Humphreys had left her next to nothing at all. Everything was 'that' Mr. Stafford's! And, dear, dear, dear! he must be very deep; and she was very miserable. Where she should put Miss Hilary to sleep in her small house she couldn't think. What a pity it seemed for them to be so cramped for space when there were a lot of rooms perhaps standing empty in this great house! And, oh! there were the children's things to pack. No one had ever called her a spiteful woman, but she did wish now, from the bottom of her heart, one of them had not been named Philippa. And why, why had she unluckily bought them two costumes each? and trimmed with corded silk! Sateen would have been amply sufficient, considering the circumstances."

In the midst of which lamentations up strode Mr. St. John, with terse directions for Miss Hilary St. John's personal requirements to be put together without loss of time. Then the young deposed mistress had been seen crossing the gallery, and disappearing for a brief space into Aunt Phil's chill, empty room. Returning, she had taken her heavily crape-trimmed hat from the hand of the half-scared woman, with a curiously wistful "Thank you," and, without farewell to any, looking neither right nor left, had passed down through the clusters of wondering, whispering servants, and so quitted the house of whose possession, one short hour before, all had felt her assured.

So it was actually true! It was no make-up of that sharp-eyed young lawyer. As the little cavalcade set off Brainford-ward, Wilkins, with a gasp of dismay, marched his subordinates off to their own regions, through the red-baize doors, and sinking into his own arm-chair, ejaculated with a groan——

"Well, of the whole of the craziest cranks our poor old missus ever treated us to, this last is the head one. There's no mistake about that;" which remark was received with a whole chorus of confirmation.

"It's what I shouldn't have suspected—never!" cried Mrs. Wilkins, her tone implying that for that cause alone Miss Humphreys' deed ought to have been beyond the pale of possibility. "For the missus that have remembered the whole of *us* proper and thoughtful like" (Mr. Milroy had just given the butler that agreeable information before leaving) "to go and serve her very own in such a fashion wholly puts me out. It's not as though Miss Hilary had angered her, nor worrited her, nor wexed her, and it do seem a shame!"

"It do!" echoed half a dozen voices; and Joyce, very red-eyed and plaintive, took up the tale.

"As for vexin' her, Miss Hilary never meant it, poor dear, but she did put missis out now and again. That I've seen full often, specially of late."

"As how, Miss Joyce?" questioned Wilkins, with a judicial air, that suggested getting to the root of the matter now.

"Oh, 'tisn't so easy to phrase how, Mr. Wilkins, but with orderin' this and that, and makin' as if she was real missus already; talkin' of things as if they was her own, and so forth. I know mistress was mighty put out when I just happened to be tellin' her some of poor Miss Hilary's plans for the garden that she'd just spoke about to Bell."

"Then, why," said Bell severely, "why did you talk on 'em at all, Miss J'yce?" Hilary's devotion to his flowers made her a huge favourite with Bell, spite of her occasional freaks in the way of cutting up lawns and paths. "When a womin have left off bein' a-seedlin', so to speak, one don't expect her to go sowin' mischief and rakin' up ill-will in families where she's planted. That's what I call turnin' out a regular noisome weed 'stead of a useful wegetable. What call had you to tell the poor old missus anything? Miss J'yce, I wonder at you!"

"So do I," said the cook, between whom and the lady's maid rankled a jealousy not unconnected with Mr. Bell. "I wouldn't have said a word to hurt the poor young lady, that I wouldn't!"

"Oh! go on; set upon me, all of you, do," cried Joyce, hysterically. "I wasn't fond of Miss Hilary at all; oh dear, no. I'd buttoned her boots and brushed her pretty hair and waited on her for fifteen years, off an' on, without carin' the least mite about her, of course. Why, I'm not going to say Miss Hilary was a angel, for she'd got her faults like the rest of us, and wasn't as thoughtful as if she'd been double her age; but a kinder heart than hers never beat in nobody's bosom, and sooner than have gone and set her aunt against her wilful, I'd have gone and eat deadly nightshade out of the hedge; and that you all know, and so do Mr. Bell."

Here Joyce broke into such very doleful sobs that the penitent gardener set to work to console her. Her audience generally agreed that Miss Humphreys' last astonishing whim could be noways laid to her charge; and all, true to the principle of highly valuing what they had not got, began deploring Miss Hilary, and recounting the excellences of her they had lost.

"She'd have been a real free-handed mistress, she would," cried a kitchen-maid, whose old grandmother had periodically watched by her tumble-down garden gate to make painfully rheumatic bobs at Hilary, thereby extracting sundry half-sovereigns, which had supplied her with more ardent spirits than were desirable. "Ah! and she'd have kept the house alive," said Maria, who had proudly heard of her young lady's successes at Steeple Forncett. "They did tell me yonder the company thought a deal of her."

"Some of them did, no question," said Wilkins reflectively; "though what he—h'm—they will do now is quite another affair. Money makes a sight of difference."

"No two minds about that," agreed the laundry-maid. "My word, Miss Hilary won't get five clean white mornin' cambrics a week now, I warrant! It did make my arms ache to iron 'em, and often I did wish she'd think afore she crumpled up so many. But somehow I never seemed to mind when I see her in a fresh one. She looked as nice and pretty as—as——"

"As one of my June tiger-lilies," put in Bell. "I've said so to myself many times, when I've seen her come down the path in one of them white frocks with

all them shiny braids a'top of her head. Ah! deary me; Mr. Stafford won't want no white frocks! Who'd ever 'a counted on seein' him master here?"

"Ah! there 'll be a many blame him for takin' poor Miss Hilary's place like," chimed in Mrs. Wilkins. "Only to think of the changes this one day have brought forth!"

Only to think, indeed!

While the domestics discussed the marvel in every aspect, unanimously agreeing that the one sole speck of comfort was getting rid once and for all of Mr. St. John; while they speculated and debated on their new master, he, all alone in the silence and solitude of his drawing-room, was trying to realise the tremendous metamorphosis, and finding it an almost impossible task.

Not once, nor twice, but over and over again, he read Miss Humphreys' letter to him; those firm, black lines that contained all the reasons she vouchsafed anyone for her doings, and after each perusal the maze it involved him in seemed denser. Could he have heard the old housekeeper's words, fully would he have endorsed them. Many *would* blame him for standing there in Miss Hilary's place. "Miss Hilary's!" The girl he had watched, almost enviously, springing out of her luxury-girt childhood into that enchanting womanliness that had unawares stolen away his heart. What was he doing by taking her inheritance from her? How could he—loving her as he knew too surely that he did, as he had somehow always hoped in his poverty-bound life he should have escaped ever loving any human creature—how could he step in quietly now and take all that the world had long counted hers? Others besides Mr. St. John would call it robbery. How should he stand justified for this strange appropriation to outsiders, which perhaps signified little: to himself, which mattered more: to Hilary——?

Ah! again he unfolded that strange letter, carried it to the window, re-read it by the waning light, his face as sombre as the now sunless, fading autumn day. Slowly—with all his conscience he tried to do it impartially—he took in for the tenth time the meaning of every single word; balanced the benefits Miss Humphreys had set plainly forth against the ills which might have followed a different disposition of Abbotswick; steeled himself to the future he had accepted; for the road he had set out upon appeared to him the only one possible.

"A very easy conclusion!" say you? "An uncommonly natural ultimatum when that road is paved with gold, and leads to well-defined position!" Nay, but it seemed far from easy or natural to Norris Stafford, as he paced restlessly up and down, till shadows lurked about the corners of the darkening room, and the pale portraits of half a dozen departed Humphreys looked down like ghosts from their frames upon their stranger owner. Whole hosts of pains, difficulties, misconstructions crowded on him, and the end of them all——

"Now Heaven help me!" he exclaimed aloud; and never had he felt more need of what the words implored.

He stopped pacing presently, and stood a minute by Miss Humphreys' writing-table. All on it, from the old Russia-covered blotting-case to the heavy silver inkstand and tall fluted candlesticks, was business-like and old-fashioned: all but one thing—a likeness of Hilary. Through years of altering growth, some such picture had always stood here in Aunt Phil's frequent sight. Here it still stood. The curate lighted the wax candle that he might see it plainly, and gazed for minutes on the happy, fresh young face looking brightly forth from its dark frame. Then he slipped the card from its fastening, and, none being by to see, laid it passionately on his lips, white with an agitation he could barely master. But this weakness had to be conquered. Fighting with all his strength against the heart-sinking that oppressed him, he folded Miss Humphreys' letter around the face of her discarded *protégée*, thrust both into his breast pocket, strode resolutely across the room, and rang the bell.

The butler, appearing, found the new master quietly seated in the identical Chippendale chair, by a small leather-topped table, whence he had received so many orders from his old mistress.

"It will be sufficient for me to speak to you, Wilkins, if you will oblige me by carrying out my wishes."

"Certainly, sir."

"I should like all the establishment who choose, to remain here definitely a couple of months, unless they find better homes in the meantime."

"Thank you, sir, I 'm sure, for all of us."

"I shall be still at the rectory——"

"For the present, sir?" ventured Wilkins.

"At the rectory," repeated the curate, "and will give you further directions presently. Arrangements about the house I leave entirely to yourself and your wife."

"Thank you, sir," said Wilkins again.

"Meanwhile, let everything be kept precisely as it is now. I know all is safe in your hands. Miss Humphreys has trusted you so long, I can well afford to do the same." Then he walked towards the hall, as if to leave.

Wilkins, gratified by the confidence shown in him, felt bound to speed him with some species of congratulation.

"Of course, sir," he said, following deferentially, "this isn't exactly—not what we expected; but still, sir, I may say for myself—and for the whole of us, I 'm sure—if poor Miss Hilary had *got* to be set aside, there 's nobody we 'd sooner congratulerate——"

Mr. Stafford put up his hand quickly.

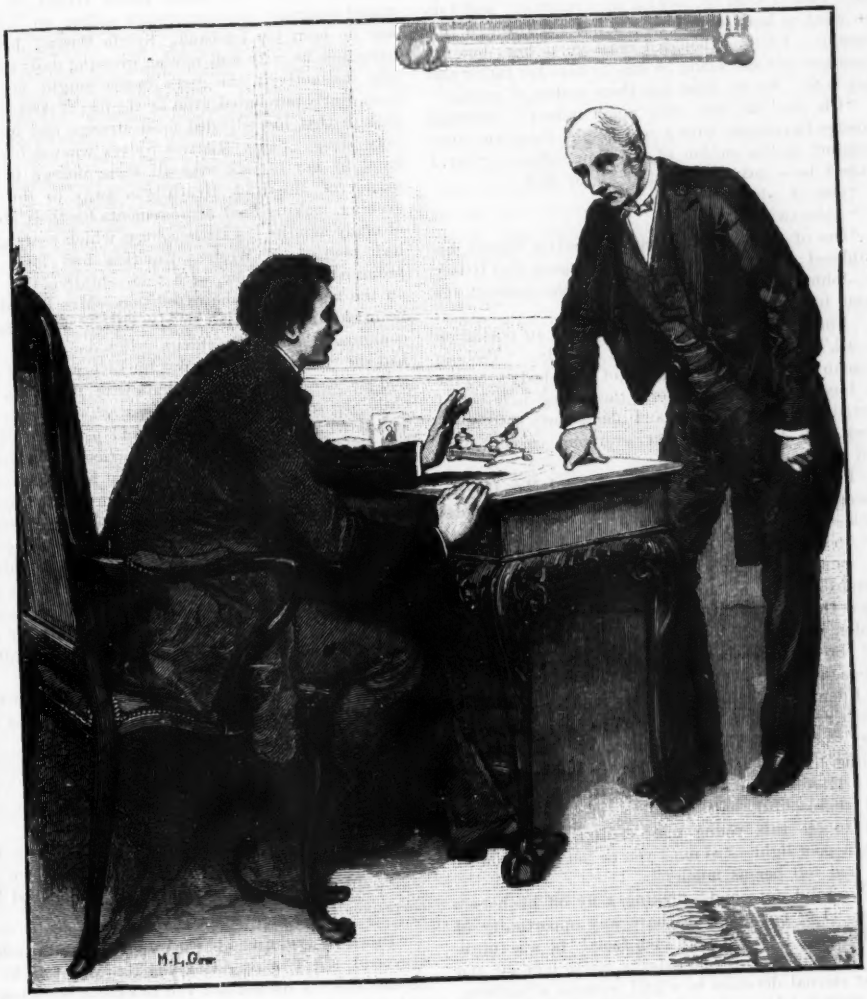
"No—no, thanks," he said; "nothing of that sort—I 'm much obliged to you—now, or at any time whatever. Good-night."

And he stepped forth from his mansion, and adown the shivering, sighing avenue, to his modest half of the small rectory; while Wilkins bolted up the front of the house, and went back, bearing his last piece of satisfactory intelligence to the party, who, after all the excitement of the day, were now settling down to an excellent supper off the remains of the funeral luncheon.

CHAPTER XI.

What a drive home was Captain Cavenham's that afternoon, to be sure! and what a terribly bad time his brown horse had of it between Abbotswick and Steeple Forncett!

brutally, that the affronted animal went along in a style that caused the groom to hold on very tightly behind, and more fervently wish than expect himself at his journey's end without a spill. Once the young officer had to draw rein. He was dashing by the gate



"'Let everything be kept precisely as it is now.'"—*p.* 292.

Disappointment, disgust, mortification, filled the angry young gentleman's brain. He was one of those who habitually spend their liveliest emotions on the first object that comes handy, and now, in a ferment of exasperation, to the muttered accompaniment of highly unparliamentary language, he laid his whip across Jack's glossy side so smartly, flicked at his forequarters so viciously, and jerked his mouth so

of Mosswick Heath when a graceful young woman, with a pair of pretty children clasping her hands, drew the young ones safe from the quick, on-coming wheels to the grassy roadside sprinkled deep with beech leaves. Then she made a gesture of recognition, and George Cavenham had perforce to pull up and speak to her.

"How glad I am to see you! Have you been to

Abbotswick?" questioned Mrs. Dasent, coming near. "And will you tell me about Miss St. John? What a sad week this has been for her!"

"Un—commonly," said the young man, with grim emphasis, staring straight away between his horse's ears.

"We have only had a message or two about her," Mrs. Dasent went on, looking up anxiously, "and I do so want to hear more how she has got through this trouble. I felt as though I must go to her; but my husband said she would be sure to have her father and his wife. Mr. St. John was there to-day, of course?"

"Oh, yes! he was, very much indeed!" returned George Cavenham, with a curt laugh—there was some comfort in the notion of a fellow-sufferer—"but I expect he's entirely out of it all by now."

"Out of what?"

"Abbotswick."

"Out of Abbotswick!" repeated Sylvia Dasent, bewildered; "why, George, you don't mean that Hilary St. John would send her father off the moment she came into possession?"

"I mean that Hilary St. John is not in possession at all," retorted the young man roughly. "The old woman has been making game of everybody. So far as I can understand matters, the young lady is endowed with her blessing, and about forty shillings a week. A beastly sell for everyone concerned, I call it."

"Forty shillings a week!" returned Mrs. Dasent, scarcely crediting her own ears. "Then Abbotswick——"

"And everything belonging thereto, is gone over by some legerdemain to that lanky parson. Confoundedly well he must have played his cards to cozen that old dame out of everything. Beg your pardon, though—he's a friend of your husband's, isn't he? So perhaps you think the transaction altogether satisfactory?"

"I don't know *what* I think it," said Sylvia Dasent, drawing back, thoroughly perplexed and pained at every word of her young relative, who sat sullenly pulling his long moustache over his thick, twitching lips; "I only know I am sorry for Hilary. And so"—half reproachful, half pleading, for she could not bear to see this young man exhibiting himself in such a poor light—"so must you be too. Did you see her, and tell her as much?"

"No, I did not; and," flicking a fly off his horse's mane, "I'm not likely to have any opportunity of condolence." ("Women are such fools!" he was thinking; "I suppose this one expects me to bolt off and swear eternal devotion to a girl without a farthing. I'll show her I'm out of that; thanks very much!")—"Any message for the girls at home to-day, Mrs. Dasent?"

"None but good-bye," answered the lady coldly; "we leave on Saturday."

"Then *bon voyage*," said Captain Cavenham.—"I should not mind going over the big pond myself, or to the bottom of it either, with such a cursed run of luck as I'm having," he muttered, as he drove off scowling; and Mrs. Hugh Dasent, summoning her bairns from their ra'd after blackberries, gave on Hilary St. John's score one great sigh, less of sorrow than of relief.

The Cavenhams, though distant kinsfolk, were no favourites of hers. The departing officer's handsome face, with its society mask uplifted—sensual, resentful, grasping—filled her with shrinking. Even with fortune's sails well filled, pretty Hilary St. John would assuredly have met rough sailing on life's sea had he been her husband. Sylvia Dasent, her own happiness as wife and mother growing daily greater, felt instinctively the girl's escape might not have been dearly purchased, even by the loss of Abbotswick, though that loss sounded most strange, and must be very bitter. Sadly Mistress Sylvia wanted her husband by her to talk over all these doings, but the master of Mosswick Heath was away in town till evening, making final arrangements for their absence of many months. A little colony, which years ago he had planted in Western America, had long been promised a visit; now, with their children, they were on the very eve of the expedition. Mrs. Dasent had been bidding good-byes in the parish when she encountered Captain Cavenham. Not one single hour had she free before setting out for Liverpool next day; and yet here was this poor impulsive Hilary—a very child she seemed to the young matron—suddenly cast into a whirlpool of calamities, and perhaps (neither Mr. St. John nor his wife had particularly attracted Mrs. Dasent) without a single soul at hand who could quite enter into or soften their keenness for her.

Going to her unsummoned was out of the question; leaving the country without a sign of sympathy equally impossible. All she could do was to write—and that she did before nightfall, sitting by the side of her own little sleeping girl, whose bonnie face of perfect happiness filled her with tenfold pity for any on whom this cold world's buffetings were falling perchance for the first time.

Hugh Dasent, coming down late, heard the whole tale, and was altogether at one with his wife on the subject.

"Poor girl!" said he, scanning Sylvia's tender lines; "if anything can console her yet, this will. Your note shall go over to her before breakfast, and I'll send a line to Stafford at the same time."

Mr. Dasent's epistle was very different from his wife's; but he comprehended the man to whom he was writing, and that man perfectly understood his correspondent.

"DEAR STAFFORD" (it ran),—"This is altogether very odd, but I'm confident you'll work it right if anyone can. I do not ask you to excuse me when I add that at present we feel very vexed for you. Let us hear from you at New Mosswick.—Yours.

"H. D."

And that was the first, and for many a day the only drop of comfort that sweetened Norris Stafford's cup of wealth.

Hilary's missive was far less fortunate.

Passing from one servant to another in the much-unsettled household at Abbotswick, it only reached Joyce late in the day, when her dismal task of collecting and packing-off all Miss Hilary's belongings

was just finished. In a climax of mournful worry she simply slipped the note in the last package—a lot of trifles which Hilary by chance left untouched for months; and so it came to pass she lost for long the kind, womanly sympathy that would have been as balm to her through many an aching hour.

Now to return, however, to our neglected Captain Cavenham.

Fuming still with ever-increasing spleen, he rattled on his homeward road; pulled his horse up all of a heap—"fit to break the shaf's," as the groom expressed it—at his own door; strode off, shouting imperatively, "Gertrude, look sharp! I want you," into the smoking-room, where, spending maledictions on the matches because he broke them in his wrathful haste, he ordered his sister to give him a brandy-and-soda, and not stand gaping at him like an idiot; and finally vouchsafed a disjointed explanation of his amiable humour, ending with the query—

"So will you have the goodness to tell me what is to be done now?"

His sister sat aghast at the recital.

"Poor unfortunate Hilary!" she cried; "who on earth would ever have suspected such an end to her grandeur! *Po-o-r* Hilary!"

"'Poor Hilary' be hanged!" exclaimed her brother, savagely impatient of any pity not spent upon himself; "the thing could never have happened if your 'poor Hilary'—as she certainly is and no mistake—hadn't been next door to an imbecile! Imagine any girl letting such a chance slip, and imagine what a mess it's let me in for! It's poor somebody else, I think—not poor Hilary. Look here, Gertrude," suddenly throwing away his cigar and setting his selfish mouth into its very hardest lines, "you egged me on into offering to that girl, didn't you? You got me into this mess—you can't deny it. Now get me out of it!"

Gertrude herself was not remarkable for refinement of feeling, but her brother's unblushing callousness to their girl neighbour's troubles, and his cool shouldering of his own dilemma upon herself, fairly nettled her. Women are infinitely superior to men in keeping up appearances on all occasions. Now she would have preferred decently veiling her own chagrin under commiseration of the principal sufferer.

"Upon my word, George," she retorted with spirit, "you were ready enough to be egged on. I was under the delusion, from all you said and did, that you actually cared for Hilary. You don't suppose I looked upon the whole transaction as purely mercenary, do you? If so, it is well the whole thing has come to an end."

"But, confound it, has it come to an end?" broke in her brother roughly; "she was not to send an answer to that blundering letter of mine till next week. Suppose she says 'Yes.' Suppose that father of hers cuts up rusty if I back out; why, I shall be the laughing-stock of the whole regiment. And suppose old Isaacs comes on the scene and lets the governor know how deep I'm dipped; and suppose—— Oh," helping himself copiously to brandy without the soda this time, "if I go on supposing, I shall go off my head. Find me a way out of this fix, Gert, or I shall put a bullet through my brains."

Gertrude had heard this threat before from her fast-living brother when his quandary was less serious than now. She was not, therefore, particularly alarmed or affected by it. Nevertheless, she knew this collapse of Hilary's prospects spelt ruin for the captain, unless some counterbalancing stroke of luck set him on his feet again. Help him somehow eventually she very well knew she must; but first a certain shallow sentimentality in her own nature which he had been ruthlessly trampling on demanded healing. Till he had paid her the compliment of apologising to her feminine feelings she would aid him not a jot. Pushing the spirits out of his reach, she drew the corners of her lips down, saying, contemptuously—

"You talk like a half-tipsy boy in his teens, George. I'm absolutely tired of doing anything for a person who thinks of nothing in the world but himself. I would never have helped your suit on with Hilary if I had imagined you had no real regard for her. If you have not the grace to pity her, I have."

The astute brother had wit enough to perceive what was wanted of him.

"Pity her! of course I do," he exclaimed, ready enough to swear black was white if that would dig him out of his quagmire; "and I vow I was getting uncommonly fond of her—no sham about it, Gert, uncommonly! I felt"— warming to his theme as he saw his sister assume a more satisfied air—"as if I could run in harness with her to the end of time and never kick over the traces. Of course it's losing the girl that's helping to play me up like this. You shouldn't be hard on what a fellow says when he's so wretchedly down as I am."

Gertrude was mollified. This brother of hers invariably twisted her round his finger when he took the trouble to do so. After all, her own family and its interests ought to be her chief concerns. That belief had been her lesson from childhood, and she had learned it well.

"Hold your tongue for ten minutes if you can, George," she ordered tersely, and he, foreseeing advantage to himself in obedience, did as he was bid.

For full five minutes Miss Cavenham, pleating and unpleating the lace upon her dress, plunged all her energies into the intricacies of the situation. Then—

"So you are distressed about the misfortunes of Hilary St. John?" she asked.

"Emphatically," answered the captain, "I am."

"Then I can say so truthfully, if I write to her for you?"

"You may, honour bright," he answered fervently. If Gertrude was going to haul him through this dilemma, he would hang on to any assertion she chose to make in his name.

"But poverty, married poverty, would really be far worse for Hilary than for you?" pursued Gertrude, interrogatively.

"Fifty times worse," cried the young officer, cleverly catching his cue; "it would be positively horrid for her."

"So it would, George. And you feel bound to think of her, don't you?"

"First and foremost," said he gravely, with just the ghost of a twinkle in his eyes.



"Peeping at her with mournful and rather resentful interest."—*p.* 299.

His sister nodded, as if fully accepting the truth of this. Then, suddenly making a new departure, she demanded, point blank—

"Do you owe more this time than my father could pay down, provided you were going to settle—which means marry—satisfactorily?"

"N-o-o," said the captain, rather faintly. "I dare-say he might manage it, only you see," harping on the string so notably unsuccessful, "I'm not going to——"

"Be quiet. Your money affairs surely could be cleared up once and for all if I—helped a little;" by which was meant if Miss Cavenham parted for that purpose with a portion of her small independence inherited from her mother. George's own share had gone before he got it.

"Why, yes, if you helped, Gertrude," with just grace enough to look ashamed of himself.

For this brother Gertrude Cavenham was prepared to do a good deal. Possibly, being a Cavenham, she saw her way to repayment some time or other. Playing rather nervously with the spent vestas flung about the table—

"George," she said, "can you get leave and get away from Brainford for a month or two?"

"Well," dubiously, "I might work it if I smoothed old Buffles down the right way of his feathers" (Buffles being colonel of the Forty-first); "but what then?"

"You would be the better for a change of air after all this worry?"

"Yes," with alacrity; "I shouldn't a bit mind a run to Paris."

"You'll have to run in a different direction, brother mine. I heard from Mary Francis this morning; she is in Cornwall with her aunt again, and finds it wretchedly dull."

The colour slowly deepened on the captain's face. Now he saw what his sister was driving at. Miss Francis had been Gertrude's schoolfellow. She was her senior, which brought her to being his own elder by ten years. Plain she was—lamentably; but rich—very. Years before, she had stayed at Steeple Forncett, and the young fellow, just commissioned, had amused himself by a flirtation which was what he elegantly termed "ripping fun," and placed, as he considered, out of the pale of all seriousness by the dictum, "A man may not marry his grandmother." The lady, however, may not have seen the discrepancy of age in the same light. Her intimates, of whom Gertrude Cavenham was chief, suspected her of taking the fascinating captain's attentions very much more seriously than he intended them, and of wearing the willow for him far more faithfully than he deserved. At any rate, she and her money were unappropriated still. In quest of both, George Cavenham grimly felt it was his fate to go, small inclination though he felt for the expedition. It was no more use struggling for bachelor freedom any longer than if he had been some feeble fly in some great spider's web. He had had his fling. Practically he had woven his own web; now he must walk into it and let its meshes hold him fast for the rest of his days.

But the young captain was not enamoured of the prospect.

"Well, what am I to say when I get to Cornwall?" he demanded sulkily.

"Say you've gone down for the fishing."

"What fishing?"

"Well," impatiently, "for the sea breezes, then, or for your health, or for anything you like; but, mind, what you do go for is—Mary. You were always good friends enough; you can't help esteeming her." (The captain made a wry face.) "Upon my word," his sister cried, "I think she's ten times too good for you, George; but that is the only way out of the wood I can devise. Get away directly—to-morrow, if you can; then you may leave me to manage the letter to Hilary."

The captain only too thankfully accepted this counsel. "You'd always a genius for managing, Gert," he said admiringly, going promptly off to seek an interview at Brainford with his commanding officer, while Miss Cavenham put herself to the task of compiling the epistle which was to get her brother free from Hilary.

It was very neatly done—quite creditably, considering what a very delicate topic it dealt with. Between the little something in the way of pity which she actually felt, and the great deal more which she assumed on her own part and her brother's, Gertrude composed a very natural-reading as well as sensible effusion.

"Nothing," she said, "could exceed poor George's sorrow at this sad turn of events." (That was literally true.) "Had he been a rich man he would have hastened in a moment to dear Hilary's side to claim her more proudly and willingly in poverty than in wealth" (that was a flash of sisterly imagination); "but having, alas! nothing but his pay to depend upon, and poor papa's insignificant allowance, never would he be so cruel as to drag down the woman he loved into hopeless poverty. He could rough it" (how glad Gertrude was he had happened to use that phrase) "alone, but to have her by his side without sufficient means to give her those luxuries to which she had been accustomed would be insupportable pain. Therefore, terrible as the pang was, he must renounce all claim upon her; only trusting—as she, his sister, also did most sincerely—that the future might somewhat heal his own wound and bring some recompense to Hilary for all she was now passing through."

They heard that Mr. St. John had transported his daughter to Brainford, and at the general post office of that town Captain Cavenham deposited his missive as he drove to the station the following day. By good luck he had got his leave. Now he would be safely far away from any jokes at his own expense raised by those fellow-officers before whom he had lately boasted of his coming luck.

On the platform was a big collection of luggage, and a group round the door of a first-class carriage. It was the Dasents going on the first stage of their long journey. Just then they were the last people he wished to travel with. Backing to avoid them, he jostled roughly on another individual, but was far too preoccupied to apologise, though, as he pushed his way quickly to the other end of the train, it occurred to him he had seen the man before.

The man thought so too, and Mr. Bevis rubbed his jarred shoulder with anything but a pleasant gaze after the retreating officer.

"Just his impudence!" he muttered; "met the young jackanapes at Abbotswick. Knows who I am as well as I know him. Might have said 'Beg your pardon,' at any rate; but that set are all tarred with the same stick." Then, as the truck with the officer's luggage came to a standstill by him—"Cornwall," meditated the young lawyer, reading the labels with a side-glance; "that's a long way off; and a pile of things, too. Oh, ho!" with a very knowing expression, "now I know what he's after—it's to get out of the way of Miss Hilary, the heiress that's not! And so, my young lady, who could not remember your humble servant's proper name when you were in all your state and glory, I'll wager a trifle you've seen the last of one of your suitors; and, for all your good looks, where you'll get another from now isn't quite so clear to me."

There is no doubt at all that Mr. Bevis, though a very far-seeing young man, *would* have been truly surprised had anyone told him at that moment where the faithless captain's successor was to come from.

CHAPTER XII.

In the meantime what about Hilary herself?

Well, the strange transformation scene, once over—that exodus of hers from Abbotswick in the still grey October afternoon, Mr. St. John opposite to her in Miss Humphreys' roomy old landau sunk in stony

silence, Mrs. St. John beside her dropping tears quite audibly upon her new silk mantle, the figures of the two astonished little flaxen-haired girls perched up among piles of packages in the waggonette in front—lives like a nightmare in her memory. Nay, so preposterously unreal seemed the whole proceeding, that for weeks and months when she woke at night her first sensations would be those of old Abbotswick habits. What was the stable clock going to strike next? What were Aunt Phil and she going to amuse themselves with that morning? Had the maid been in to light her fire yet?—and so forth.

And even in broad daylight, with eyes and senses all wide awake, she could not for long divest herself of the notion that this new state of affairs was not at all canny; that it would roll itself up some day and vanish like a mist, and the old bright outlook lie smiling before her once again.

But she had to grope her way out of such fancies into grim reality along paths uncompromisingly rough; and, moreover, she had to start upon these with scarce a breathing space between one turn of fortune and another.

Her very entrance into her father's home bristled with small, miserable awkwardnesses, beginning even on the threshold.

Jane, curtseying in profound surprise at the door as the pale young lady went up the steps, had her civilities morosely checked by her master: "Go down and fetch your mistress's shawl out of the carriage. Miss St. John can find her way into the house. My daughter is returned to live with me now."

"And wherever she is to sleep I can't think," said poor Mrs. St. John feebly, seating herself in the front room, where the shutters were still half closed, Jane being of opinion that the *éclat* of a family interment ought to last as long as possible. "I've actually no spare place whatever for her—nowhere to put up a bed in, and no bed to put up! However we're to manage I can't imagine!"

"I can go anywhere, mamma," said Hilary, feeling very heartsick indeed. "I don't mind where, so as not to be in your way."

"But unfortunately I can't make space, nor build fresh rooms," said Mrs. St. John plaintively; "we're over here, and Willie over the passage, and the boys over us, and the little girls behind, and Jane over the kitchen, so there's nowhere left but the little lumber-room in the roof, and that's quite sure to be full of spiders, and this time of day who's to clean it?" And then, with an outburst of long habitual politeness, "Oh, the idea of putting *you* up there, after all you've been used to!"

There were sounds without of the carriage departing. Hilary turned strangely cold and lonely. Mr. St. John came in at the instant, and caught up his wife's words.

"As Hilary has forfeited all she was used to, she must simply now take what she can get under my roof, and be contented. I have, I may say, bestowed opportunities upon her such as not one parent in ten thousand has the chance of doing. I have literally hedged her about with advantages. I have fostered hopes for her and of her at the expense of my own feelings as a father. I have built—so to speak—my happiness upon hers. And what have I got in return? Why, the ghastliest disappointment that could have been contrived for me by human being, and a heavy addition cast on my already overburdened income."

Then Mr. St. John plunged into a lounging-chair which had lost one of its castors, looking the picture of woe upon his crooked throne.

A new, keen pain tightened on his daughter's spirit. Her throat contracted and her lips trembled.

"Papa," she said, with a sort of startled pleading "I always thought you wanted me at home. Was it not true, then? Don't—oh, don't you care for me?"

Mr. St. John waved his hand impatiently.

"Care for you! Of course I do," he answered; "but I'm not going to conceal from you that, directly or indirectly, you have given my feelings the very severest shock they have ever sustained. Every single thing I had for years been calculating on—for *you*, remember, for *your* benefit—is lost. The St. Johns are a candid family. Candidly, therefore, I tell you that though my house is open to you as to my other children, I feel you have not the same absolute right in it as themselves. You must by some indiscretion have flung away your aunt's favour, on which the interests of—I may say—all of us depended. Under those circumstances, though I am prepared for you to take your place in my family, you must not be astonished if I cannot conjure up any very fervid welcome for you."

This was indeed candid—rather brutally so. There came a day when Mr. St. John was sorry he had been so explicit. Hilary's young face seemed to furrow with pain while he spoke coldly on, but she only looked at him very wistfully, and said—

"Thank you, papa. I understand you—now."

Which, indeed, she did, for the first time in her life.

"As for the unprincipled, or to put it more plainly, the crazy, conduct of the person to whom I had confided you for years——" pursued Mr. St. John.

But Hilary, with her white face suddenly aflame, turned upon him.

"Not one word of that sort, papa, if you and I are to live in peace together! I have nineteen years of happiness and plenty to thank Aunt Phil for. For what she has seen fit to do now I *will not* permit one syllable to be cast at her in my hearing."

Mr. St. John shrugged his shoulders and elevated his eyebrows with a sneer.

"You are out of position, Hilary, in dictating to me in my own house; but as it certainly is desirable for us to live at peace together, I will make allowances for you. We will not discuss Miss Humphreys, for I can have only one sentiment about a person who has so grossly aggrieved me. As for her coadjutor—I consider him a thief."

Hilary's lips contracted with just one extra pang. She tingled with shame at Norris Stafford being saddled with such a title. An insane craving came over her to listen once more to the kind, quiet tones of this "thief." Oh, the restfulness of them after this jangling storm from her father! But her spirit for the day was almost spent; she dared enter on no

battle now to defend her supplanter. Such a great wave of weariness came over her, body and mind, that Mrs. St. John, with quite surprising adroitness, interfered.

"Algernon, however wicked people have been, I do think it 's time we had some tea—I daresay it 's ready." (This house-mistress was never very certain about meals.) "Come into the next room, Hilary; though I cannot offer what you have been accustomed to, yet you ought to be having something." Then she led the way, apologising from custom as she went.

"Excuse the paint in the back passage: the boys do kick it so. I 'm afraid that little paraffin lamp runs; there 's a frightful smell. Of course you burned wax at Abbotswick. Oh, you 'll have to put up with a great deal, dear; but—Herbert, don't stare at your sister Hilary so." The boys had come in from office and school, and, in conclave with Jane and the little girls, had got a general outline of the day's tragedy. "Come and shake hands with her, and find her a chair."

The shaking hands was duly performed; but it was as difficult to find a chair for Hilary as it was to find her a bed, or any other necessary. The ugly, square back-room was littered from corner to corner with books, toys, packing-cases, tools, everything that ought not to be there—including a rocking-horse surmounted by the baby of the St. John family, whom his mother first delightedly embraced after her absence from him, and then smartly slapped because he brought his wooden steed straight down upon her toes. Naturally, small Will resented this treatment, whereupon his father ordered him off to the kitchen, and thither Jane carried him by main force, howling.

"Fetch a chair from anywhere you choose," ordered Mr. St. John, looming as black as thunder from his own at the end of the table: "anything will do. Hilary is merely one of ourselves now. Why, what the—what on earth are these things for?" scowling at the smart set-out upon the fresh white cloth.

"Only a—a mistake of Jane's," explained his wife, timidly. She was feeling mildly elated at the appearance of her tea equipage. Very small straws sent this good lady's spirits up or down. "We always had the best things, you know, Algernon, when Hilary came before."

"But," said Mr. St. John fiercely, "that was under different circumstances. Ring the bell, and order the every-day things up at once. What is good enough for us is good enough for Hilary. What we can drink out of, she can drink out of."

Not venturing to combat the point, Mrs. St. John just dropped a few tears on the gorgeous Japanese tea-tray, and summoned Jane to remove it.

Then the offended maid-servant collected the best "crockery" with such speed that a distinct fracture was the result, after which she clattered the common set down before her mistress, which set—like the chairs—proved too few by one. There was no cup for Hilary.

"There were ten," thundered Mr. St. John, "three weeks ago! Where are they gone to? Whoever has broken them shall pay for them. In small things I *can* defend myself. I will not be robbed in my *own* house."

After which outburst, investigation laid the burden of two breakages on the cat; one had some of Mr. St. John's last invention—liquid glue made from fish-bones—in it; and the other, Mrs. St. John meekly suggested, might perhaps be found to-morrow.

In this dilemma, round and rather stupid-faced Bertie St. John, the young clerk, shone forth.

"Here, Hilary may have my cup to-night; I don't mind a mug," said he, gallantly.

And, provided at last with some lukewarm beverage and a bedroom chair, his step-sister joined the painful, muddled meal, though of a truth she felt she would never have inclination to eat or drink again.

The evenings this household always spent in the same tea-scented apartment, where the young people amused themselves as they chose, departing from the family circle when sleepiness overtook them. To-night, Mr. St. John concealed himself moodily behind a newspaper, which, as if in ironical malice, contained an obituary notice of Miss Humphreys, ending with a broad hint as to whom her property would devolve upon.

Hilary's father had himself to thank for that paragraph. Now, he was ready to anathematise the editor for using the information he had incautiously spread. Tearing the lines out of the column, he first showed them to his wife, then burned them. Mrs. St. John thereupon had another little crying-fit, which no one paid the slightest regard to, after which she disappeared for an hour. The little girls and their brothers whispered about their luckless sister Hilary, peeping at her with mournful and rather resentful interest; and Hilary, her head throbbing with exceeding fatigue, sat rapt in thought; while a noisy American clock ticked away the slow minutes of the very longest evening of her existence.

It was relief indeed when her stepmother returned, presently, comparatively cheerful.

"I've been sitting on the top landing," she said, "looking at Jane clearing out the lumber-room, and we've found a little iron bed that I'd quite forgotten. The knobs are off the ends, and three of the splines won't go over the catches; but, if you don't fidget about, I don't think it will come down, Hilary. I'm sorry to say there 's no soap-dish with the toilet things; but perhaps you won't mind a plate for the present. And will you like to come to your room?"
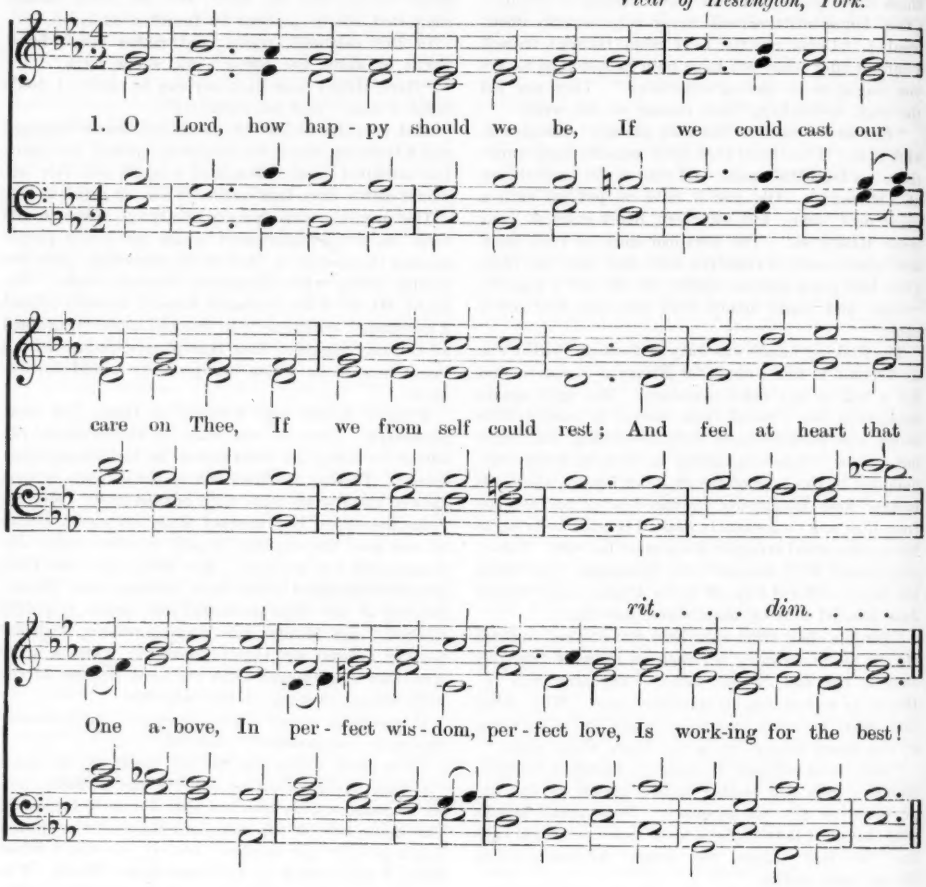
Ah, that Hilary would! Anything, anywhere, to be alone. Her father brushed the top of her forehead with his moustache—the nearest approach to an embrace he ever vouchsafed her from that date; Mrs. St. John, not at all unkindly, offered a large damp cheek for a good-night salute; the children ducked their heads, and nodded sheepishly at her; and so she passed up to her hiding-place in the roof, where, too stupefied even to think, she lay watching myriads of stars, through her uncurtained casement, till sleep closed her tired eyes. And so ended her first hours in the house where she was not wanted.

(To be continued.)

"O Lord, how happy should we be."

Words by KEEBLE.

Music by the REV. F. PEEL, B.Mus.,
Vicar of Heslington, York.



2.

Could we but kneel and cast our load,
E'en while we pray, upon our God,
Then rise with lightened cheer,
Sure that the Father, who is nigh
To still the famished raven's cry,
Will hear in that we fear!

3.

We cannot trust Him as we should:
So chafes fall'n nature's restless mood
To cast its peace away;
Yet birds and flow'rets round us preach,
And all the present evil teach,
Sufficient for the day.

4.

Lord, make these faithless hearts of ours
Such lessons learn from birds and flowers;
Make them from self to cease:
Leave all things to a Father's will,
And taste, before Him lying still,
E'en in affliction, peace.

REAL AND AMATEUR GENTLEMEN.

BY THE REV. E. J. HARDY, M.A., CHAPLAIN TO THE FORCES.

IF it be true that "manners makyth man," surely nothing less than manners can make a gentleman. Without them it is possible to act the part of a gentleman for ten minutes without being found out, as the Duke of Wellington said George IV. could do, but not for much longer. It is true that "the grand old name of gentleman" is now so "soiled with all ignoble use," that one prefers to call himself simply "man" rather than "gentleman." And yet were a distinction drawn on proper grounds between *gentlemen* and *roughs*, we should all desire to belong to the former class. With quite as much reason we might repeat the complaint which Steele made long ago in the *Spectator*, that there is no adequate idea of what is meant by "gentlemanly, gentleman-like, or much of a gentleman." "You cannot be wronged, but all the world will say of him that did the injury, 'It must be allowed he is very much of a gentleman.' Here is a very pleasant fellow, a correspondent of mine, that puts in for that appellation even to highwaymen." Curious are the ideas of some people as to what constitutes a gentleman. The other day I heard two soldiers debating the question. One said that it is money that makes a gentleman. His companion asked in reply if a donkey had two panniers full of gold on his back and owned the money, would he be a gentleman? In the same way a cabman has suspicions as to your gentle blood if you give him only his legal fare.

Others, again, seem to think that clothes make a gentleman, as if the peacock were not more gay than the eagle himself. "Why," asks Fuller, "should any brag of what is but borrowed? Should the ostrich snatch off the gallant's feather, the beaver his hat, the goat his gloves, the sheep his suit, the silkworm his stockings, and oxen his shoes, he would be left in a cold condition." A friend of mine, not long ago, coming over from Ireland, heard a man asking, in reference to another, who he was. "I don't know," was the reply; "but he's quite a gentleman. He always wears a tall hat." Indeed, there are those who seem to be incapable of valuing their fellow-men by anything except their clothes. There is a story told of a Persian prince which well illustrates such worldliness. Dressed as a poor man, this prince went to a feast. He was pushed here and there, could not get to the table, and had soon to withdraw. On going home, he dressed himself in his best, placing jewelled slippers on his feet, and putting on a cloth-of-gold cloak. Then he returned to the feast, where matters were immediately altered. The guests made room, and the host, rushing up, cried, "Welcome, my lord! What will your lordship please to eat?" The prince's answer was very expressive. Stretching out his foot, so that his slipper sparkled and glittered, he took his golden robe in his hand, and said with bitter irony, "Welcome, my lord coat! welcome, most excellent robe! What will your lordship please to eat?—For," said he, turning to his surprised host; "I ought to ask my coat what it will eat, since the welcome was solely to it."

But the most foolish of all notions on this subject is that which imagines that a gentleman is one who does no work, certainly no manual labour. We find it lingering in the phrase, "a walking gentleman." Now, I think that to consume much, to produce little, to go away from life's feast without paying the reckoning—I think that this is not the part of an honest man. The Jews had a proverb that if a man did not teach his son a trade he taught him to steal, and no one would call a thief a gentleman. Even the South-Sea Islanders knew better than to think that it made a man a gentleman not to work. When Bishop Patteson went among them they were surprised to see that he was ready to put his hand to anything. He would do a piece of carpentering, wash up things after meals, teach the little blacks to wash and dress themselves. Other white men wanted to put all the work on the negroes, so, in order to mark the difference, they called the Bishop a "gentleman-gentleman," and the others "pig-gentlemen."

Having tried to show what a gentleman is not, we will now say briefly what he is. He is a man who is gentle in thought, word, and deed. He is generous and just, honourable and brave; and, having all these qualities, he exercises them in the most gracious outward manner. A true gentleman pays his bills; is a good son, husband, father, and friend. His aims in life are high, and he keeps from all that is mean.

The third Earl of Balcarres always expressed himself as delighted with the Epistle of St. James, as that emphatically of a gentleman—a term implying, in his acceptance of it, all Christian excellence and perfection.

But the character of the Christian gentleman cannot be better described than in the words of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians: "Charity [or love] suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." Compare with this the fifteenth Psalm, which also describes a real gentleman, and not one who is only playing at the thing: "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour; . . . he honoureth them that fear the Lord."

What is a good manner? It is the art of putting our associates at their ease. Whoever makes the fewest persons uncomfortable is the best-mannered

man in the room. This implies a quick natural sympathy and the absence of vanity and ill-nature. Why are people who are not certain of their position so much harder to get on with than those who are really well-born? Because this very uncertainty causes them to hedge themselves round with stiffness and artificiality. They are afraid of allowing themselves to be natural, and will not draw from the fountain of natural politeness, which is in the heart and is closely allied to love.

Lord Chesterfield defined good breeding as the result of "much good sense, some good nature, and a little self-denial." The Spirit of Christ does *really* what this sort of courtesy only does outwardly. Love gives the true Christian a delicate tact which never offends, because it is full of sympathy, and is capable of exercising not a little, but a great deal of self-denial.

True courtesy is "the beauty of the heart." How well it is that no one class has a monopoly in this kind of beauty; that while favourable circumstances undoubtedly do render good manners more common among persons moving in higher rather than in lower spheres, there should nevertheless be no positive hindrance to the poorest classes having good manners. Here is an illustration of true politeness exhibited by both classes of society. One day, in hastily turning the corner of a crooked street in the city of London, a young lady ran with great force against a ragged little beggar boy, and almost knocked him down. Stopping as soon as she could, she turned round and said, very kindly, to the boy, "I beg your pardon, my little fellow; I am very sorry that I ran against you." The poor boy was astonished. He looked at her for a moment in surprise, and then, taking off about three-quarters of a cap, he made a low bow and said, while a broad, pleasant smile spread itself all over his face, "You can hev my parding, miss, and welcome; and the next time you run agin me, you may knock me clean down, and I won't say a word." After the lady had passed on he turned to his companion and said, "I say, Jim, it's the first time I ever had anybody ask my parding, and it's kind o' took me off my feet."

One very cold day the American preacher Henry Ward Beecher bought a paper from a very ragged little boy. "Poor little fellow!" said he, "ain't you very cold?" "I was, sir, before you passed," replied the boy, with natural good manners.

Politeness has been defined as benevolence in small things. This is well illustrated by the following incident, which is related in the "Life of General Sir William Napier, K.C.B." Taking a country walk one day, he met a little girl, about five years old, sobbing over a broken bowl, which she had dropped in bringing it back from the field to which she had taken her father's dinner. She said she would be beaten, on her return home, for having broken it. With a sudden gleam of hope she innocently looked up into his face, and said, "But zu can mend it—can't 'ee?" He explained that he could not mend the bowl; but he would give her a sixpence to buy another. However, on opening his purse it was destitute of silver, and he had to make amends by promising to meet his little friend in the same spot at the same hour next day, and to bring the sixpence with him; bidding her tell her mother she had seen a gentleman who would bring her the money for the bowl the next day. The child, entirely trusting him, went on her way comforted. On his return home he found an invitation, asking him to dine in Bath the following evening, to meet someone whom he specially wished to see. He hesitated for some little time, trying to calculate the possibility of going to meet his little friend of the broken bowl, and of still being in time for the dinner party; but finding this could not be, he wrote to decline accepting the invitation, on the plea of a pre-engagement, saying, "I cannot disappoint her. She trusted me so implicitly."

This anecdote of Christian chivalry on the part of a really "gallant" genuine *gentleman* is all the more impressive from the fact that the action was not only in itself a little one, but was done for the sake of one of those "little ones" who are made the test of purity of principle.

Rather more than fifty years ago, there was a lawsuit in which Trinity College, Dublin, was concerned. On this occasion the Rev. John Barrett, Senior Fellow, familiarly styled "Jacky Barrett," was dragged from his sanctum, from which he very rarely stirred, to give evidence against the assailant of his beloved establishment. The barrister who cross-examined him gives this account of his defeat by the little kiln-dried sage: "I examined the most learned of the whole University, Dr. Barrett, a little greasy, shabby, croaking, round-faced vice-provost. He knew nothing on earth save books and guineas, never went out, and held but little intercourse with mankind. I worked at him unsuccessfully more than an hour; not one decisive sentence could I get him to pronounce. At length he quite grew tired of me, and I thought to conciliate him by telling him that his father had baptised me. 'Indeed!' exclaimed he. 'Oh, I did not know you were a Christian.' At this unexpected repartee the laugh was so strong against me that I found myself muzzled." On seeing the manners, or want of manners, of amateur gentlemen and ladies, one can hardly help saying, when they talk of their religion, "Oh, I did not know you were Christians."

"A rough Christian," said a dog to a hedgehog; but if the dog had known more of the matter he would have known that a true Christian is never rough, for he learns gentleness from Him Who was "the first true *Gentle*-man that ever breathed." True politeness is more than "surface Christianity." If a man be a Christian gentleman, the fact will be known by his cat, his dog, his horse, his children, and every living being that comes in his way. To each and all he will display the gentler graces. "In honour preferring one another" is the sacred rule; and it is also the law of good breeding. "Honour all men"; "be courteous."

The mode in which people conduct themselves towards inferiors is even a better test of good breeding than their bearing towards superiors and equals. I take the following from an American newspaper:—

A certain lieutenant-colonel of cavalry was noted for his profanity, but one day he met with a deserved rebuke. General Custer was with him when he rode up to a sergeant of the guard in his regiment, and, swearing

at him furiously, ordered him to attend to a matter that had been neglected. The man folded his arms and stood at bay, looking the officer squarely in the eye.

"Do you hear me?" said the Colonel, with another oath. "Why don't you do as I tell you?"

"When I receive a proper order I shall obey," said the soldier firmly. "The articles of war forbid you to address me in the language you have used."

General Custer laughed, with a keen appreciation of the state of affairs.

"He 's got you there!" he said to his subordinate.

The Colonel at once changed his bearing, and apologised with a very manly frankness.

"Sergeant," said he, "you are right, and I apologise. I should not have addressed you as I did."

Then he gave his orders; the man touched his cap respectfully, and turned away to fulfil the command. The Colonel, moreover, had risen many degrees in the estimation of the soldiers.

"The love and admiration," says a well-known writer, "which that truly brave and loving man, Sir Sydney Smith, won from everyone, rich and poor, with whom he came in contact, seems to have arisen from the one fact—that without, perhaps, having any such conscious intention, he treated rich and poor, his own servants, and the noblemen his guests alike: and alike courteously, considerately, cheerfully, affectionately, so leaving a blessing and reaping a blessing wherever he went."

A somewhat similar account is given of Sir William Jones. When he returned the salute of a negro he was reminded that he had done what was very unfashionable.

"Perhaps so," said Sir William; "but I would not be outdone in good manners by a negro."

"My child," said a father to his daughter, "treat everybody with politeness; for remember that you show courtesy to others, not because they are ladies, but because you are one."

"Politeness," says Joubert, "is one development of virtue;" and in reply to those who would contend that it is necessary for society only, not for home, he remarks that we should wear our velvet indoors—that is, give those nearest to us the chief benefit of our gentleness. How many put on their velvet to go out into the world, and consider that anything will do to wear at home! Politeness is their court-dress, which they change for a dressing-gown when they return home.

A really good manner is, like our skin, put on from within, and never taken off while we are alive. Nature's gentlemen are always gentlemen and ladies; but there are artificial gentlemen and ladies, who put aside their good manners with their good clothes in the privacy of their homes. They have company manners for abroad; but home is to them not only Liberty Hall, but a hall of licence, where they allow their evil natures full play.

HAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AN UNEXPECTED LEGACY," AND OTHER STORIES.



"YOU 'LL be home early to-night daddy?"

"Why, no, not so very early, Hal. I'm going to the club."

"Oh, daddy, I am so lonely without you!"

"Why, there 's Jane and the two dolls," he said, smiling. "What more would you have?"

"My daddy."

"Well, we 'll see, little chap; p'raps I 'll be home by eight o'clock to-night."

"Oh, do, dear daddy, and we 'll have the tea hot, and everything so nice and comfor'ble for you."

And as John Smith stooped down and kissed his little boy, he fully intended to spend the evening at home, and thought what a happy time they would have.

John Smith might have been a happy man, but he wasn't.

He had as good a wife as man could desire, and three children, of whom the youngest was Hal, a boy of four.

For some years after his marriage he had been a fond husband and a devoted father, but of late he had attended a convivial club, where he was made much of, and had come to believe that he was a cut above the ordinary run of workmen, and, as such, that he was badly paid and far too hard-worked. The home which had seemed so bright to him before, he had come to regard as rather mean in comparison with the club-room at the "Red Lion." And, alas! it *had* deteriorated of late, for a considerable portion of his earnings disappeared in "glasses round" to his "friends" during the hours spent in political discussions, wherein he gave his advice, in an authoritative manner, on the concerns of the nation at large!

His wife watched with a sad heart the terrible change which had come over him, and worked with all her strength to make the best of their diminished income, praying daily, hourly, that the good God

might bring back the wanderer, and waiting in faith and patience for the time to come.

Her one great hope lay in Hal. She felt that for the time her own influence was but slight; whilst the two girls were afraid of their father, and terrified at him in his sullen and savage moods, when he returned from the "Red Lion" discontented and unhappy. But Hal! There was a depth of unfathomable love in the father's heart for this little curly-headed fellow. Never in his life had John Smith spoken unkindly to the boy, not even when intoxicated. And as for Hal, daddy was to him the kindest and best of fathers: his own darling daddy, whom he loved with his whole heart. "First, dere comes daddy and mudder," he used to say. "I love them with all my heart; and den dere comes Mary and Jane, and I loves them werry much; and den dere comes Old Ned and Screecher" (the latter were his pet names for the negro doll and the little stuffed owl). "I'se werry fond of them too." This was Hal's little kingdom, and very happy he was in the midst of it.

Eight o'clock came, and Hal was in a great state of excitement and expectation.

Everything was ready; the toast was crisp and inviting, the tea steaming hot, and Hall sat on his high chair with his face fixed on the door, listening intently to hear his father's footstep as he came up the court.

"Poor daddy!" he kept saying, "I'se afraid he's workin' awful hard—don't you think so, Jin?"

"Yes, Hal—he's sure to be here presently," his sister remarked cheerily; "and mother and Mary will be in by eleven."

But as the minutes sped by and daddy came not, the little face grew weary and sad with the intense strain of long-continued, anxious watching.

Suddenly he said—

"Jin, what does people say prayers for?"

"They ask God for what they want."

"And can God give anything?"

"Oh yes, everything, I know. And mother told me one day that whatever we prayed for God would give us if it were good for us."

"I'se so glad! Jin, for we do want daddy, don't we? and it must be good for us to have him. Will you pray, Jin?"

"I'm afraid I couldn't, Hal, except I was kneeling all alone by my bed or had mother with me. But if you could just tell God what we wanted, why, it would be like praying together."

"Oh yes, Jin, I'll try." So he folded his hands, and bowing his little head reverently, said:—

"Oh Lord, we wants daddy, both Jin and me, so werry much. Please send him home safe and quick, for we's so hungry, O Lord, and we can't have tea without him."

"Now he'll be here d'rectly, won't he, Jin?" he said, confidingly.

"Yes, dear," replied the little girl of five, carried away by the intense fervour of his faith.

Still the weary moments passed lingeringly away, but no daddy came.

"Go to the window and see if he's comin'," exclaimed Hal impatiently.

"No, dear, he isn't coming," said Jinny; "and it's a terrible foggy night."

"Do you think, Jin, 't is too thick for God to see us? or p'raps dere wasn't enough of us for Him to hear?"

"No, I'm sure God heard," said his sister reverently, "but——"

"But what?" he asked anxiously, as the little girl hesitated.

"I once heard mother pray for father, and after she'd prayed she went and brought him home."

"Oh!" said Hal, "p'raps that's part of the prayer. Yes, I'se quite sure, Jin, that that's the second part of mudder's prayer; so I'se agoin' to look for daddy and bring him home to tea."

"Well, dear, I'll go too; but *where* shall we go?"

"He mightn't be able to see his way home," said Hal, reflectively; "and so we'll take the lamp, and I'll just go to the 'Red Lion' first. It's so bright there, p'raps he got as far as dat and couldn't get no furder."

"Yes, that's it, sure enough," said Jinny.

So away these two mites went, Hal carrying a bull's-eye lamp in one hand, whilst the other was fast locked in Jinny's. A curious pair they looked as they walked through the sloshy, deserted streets, but happily the "Red Lion" was not far off, and its blazing lights soon loomed in sight.

"I'll wait outside," said Jinny, afraid that her father's anger would be kindled if he saw her, but believing that Hal could incur no displeasure.

Handing Jinny the lamp, he walked straight into the parlour.

"Daddy," he cried, with a thrill of joy, as he saw his father, "we've come to fetch you home, as we were afraid you couldn't see the way this dark night; and tea is getting cold, and old Ned, and Kitty, and Screecher, and Jinny, and me is awful mis'able without you," and the little child stretched out its arms in loving expectation. For a moment the father's heart went out in love towards the appealing face, and he longed to clasp the child to his breast.

But the cynical voice of Tom King, his boon companion, quenched his better feelings.

"Hullo! that kid seems to think you've had too much, friend Smith, and no doubt his mummy has sent him to fetch you!"

Poor, weak, miserable man! The thrust went home, and he felt ashamed—ashamed of being sent for—he, the leader of that choice band. So he got up and pushed the child aside.

"Come, come! you've no business to be out at this time of night; get away home."

Alas! the child staggered back, and fell heavily to the floor. His father, sobered by the accident his brutality had caused, caught Hal up in his arms, and kissed him again and again.

"I werry sorry, werry sorry," sobbed the child. "Poor daddy! I didn't mean to fall."

He had fallen on his arm, which had evidently been hurt, but he bore the pain without a murmur, afraid lest he should make his father sorrowful.

"Nothing broken," was the verdict of one of the men, who belonged to an ambulance corps, and had

picked up some little knowledge of surgery; "but it'll be stiff for a day or two, I daresay."

No longer afraid of his companions, John Smith bore off little Hal, stumblingly and uncertainly, it is true, for he was muddled; but he happily arrived at home without mishap, and the child was soon fast asleep, with a smile on his face. His last words as he went off to sleep, with his two hands resting lovingly in his father's clasp, were, "Dear, good daddy, I'm so werry, werry happy!"

A purer, happier outlook rose for a moment before the mind of John Smith as he thus rested by the bedside of his little son. But the jeers of his companions—how was he to stand them?

As he sat thinking, thinking, sitting by the little table in a half-stupefied condition, he by accident dragged the cover off the table, and with it the paraffin lamp. The oil in it flowed in a blazing stream over the floor.

In a moment the room was in flames, whilst John Smith, awaking from his doze, was too muddled to retain any presence of mind. But the thought of self-preservation coming naturally uppermost, he rushed down the narrow stair into the street, shouting "Fire!"

Jin, who had crept in stealthily after him when he returned with Hal, had long been asleep in the adjoining room.

The keen fresh air, coupled with the shock he had just undergone, restored Smith to his senses, and his first thought was Hal.

To re-enter by the way he had come out was impossible, for the room was now one mass of flame, and the staircase had already caught light.

One wish alone was present to his mind—to save his son, even if he sacrificed his life in the attempt. But how?



"'Daddy,' he cried, 'we've come to fetch you home.'"—*p.* 301.

Close by, at the builder's yard, he was aware that a ladder had been in use that day. From the little crowd that had begun to collect he called on a companion for assistance, and they returned in a few minutes and placed the ladder against the front window, out of which the flames now began to curl.

"Stand back!" cried several voices. "It is madness to attempt to enter that house!"

But he heeded them not. He burst through the window, and in a second was by the bedside of his two little ones.

Both were awake and clasping each other, but no fear or dismay was depicted in their faces.

"Quick, Hal," cried the father; "I may yet save you."

"No, no; Jin first," cried Hal.

"Never," said Jin, firmly. "Father, take him—quick."

There was no time for discussion. Every moment brought the fire towards them, and the father, seizing his beloved Hal, dashed through the flame.

At the window a fireman was waiting, who, seizing Hal, cried, "Come out quickly, or you will be suffocated."

"Jin," murmured Hal, in agonised tones.

For a moment John Smith hesitated, then Hal's appeal and the thought of Jin's heroism prevailed, and with a prayer to God for strength, he turned, and was lost to sight in the flame.

The people below were watching with feverish anxiety for the return of the father from his perilous, almost hopeless quest.

Handing Hal to those waiting at the foot of the ladder, the fireman hastily re-ascended, just as the father staggered through the flames, which were now shooting in dense masses from the window. He caught the child from him, passed her to the man below, and seized Smith, who was now all unconscious of what was passing, his strength being spent, his clothes in flames, his face blackened and scorched.

A mighty cry of relief rose from a thousand voices as he was borne quickly down. They rolled him in a blanket to extinguish the flames which enwrapped him; and when John Smith opened his eyes they rested on all his dear ones standing round him.

A murmur, "Thank God!" escaped his lips, and his scorched face was lighted by such a smile of peace as had not crossed it for many a day.

* * * * * *

John Smith had learnt his lesson by the terrible ordeal he passed through that night. The "Red Lion" parlour misses him, but the constant and unfailing prayers of those who loved him were answered in a way they looked not for. Hal had ever thought his daddy perfect, and thinks of him not otherwise than he always did, but the two girls have learnt to know the full meaning of that hallowed word, Father, and share with Hal a loving reverence for his gentleness and goodness.

SPIRITUAL DWARFS.

BY THE REV. R. H. LOVELL.

"And Zacchæus sought to see Jesus who He was, and could not for the press, because he was little of stature."—ST. LUKE xix. 3.

ANXIETY to *see* Jesus Christ, and to know who He really is, is still the world's concern. No other sight so stimulates curiosity or awakens interest. About no one else is the inquiry so persistent, "Who is He?" And it seems probable that this anxiety will yet rather increase than decrease.

Curiosity still wants to see Christ, and to hear about Him. Science, with her clear cold eyes, wants to gaze upon Him, and asks with earnestness, "Who is He?" Evolution can hardly draw her breath for anxiety to know who He is, from what environment He could possibly have come, and why she has not produced a more highly developed Christ these 1,800 years. Neither in art nor literature, much less in life itself, has she produced a nobler ideal than the original. Evolution is curious to know more about this Christ, only she does not climb trees to see Him; she looks through a microscope at protoplasm, and then wonders she cannot see the Christ.

Art wants to see this Christ, and has been trying to paint His portrait by all her greatest masters, from Raphael to Holman Hunt. None of them are yet satisfied with their efforts. His *perfect* likeness has glorified no canvas yet.

Literature still wants to see Him. Successful as "Lives of Christ" have been as literary efforts, it is still true that no book would be more popular than another new and inspiring "Life of Christ."

Youth still wants to see Christ. Multitudes of eager, keen, fresh young spirits would climb any eminence to get a real sight of Him. Trouble wants to see Him; care looks out for His coming; the Church looks for Him to come once more; the common people want to see Christ to solve their problems and meet their needs. Old age wants to see Him; His face, so bright and restful, is the one vision for which it longs, to give life its glory and crown. So the hunger of the heart of Zacchæus "to see Jesus," and "to know who He was," is as real and fresh and powerful to-day as ever.

When Christ went to Jericho (not a small city) only *two* men received benefit from Him. A *short* man inside the city, and a *blind* man outside the city. One very rich, the other poor. One too blind to see, and the other too short to see, were the only men who did see. The inquiry would be not a little interesting as to why it was these men did see.

But we are now concerned rather to look at Zacchæus as a typical character—the type of many to-day who want to see Christ, but who are spiritually too short to see Him; men who are looking out for sycamore-trees to help them to see; men who have been more helped by trees than by ecclesiastical systems. Zacchæus *knew* that he was too short, and was willing to be helped to see; his anxious concern to climb the tree is a promising feature in his character.

The Zacchæus of to-day often does not know that he is so short and small. Because *he* does not see, he often declares that there is no Christ to be seen at all. Until Zacchæus will believe the testimony of thousands as honest as himself that there is a Christ *they can see*, and that it is *something in himself* that prevents his vision, little can be done for him but leave him to his vanity.

What produces spiritual smallness? Not necessarily ignorance or dulness; oftener the over-development of some *one* talent, that gives the individual a reputation for great cleverness. Nothing is more *polished* or *sharp* than a needle, but it makes a very little hole to see through. It pricks, but it does not cut like a sword. A man may so cultivate mathematics that he has no ear or patience for poetry. Looking ever down at minute germs is not the way to see the stars. Some very clever people have no faculty of common sense. Fine powers of observation for minute organisms surely are no qualification for either perceiving or receiving spiritual experiences.

Three causes may be given for spiritual smallness. In the world of vegetation, *cold* is one of the secrets of dwarfed stature. The frost's finger lays his mandate on pine and fir and says, "You may grow no higher." Sunshine means height. Can any man read the autobiography of Stuart Mill and not see that he was trained in an *ice-house*, called home? The deep secret of many a spiritual scepticism and hindrance is want of sympathy, want of heart-warmth, want of love. Pentecost was not an *icy* experience, it was an experience of *fire*. The "true Vine" loves the sunshine for its culture.

A second cause of spiritual smallness is pride—that is, a man ever so looking at *himself*, or his work, or intellect, never looking *higher* than self, he never sees One Who is higher, or deeply feels any such need. "Unless *I* see, and unless *I* am satisfied," is the first condition; and that temper of mind never looks Godward, it is so busy with the "*I*."

Speciality of training may be a hindrance to spiritual stature. Ours is the age of specialists. Men give themselves up to one pursuit, and to see one order of facts; and so, *looking* for nothing else, they *see* nothing else. A giant in *materialism* is often a *spiritual* dwarf. You may train your nature to look for *law* and be blind to "its Lord;" for atoms, and be ignorant of their Author. He who neither trains the *special* organ of vision required, nor looks with any persistence, can hardly expect to see that which he is both unfitted and unwilling to perceive.

Zacchæus was not *only* short; that might not have mattered if there had been no *crowd*. The *crowd*, with the innate selfishness of human nature, had no concern to stand aside and let the short see, or care to place the dwarfed in a front position. The difficulty of Zacchæus was therefore not only a personal defect, it was an *external* difficulty as well. *Other people blocked out* his view of Christ.

We cannot live alone. Some in life will excel others. If our *leaders*, whether at school, or in business, or in literary or Church circles, are sceptical, prayerless, Christless, then many a short one will lose his view of Christ. Many a young student has lost his view of Christ, simply because he is not tall enough spiritually to see over Huxley's, or Tyndall's, or Darwin's shoulder. Even a minister of Christ may get in the way of his Master. People, even "anxious inquirers," may be so "taken up" with the servant as to fail to really see the Master. Crowds of forms and ceremonies may and do sometimes block out the view of Christ. There is nothing like a *private*, personal interview for really seeing Christ. I once saw a crowd gathered to see the foundation-stone of a new "house of prayer" laid. The adult crowd blocked out the children who had come to the ceremony. I saw one man take a little girl on his shoulders, saying that "she should see, whoever else did not." That act caused others to place all the children in front. We want men and women to-day to place the young, the anxious, the sceptical, so high on the shoulders of practical life and testimony that many a short one shall get a commanding view of Christ. Are we all helping men to see Christ, or hindering their view? If men do stop our view, we need not therefore lose the sight, for there are still opportunities for climbing eminences from which we may be helped to a sight of Christ.

Zacchæus was *determined* to see. All along life's pathway there are trees towering grandly over life's crowd, from which we may see Christ *if we will*—your mother's life, your father's example; some biography of a good man, a life like Livingstone's, or Bishop Hannington's. Many a book exists in which every hindrance to intellectual vision has been fully met and removed. You may see Christ in the past of the world's history; in answered prayers—far, far too many and striking to be honestly questioned. You may see Him in fulfilled prophecy. In history, experience, revelation, literature, there are many such trees. Above all, that tree of Calvary, which needs no climbing, will give an immediate view, if once we really wish to see Him.

Climbing the tree can give a *sight*, but that will not satisfy. To *see* Christ we may ascend, to *receive* Christ we *must descend*. Not the mere sight, but the *reception*, of Christ can alone give pardon, rest, and full satisfaction. Christ does not say His most precious things to people up in trees, or in crowds. He waits until He and they are alone; then Christ gives to the full all the spirit longs for.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

37. Quote some words from the Psalms which manifest David's trust in God.

38. What great event took place in the house of Simon the Pharisee?

39. How did Jesus teach His disciples to trust in God?

40. After what declaration of faith did our blessed Lord give to Simon the name of Peter?

41. What command did God give to the Israelites concerning their dress, and why?

42. In what words does St. Paul teach us that faith is the groundwork of Christianity?

43. What words does St. Paul write to the Corinthians which show how much he suffered for Christ's sake?

44. On what occasion did our blessed Lord allow His disciples to worship Him as God?

45. In what city was it that Jesus could perform no mighty miracles, and why?

46. Quote some words of Jesus which show forth God's watchful care of our bodies.

47. What words of Jesus show God's anxiety and care concerning our souls?

48. What was the first miracle performed by the Apostles after our Lord's ascension?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 240.

25. "Exact no more than that which is appointed you." (St. Luke iii. 13.)

26. They would receive the power of the Holy Spirit, Who would guide them in the way of Heaven. (St. John xvi. 7, 13.)

27. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness." (Isa. xl. 3.)

28. St. Matt. iv. 12—16; Isa. ix. 1, 2.

29. After the healing of the man with a withered hand on the Sabbath day. (St. Matt. xii. 10—14.)

30. "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." (St. Mark i. 24.)

31. Isa. lxi. 1, 2; St. Luke iv. 18—21.

32. The parable of the Vine. (St. John xv. 2—10.)

33. Because of its neglect of the practical duties of the Christian life. (Rev. iii. 15, 16.)

34. St. Mark ii. 5.

35. As sins against God Himself, as well as wrong done to our neighbour. (Psalm li. 4.)

36. That Jesus cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. (St. Matt. xii. 22—24.)

JOHN BRIGHT: A FRIEND INDEED.

BY A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.



FOR more than half a century John Bright has been, in the truest sense of the word, "a publicist;" and for forty-five years he has been almost uninterruptedly a member of the House of Commons. His life has thus been before the public, and on much of it a "fierce light" has beaten. In its later years that life has been much less one of controversy, for many of the objects he at first strove for were gained. And (not in a party sense) it may be said that later years showed the conservative side of his character—the attachment to home, to long-fixed forms of belief, to recreations, all conducing to this end, assisted by that natural magnification of victories, and of removal thus of the causes of strife. In seventy-seven years of life the desire for change becomes satiated, and there is less of looking forward, more of introspection and retrospection. The surroundings of John Bright have had their effect, too; for legislation and custom have altered their position and removed penalties his people had to bear. When John Bright entered public life Parliament may be said to have been closed to that middle class of which he was largely the exponent; the adherents to his faith were prohibited from entering many paths now open to them; and there were laws which pressed harshly upon them. But these may be said to be circumstances well known, and our aim is that of glancing at some incidents in that life more pleasant in remembering.

John Bright came of a Quaker stock, and for generations on both sides, in Charles Lamb's words, "parents owned the Quaker rule." When eleven years old he was sent to the noted Quaker seminary at Ackworth. The entry in the "List of Scholars" as to John Bright is simply his number on the school-roll, 4542, his name, "Rochdale" as his residence, and 1823 as the year when he left the school. From thence he went to York School, also a school for members of the Society of Friends, but for those of more advanced years and requirements. At York and at Newton-in-Bolland his education was completed, and thence business and, gradually, public life received him.

It was from the North of England that he was first sent to Parliament. In Newcastle he wooed and won his first wife—Elizabeth, daughter of Jonathan Priestman, a gentleman who used to have in that Tyneside town the pleasant appellation of the "handsome Quaker." After her death Cobden sought him.

and aroused him to Anti-Corn Law agitation. Speaking often in the North, he was chosen incidentally as candidate for Durham. He fought and lost; but in July, 1843, after another contest, he won. A pleasant story is told in that cathedral city:—Dean Waddington walked from the College to the polling place, and as he went along Saddler Street, the taunt was shouted at him—"You vote for a Quaker!" But his reply was, "I vote for a Free Trader!" Thus, then, a cathedral city and Church dignitaries sent and aided to send the great Quaker Free Trader to a Parliament he has adorned, influenced, and at times guided.



THE RIGHT HON. JOHN BRIGHT, M.P.

There is another parliament than that at Westminster that John Bright has had power and influence in. It meets yearly off Bishopsgate Without. It is in a plain building of ample dimensions—galleries rising at each end from the floor, and another higher looking down thereon. In that "naught-plotting cabal," where silence often settles down on a thousand men and women, in a well-known seat on the floor John Bright over many years used to be seen at these "Whitsun Conferences" of the Society of Friends. And less frequently he would rise up, put aside his hat, rest one hand on his umbrella, and lay the other lightly on a pillar near — hands usually encased in neat kid — and pour forth steadily, slowly, with little of passion and little approach to declamation, a flow of thought in a well of English undefiled. One memorable speech of his dwells in the mind of many. There had been expressed a great horror at the prevalence of intemperance, and a great longing for legislation to contract the means of procuring drink —to contract it as and when the people desired. John Bright arose, and the assembly, rather wearied before, settled down with a hush which told that the great orator not only "dwelt among," but had honour amongst his own people. His speech was short, his illustrations few; he scarcely raised his bell-like voice above a conversational pitch, but all heard and heeded him. He did not discredit legislation, but he pointed out that it could not wisely go faster than the wish of those who made it; that it was those makers of law, the people, who needed to be influenced; and that it was to the Churches we should look for the example, the precept, the influence, and the teaching. That speech told. The "minute" of the Quaker Church expressed it, embodied its central idea in its widely diffused "Epistle," and again and again it has been revived in measure, in spirit, and in tone.

There is another of the places which Mr. Bright loved to visit—his old school at Ackworth. His second wife came from the south of Yorkshire, and had often aided in the government of Ackworth School. Near midsummer, a "general meeting" is held at that Quaker village, and in the old days, before age and illness had afflicted the great tribune, he was a frequent visitor at that general meeting. There is a story told of one of these visits, which has its humorous as well as its pathetic side. The scholars read publicly answers to questions put to them weeks before as part of their examination. One such question was put to a scholar, who hesitated, looked from his written answer straight to where on the plain bench Mr. Bright sat with his wife. The question was repeated, and it was—"Who is the greatest statesman in this age?" Then the lad read, "John Bright," and gave his boyish reasons. There was a smile, and then a hush, as the meeting appreciated the position, and the "statesman" bowed his head, possibly to hide the feeling engendered.

In that school, in its midsummer quiet, John Bright loved to be; lingering with old friends, possibly with old schoolmates, and discussing across the table the changes that time had wrought and the improvements it had seen. And some who had heard him moving vast masses of men in the great cities—who had heard his declamations on hustings and in Westminster—loved best the man in his privacy, and in the charm of his attractive personal "after-dinner talk." And thus this latter-day Penn, who has earned the world's applause, is neither forgotten nor unhonoured by those who have been most intimate with him.

A RESCUING HAND.

BY JESSIE MACLEOD, AUTHOR OF "A STRANGE COINCIDENCE," ETC.

CHAPTER I.



ONE dark night in winter Mr. Breakspear, a London merchant, was unable to sleep in consequence of the wind howling round his house and the rain dashing against the windows. The house was an old-fashioned mansion at Hampstead, standing in an exposed situation. Perhaps he was thinking of his cargoes bound for the Cape and elsewhere. When once the mind enters upon a train of anxious thought it is good-bye to slumber.

As he listened to the storm, he fancied that between the blasts there were additional sounds which did not belong to them: beginning gently, then stopping, then recommencing—noises, in fact, of a saw and the cautious tapping of a hammer on a chisel. Mr. Breakspear arose in order to hear more clearly. Yes, the sounds were distinct: someone was attempting to break into the house by removing a pane of glass in the room below.

Sometimes he had considerable sums of money by him; there was always handsome plate; and at present the establishment was a small one, for Mrs. Breakspear and the children were at Brighton, and several of the servants also.

The merchant took a revolver from its case, then gently opening the window, looked down. It was as he thought. Through the rain which dashed in his face he distinguished two figures, one holding a dark lantern, while the other worked.

"You rascals!" shouted he in his loudest voice. "What are you doing there?"

The light was instantly extinguished, there was a scuffle, and rapid footfalls on the gravel walk. Mr. Breakspear fired his pistol—into space as he thought, but there was a cry, followed by groans: he had done in the dark what probably he could not have achieved with a good light and taking aim—shot the housebreaker.

He was horrified at his own impetuosity. Had he committed a murder!

Ringing the bell violently, he hurriedly dressed. The servants, already aroused by the report of firearms, rushed to his room; then carrying lights, they accompanied their master to the garden, where midway down the path they found a man lying on his face, to all appearance dead. The merchant had an excellent heart, and his remorse was great; he ordered the inanimate burglar to be carried into the house and placed on the bed of one of the absent servants.

He was quite a young man, thin almost to emaciation, dressed in a threadbare suit of clothes known as the "shabby genteel," which were wet through. There was nothing rough, coarse, or repulsive, the accepted characteristics of a housebreaker, about him; his hands were long and delicate. A dark line of blood issued from a wound at the side of his throat—a most dangerous one, as the merchant saw at once.

Greatly dismayed, he did his best to stop the bleeding, while as soon as possible he sent his brougham to bring the nearest surgeon. Fortunately the doctor was still up, having just returned from London, and it is probable that his prompt attendance saved the young man's life. He extracted the bullet, which had only just escaped the jugular artery: the patient was ordered to be kept very quiet, and on no account taken to a hospital at present.

Here was an embarrassment for the merchant: to have a burglar, who was attempting to break into the house, on his hands to be nursed and cared for!

But Mr. Breakspear never flinched; he had brought the trouble on himself by his rash act, and being a just man, accepted its consequences, vowing never to use firearms again.

When the young man recovered his consciousness he was surprised at his surroundings, and very grateful for the comforts he enjoyed. He thanked the merchant with tears, although reticent as to his past life; but at last yielded to the gentleman's urgent solicitations to confide in him, and relate what had brought him to this last stage of degradation. His father, he said, was a severe man; mother he had none. In spite of a good education and respectable position in society, he had unfortunately made idle acquaintances, incurred debts he could not defray, and after a stormy scene with his father, ran away from home.

At first he joined a company of strolling actors, but finding no money was to be gained, left them at Liverpool and tried a seafaring life, making a voyage to the West Indies. The hardships he endured thoroughly disgusted him. Too proud to return home destitute, he became entangled with associates who were nothing more nor less than thieves, and at last consented to accompany one of the gang to break into the merchant's house to steal plate, jewellery, or whatever articles of value they might light upon.

It was the old story of a rapid downward course, caused by a want of industry, a love of pleasure, insidious and dangerous companions—the influence of "evil communications."

Mr. Breakspear listened, much interested; it might be possible to reclaim this youth, and fit him for a useful station in the world, if respectable society should happily succeed to the vicious crew with whom he had associated.

"No, sir," he replied to the merchant's offer of mediating with his father. "I have disgraced his name, and will not reveal it until I have redeemed the past."

"Then what am I to call you?"

"John Francis," he said; "they are some of my real names, at any rate."

When his strength had somewhat returned, Mr. Breakspear placed him in a cottage on the opposite side of the Heath, while he considered what would be the best course to take with him. He dressed him in an old suit of his own, and could not resist smiling at the effect; being himself taller and considerably stouter than his *protégé*, the garments hung upon his thin figure so loosely that he resembled a scarecrow.

The merchant found it a very difficult matter to obtain him employment—he was no handicraftsman. To place him in his own counting-house would be unjust to his respectable clerks, nor would it be right to recommend him to another firm. At length, however, an opening presented itself at the West India Docks as a landing clerk; the remuneration was small, but it would give him a fresh start in life.

With protestations of deep gratitude, and promises of rectitude and self-denial in the future, John Francis departed.

For well over a twelvemonth the merchant received most satisfactory accounts of him, when he was promoted to a similar situation at Liverpool, and Mr. Breakspear lost sight of him; thus nineteen years glided by.

CHAPTER II.

"I REGRET Mr. Ashworth cannot receive me, for I am anxious to make his acquaintance," said the Rev. Mark Heritage, the new vicar of St. Osyth's, who was calling upon a lady of his congregation.

"You are very kind; but my uncle is averse to having visitors—he feels his loss of sight so much," answered the lady he addressed.

"Loss of sight is not loss of speech, nor of hearing; besides, I do not come as an ordinary caller-in: I am the vicar of his parish, and see the old gentleman occasionally led into church. Do go and ask him, Miss Siddall, to receive me."

The lady demurred; she was a woman of an uncertain age, neither young nor old, with fair hair and complexion; her eyes were of a pale grey, with very light eyelashes; they met the clergyman's as she looked up at him, shaking her head. He was somewhat of a physiognomist, and noted a gleam in them he could not quite understand.

"It will be useless to ask him—thank you very much."

Too polite to importune, he took his leave, but as he walked leisurely homeward that fleeting expression in her eyes seemed still before him. What did it mean: insincerity, watchfulness? Yes. Mr. Heritage had only come to the living three months before, and in that time had become acquainted with most of his parishioners; but although he had made several attempts to obtain an interview with Mr. Ashworth, who was a retired solicitor, he never succeeded in doing so.

His heart had warmed to the melancholy-looking, white-haired old gentleman who came to church on fine Sundays, led to his seat between his niece and the verger, and could not understand why he was always denied. Miss Siddall attended the services regularly, singing in a loud metallic voice. His predecessor in the living, being of feeble health, had not visited in the parish, but the new-comer was active, and in the prime of life—different in every respect.

Some few weeks after this, he chanced to see Miss Siddall enter a shop, and it suddenly occurred to him that her absence might give him an opportunity of seeing Mr. Ashworth; at any rate, he would try the experiment. The maid-servant who opened the door hesitated a little, but admitted him, while she went to her master, whose reply was an invitation to enter the old gentleman's sitting-room, which, with an adjacent bed-room, was on the ground floor.

"This is a pleasure I have longed for," said Mr. Ashworth, extending his hand in the direction of the visitor.

"And I also," said the vicar, who saw his vague suspicions substantiated. "I have called several times, but Miss Siddall would not have you disturbed."

"She is too careful of me, treating me like an invalid; but I am not ill, only feeble in consequence of my infirmity." Mr. Heritage placed himself beside him at the fire, and took his hand.

"Has your sight entirely gone, may I ask? Is there not a hope of it being restored?"

"I think there may be, for I can tell whether there is a light or not in the room—I know when the sun is shining. I fancy a great joy might possibly restore it."

"A great joy?" repeated the vicar, surprised.

"Yes! for great grief has taken it away. Sir, you see a harsh father, who drove his son, his only child, to Heaven only knows what fate. I have shed so many remorseful tears that my eyes have gone blind."

Mr. Heritage became deeply interested.

"If the subject is not too painful, I should much like to hear the circumstances. I might help you to comfort and to resignation," said the clergyman.

"It will be a great relief to speak of it; you will see how hard, how unnatural I have been. My niece, who superintends my house and takes care of me, will not hear me mention his name; she says I ought to forget him—but human nature is not yet dead in me."

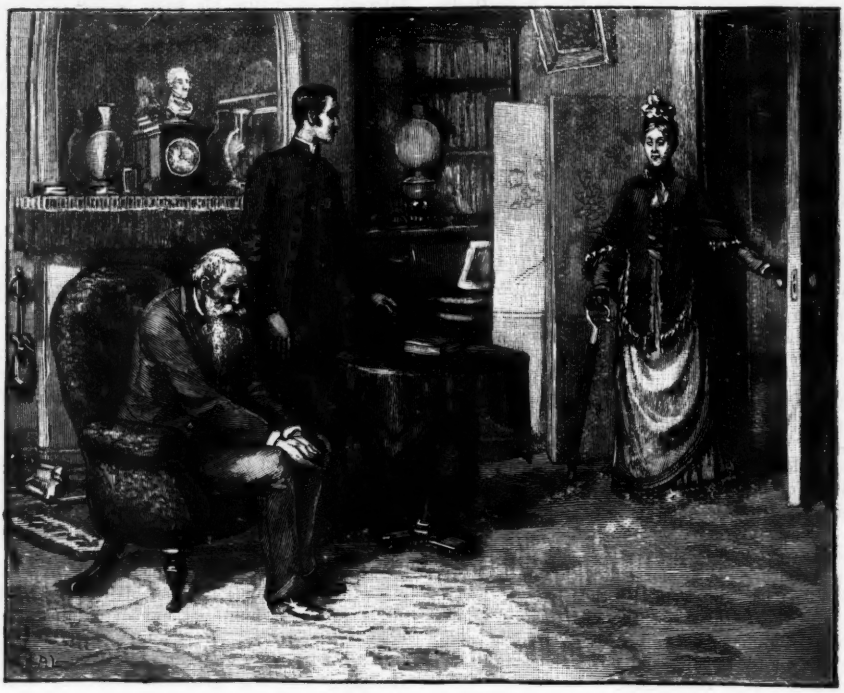
"Can a parent forget his children?" said Mr. Heritage, who was gradually becoming more enlightened. "There are few persons in whom natural feelings are quite extinct."

"I married late in life, and was immersed in law business; going to my office early, and returning late, I saw but little of my home. When I became a widower, instead of sending my boy to a boarding-school, as I ought to have done, I kept him at home. At that time I resided in Guilford Street, and my son had, unfortunately, the run of London: that was where the mischief began. He attended a public school hard by, but had much spare time, and no one to direct his youthful pleasures and pursuits. I was severe, too ready to blame and tardy to praise; he feared me, doubtless hiding much from me. Oh, it is a mistake for parents not to make friends of their children and gain their confidence: I see it all now.

"Later on, my wife's niece, Miss Siddall, came to reside with us; she and Frank did not get on well together; he despised her authority. Well, to end a

sad story, he made bad acquaintances—actors and such-like—ran a reckless, wild career, and contracted debts. I forgave him, and paid these debts, on his promising amendment; but he was weak, and fond of pleasure—so relapsed. There were scenes between us; I refused to pay his expenses any longer, and told him he must work for his living, saying cruel things in my anger. Passionate and high-spirited, that night he disappeared from his home. It is twenty years ago; I have never heard of him since."

"Did you advertise for him to return?"



"The door opened, and Miss Siddall hastily entered."—*p.* 313.

"Yes, year after year, with no results."

"It is indeed a sad story, Mr. Ashworth. Let us trust that a merciful Providence may yet lift the cloud and reunite you with your lost son. Strange and wonderful things come to pass. When did you advertise last?"

"A twelvemonth ago; I have relinquished doing so now—it appears so useless. The anxiety of hope deferred, and my remorse, have nearly crushed me."

"Where did you have your letters to be addressed?"

"To myself, of course."

The vicar mused.

"Will you allow me to insert advertisements for you? I have been fortunate before now."

"With pleasure, my dear sir. You quite put fresh heart into me; both my niece and Burnell (a former clerk of mine, who looks after my affairs for me) urge me to give up the quest."

"What is your son's name, Mr. Ashworth?"

"John Francis," replied the old gentleman. "Find me my son, Mr. Heritage, and I will bless you. To hear his forgiving voice is the one hope which binds me to this world. Expense will be no object to me. Look round—do you see a small velvet and another silk bag, hanging by the fireplace? One contains half-sovereigns, the other half-crowns. Sometimes poor people apply to me whom I have known in former days; I am glad to give them little helps."

"Yes," said the vicar, "here are the two bags, close at hand."

"Will you kindly count out ten half-sovereigns and use them in advertisements?" continued Mr. Ashworth.

Taking the velvet bag from its hook, the vicar untied the string, and poured out the coins on the table. What did he see? Farthings! A bag nearly full of them. He opened the silk one. No half-crowns were there, only penny pieces. What did it mean?

"Take more if you will," said the unsuspecting old gentleman.

"You will be surprised to hear that there is a

mistake; these bags contain neither gold nor silver, only farthings and pennies."

"*What!*" exclaimed Mr. Ashworth, rising from his arm-chair, a flush of indignation on his pale face. "What am I to understand by this?"

"That an unscrupulous person is taking advantage of you, I should say."

"Can it be Harriet?—no, she dare not. Burnell brings my money from the Bank. How is it?" said the poor old gentleman, sinking back into his seat. "Am I imposed upon? Be kind enough to say nothing of this; I must take time to think it out and take steps to solve this business. An old lawyer shall not be beaten. Allow me to be your debtor for the present."

The vicar re-hung the little bags; scarcely were they in their places, when the door opened, and Miss Siddall hastily entered, being informed by Sarah that Mr. Heritage was with her master. Discomposure was visible on her countenance, and her eyes glared as if from an inward fire. Mr. Heritage arose and bowed; he was no hypocrite, therefore did not extend his hand.

"I hope my dear uncle has not been exciting himself; his nervous system is far from good; the doctor forbids the least excitement," said she.

"Harriet," exclaimed Mr. Ashworth, "you infer that I am in bad health—that is not the case. I am an old man, and, like all blind people, feeble and uncertain in my movements—but I am not an invalid. By degrees all my friends have been excluded by this statement, and my life is rendered unnecessarily lonely."

"And this is the thanks I get for carrying out the doctor's directions—and as to friends, I'm sure, uncle, Mr. Burnell calls very often."

"Burnell is my salaried assistant. I am speaking of friends who are socially my equals," returned the old gentleman drily. He had gained courage by the vicar's presence.

"I will come again to-morrow, and bring a new book to read for you," said Mr. Heritage.

"It is very good of you to make the offer, but your time is valuable. I read to my uncle every day good books that I'm sure you would approve; for he is old, you know, and ought to care no longer for this world," said Miss Siddall sanctimoniously.

"There is only one link that binds me to it," said Mr. Ashworth. "Lost Frank!"

Miss Siddall started, glancing cautiously at the vicar, who was quite equal to the occasion.

"Mr. Ashworth has told me of his great sorrow. With prayer and trust his son will yet be restored to him."

"What, after twenty years? Never. The reprobate has died long ago, or he would have answered the advertisements," she exclaimed violently and spitefully.

"Allow me to differ from you. Probably he never met with them." As Mr. Heritage spoke he looked at her eyes, and again the ugly gleam passed across them.

"Give me my son—let me hear his voice once more, and I shall die in peace," cried the poor old man, clasping his hands.

"There!" said Miss Siddall—"and the doctor said he was not to be excited." Whereupon the vicar shook hands with him cordially, and took his leave; distantly of the lady—with her he saw it was war to the knife.

"Horrid man!" soliloquised she. "I'll keep him out all I can, and I won't go to his church any more."

The old lawyer had been a man of resolute purpose in his earlier life, but brooding over his family sorrows for so many years had sapped his energy. Now he roused himself, and feeling for the bell, rang it sharply.

"What do you require, uncle?" asked Miss Siddall, surprised.

He did not reply, but when Sarah appeared to answer his summons, said, "Sarah, Mr. Heritage is to be admitted whenever he calls; and never send away visitors without coming to me."

"Well, I'm sure!" exclaimed the lady. "Is there anything more you would like?"

"Yes. I should wish you to count out the bags, and see how we stand for money."

Miss Siddall gave a startled glance at them—they hung apparently undisturbed.

She emptied the contents, and obeyed him.

"Twenty-five half-sovereigns, uncle, and thirty half-crowns," said she.

"Wrap up twenty half-sovereigns, Harriet, and give them to Burnell, when he comes, for his quarter's salary."

"He is always paid at your agent's," she said, dismayed.

"So that he gets his money, he will not care how he receives it. Do as I say; I shall not keep any more money to give away. That which should be left in the bag, six pounds five, is just the sum to pay for the new dress I ordered for you last week."

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

List of contributions received from November 23rd, 1888, up to and including December 17th, 1888. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month:—

J. W., Camden Town (fourth donation), 7s. 6d.; J. H. S. W., Bromsgrove, 5s.; Anon., Bow, £1; Mrs. Henry Moore, Hildenborough, 10s.; Old Hutton, Kendal, 5s.; L. V. D., 5s.; A. E. S., Cork, 3s.; E. D., South Kensington, 5s.; M. Le Roy King, Rhode Island, U.S.A., £5; J. W., of W. N. E., 2s. 6d.; Reum, Leeds, 5s.; F. L., St. Helens, 2s. 6d.; Anon., Cheltenham, 5s.; F. Briggs, Bradford, 7s. 6d.; Waterloo, 2s.; J. J. E., Govan (fourteenth donation), 5s.; J. H. Jennings, Barnet, 10s. 6d.; Nine-year-old Nanny, Lethberston, 6s.; J. Evans, Lethberston, 4s. 6d.; Winifred Harvey, Carmarthen, 5s.; Mona and Mila, Stroud, £1.

Further contributions are earnestly invited, and should be addressed to THE EDITOR OF THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

THE CHINA INLAND MISSION.



THE REV. J. HUDSON TAYLOR.
(From a Photograph by G. P. Abraham, Keswick.)

CONCERNING China we are told that it would take something like the letters of eighty Bibles to represent the population of that old and wondrous empire; how vast, how solemn is the need of evangelistic labours in that great harvest-field, and what showers of blessing have come down upon the society that has now sixty-four stations with resident missionaries, and a staff of workers numbering three hundred and twenty-four. These belong to various Protestant bodies, and vary in social position; the great qualification is "soundness in the faith in all fundamental truths," and the success of the mission is undoubted and remarkable. There is a rule to avoid collections and personal solicitation of money, but the income for 1887 was £33,700! When the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor returned to England from China in 1860, he prayed that his return (occasioned by failing health) might be overruled for good; and in a letter to a friend, yearning that devoted young men might be led to serve God in China, he seems to have struck the note that has led to such glorious results. A deep impression was made on many when the University band went out some years ago; last November seven earnest volunteers, from different Young Men's Christian Associations, were commended to the keeping of the Master in a memorable meeting at Exeter Hall, and started from home and country to work in China's interior. Some who preceded them in bearing thither the Gospel standard have died at their posts, but the work will go on. It is told of an impetuous Methodist, listening to a funeral oration wherein the speaker said, "The light of Methodism is extinguished," that he started up with the cry, "Glory be to God! that 's a lie." Faithful ones are called away to rest, but others take hold of the *work;* the Gospel light will burn all the brighter for their sweet, inspiring memories. "Brethren, pray for us," writes one who is working in China; "the work is the Lord's—prisoners' chains fall off, prison doors fly open, when prayer is made without ceasing of the Church unto God."

"WORK FIRST, AND THEN REST."

This is Ruskin's advice; rest after toil "doth greatly please," but just now many would-be toilers prefer the daily task. "I am quite tired of being the gentleman," wrote an energetic little lad resting perforce at a convalescent home. His heart was back in the daily work again, and very many this winter can take up the little fellow's cry, and echo his yearning to find himself in harness. The problem, so real, so difficult, of lives, young and old, apparently exceeding the daily work that exists—the problem of lives that would work even for a pittance, the sight of enforced idleness and of competition even for temporary jobs—must appeal to the hearts of all who love God, for they love their brethren also, and would fain straighten out the tangle. There can be no truer form of charity than the endeavour to help those who are trying to help themselves; in caring for the outcast and helpless, let us not overlook the claims of those who are outwardly respectable, going hither and thither seeking daily work, asking no alms save the means of earning a living. Those who have education, leisure, and a little silver to spare, may find blessed occupation in endeavouring to bring together the work and the worker, either in England or the growing fields of labour abroad; and those who preside over Bible-classes or Sunday scholars may be of real help in unravelling social difficulties, if they will discover why certain members of their classes are out of work, and thus beset by temptation, and if they will make it a personal concern to seek situations and employment for lives that are asking work.

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK.

We have heard much of late of the supposed failure of Christian missions, but the "Report of the Missionary Conference" held in London during last year, which has just been issued by Messrs. Nisbet, shows that never before were there so many or so well-trained workers in the mission-field as there are now. Perhaps we are all of us too apt to think more of the furtherance of our own particular division of the Church than the spread of the Master's Kingdom, but we are not without hope that in this respect a great change for the better is coming over us, and of this we see the earnest in the decidedly practical Conference whose report is before us.—The memoir of the late Alexander Balfour of Liverpool, by the Rev. R. H. Lundie, is issued by the same publishers. It tells the life-story, as far as possible in Mr. Balfour's own words, of one who was widely useful in his city during a long lifetime.—To Messrs. Nisbet's series, "Men of the Bible," has now been added a new life of Him who was Son of God and Son of Man, whose life was the Life of lives. The author is the Rev. J. F. Vallings, M.A., to whom, in his own words, Jesus Christ is "The ideal Man, the representative Man, the Divine Man, God over all, blessed for ever." The series would have been incomplete without a work dealing with the life of Christ—the life of the only perfect Man who ever lived. The work is reverent, thoughtful, and suggestive.—"From Adam to Abraham" (same publishers) is the title

which the Rev. J. Gurney Hoare gives to a series of forty-eight lessons, intended for class use, upon the first fifteen chapters of Genesis. We do not see anything specially fresh in this volume, which is a companion to one on "Joshua and Judges," which we noticed some little time ago.—We should not like to be bound to express concurrence in everything which Professor Momerie says in his volume, "Inspiration, and other Sermons" (W. Blackwood and Sons). At the same time, there is much in the work that is valuable, and not a little that is helpful. The sermons on "True and False Discontent" and on "Patience" are, to our thinking, among the best in the volume.—"The Present Tenses of the Blessed Life" (Morgan and Scott) is the somewhat awkward title which the Rev. F. B. Meyer gives to a series of more than usually helpful meditations on passages of Scripture which he cites as showing the phases of the Eternal Life which is even now begun in all who have named the name of Christ.—We regret that the unusual demands upon our space will not allow us to do more than mention Mr. Selby's interesting volume, "The Imperfect Angel, and other Sermons" (Hodder and Stoughton).

WORK AMONG NORWICH FACTORY-GIRLS.

A writer on the subject of charities has said there can be no better proof of the Divine origin of Christianity and of the truth of the Gospel than the story of various helpful institutions, and it is certain that those who truly follow the Christian religion do love the poor, seek out lives in need, and hold out hands of friendship and sympathy to one and all. The young, the aged, the careless, and the infirm are alike befriended by Christian lives; the fact of need becomes a claim upon consideration and help, so that thoughtful hearts are ever planning some fresh means of influencing less favoured lives for good. We remember reading of charities abroad that provide for respectable interment of the dead, or for the safe storage of any printed matter that may be found here and there—such pieces of paper being of too much consequence to throw away. But *Christian* charity cares for the *living* rather than for those needing interment, and yearns over young souls on which may be written good or evil in their early, impressionable days. An East-End worker determined once to see for herself what attractions in music-halls and cheap theatres charmed the girls in whom she was interested. The style of entertainment filled her with grief and shame, but she noticed brightness and plants and a general air of festivity which would be a most attractive change to hard-working girls. "And I almost wondered," said she, "at the amount of influence our meetings still possess over girls to whom these doors stand open." Is not the moral that Christian institutes and meetings should extend a cheery welcome also, lifting the girls away from their hard surroundings, and refreshing body, mind, and soul? We hear from the Rev. R. Hobson, Clarendon Road, Norwich, of a very successful work among factory-girls. "St. George's Club" exists to benefit them socially, morally, and spiritually, and to make their leisure hours bright and useful. "We seek," says Mr. Hobson, "to recognise two common-place principles, viz., that prevention is better than cure, and that it is wise and well to help those who try to help themselves." Shelter is provided for girls out of work, and the movement is based on broad undenominational lines, and may be justly commended to all who would wish to help on an effort worthy of largely increased support. An interesting feature is the Orchestral String Band, consisting of twenty-four young women, who render gratuitous service to many a benevolent cause.

A CROCUS LESSON.

"When I look into my garden," remarked Bishop Hall, "I see a small spire look out of the earth, which grows into a stalk; at last appears the hope of a flower, which, ripened by suns and showers, arises to perfection." How many a lesson Nature whispers to the heart, of courage, faith, and patience, and the covenant-keeping God Who is the God of *life*



and not of death, and Whose voice awakes the blossoms to preach with voiceless lips of His goodness and His power! Autumn pointed the moral for many a warning concerning death and decay. Let the first brave heralds of spring be like the angels that bore resurrection tidings, and inspired fresh comfort, hope, and cheer. To some young friends who publicly professed the Master a lady gave pots of crocuses, with mottoes full of helpful meaning; on one was a card with the words, "Consider the lilies how they grow"—*not by great effort, but by great power.* The Heavenly Power is the secret of all true and beautiful growth. Those lowly spirits that utterly rest on God are growing most truly in grace, and those who would fain make spiritual progress must drink in the bedewing influences of the Holy Spirit, and look away from self entirely to Him Who is the Light; thus, "not by great effort, but by great *power*," will be developed the glorious and immortal possibilities "which in their seeds

"And weak beginnings lie entreasured."

AT THE PRISON GATE.

Mrs. Meredith's Prison-Gate Mission is steadfastly struggling against the forces of evil, preaching deliverance to the captive, and revealing hope to poor victims of intemperance and sin. "It's hard," said one, "when you have nothing but misery and poverty, to think about God." But she was shown that God cares for the poor and troubled ones, and that many a heart has trusted in Him even amid circumstances of poverty. The Christian solicitude that provides breakfast for them, and would fain guide them to an honest livelihood, must surely mirror, even to those who are apparently unmoved, the love and mindfulness of the Redeemer; several cases are full of encouraging promise, and many are thankful for work at the laundry; while others who disappear into the vortex of London life have at least been brought face to face with the invitations of the Gospel, and eternity alone can reveal the result. "I will do better now," said one poor woman, to whose heart the Word of God came home; and another said, "I really am going to think of what you have been saying." It is a sad fact that numbers of women are confined on account of drunkenness; this should give a prayerful and earnest impetus to temperance work. "Will some of our Christian friends," ask the workers at the prison gate, "pray for these women every Saturday night, that the pure Gospel truths they hear may sink deep into their hearts, and bring forth fruit in His own good time?"

"GOD LOVES ME."

Miss Perks, of the Soldiers' Home and Christian Mission, Winchester, relates an interesting incident of her evangelistic village work. She visited a poor old woman, blind and deaf, and a lifelong cripple. This woman was called by the neighbours "Idiot Mary," and indeed her life was one of depression and gloom, though a kindly sister was mercifully left to her, and it was this sister who longed for Miss Perks to "do something" to cheer the darkened mind. The visitor was at first much perplexed, hearing that "Idiot Mary's" one exclamation was "Misery, Misery!" How was she to brighten the poor old soul? She lifted her heart in prayer, and then took one shrivelled hand in hers, making signs thereon, till Mary muttered, "Letters!" for she had learnt to read ere, more than fifty years ago, she became an invalid. Miss Perks, after long effort, spelt out the sentence on her hand, "God loves you." Old Mary, with sorrowful face, patted her shoulder, as if to say, "Yes; *you* but not *me!*" So Miss Perks tried again, with the words, "God loves me," and patted blind Mary to make it personal. At last the worn face brightened up, and Mary closed her hand as though to keep the good news therein. A converted soldier took up the case, till Mary learnt texts and hymns traced on her one unmaimed hand; then she received portions of the Bible in raised letters, and at last she began to tell to her neighbours what she learnt and read. Miss Perks writes recently, "We have had a summer filled with blessing, having carried the Gospel all around, and the converted soldiers have taken a most active and earnest part. We have had farewell meetings with troops bound for India, Burmah, and the Cape, and now we are beginning all over again with fresh regiments. Our soldier converts are grand missionaries in all parts of the world."

THE SEASON FOR READING.

Pre-eminently winter is the season for reading, when the days are shortest and the nights longest, and when the inclemency of the weather makes one's own fireside peculiarly acceptable as a refuge. Naturally, at such a time our thoughts wander to other and more genial climes, where skies are clearer and winds warmer. Canon Bell, of Cheltenham, was sent to spend last winter in Egypt, and devoted much of his time while there to noting the close connection between the history of that ill-fated country and the inspired Bible record. What he saw he tells us in a pleasantly written volume, entitled "A Winter on the Nile" (Hodder and Stoughton), which we heartily commend to our readers.—Beside the history of Egypt, whose grandeur was passed before our own day arose, the history of England looks a little commonplace; but to us it is and must be dearest of all this world's histories. So we are glad to welcome the second volume of the Jubilee edition of Cassell's "History of England." This volume covers the all-important period between the Wars of the Roses and the outbreak of the great Revolution, and therefore embraces those most glorious epochs of our history, the establishment of the Protestant religion and the reign of Queen Elizabeth.—Another historical work which is on our table is the latest volume of Messrs. Longmans' "Epochs of Church History," entitled "The Popes and the Hohenstaufen," in which a not unimportant phase of the long-continued battle between the Popes and the European rulers is ably chronicled. Schism and slaughter seem to have been the main outcome of the Papal policy throughout the conflict.

"RESIGNING THE RUDDER."

It was a prayer of George Herbert's that he might wholly be led to resign the rudder of his life to the sacred will of God, to be moved "as Thy Love shall sway." How much fretting, how much worry, it would spare us all if we asked our Heavenly Father that He would cause us to lean utterly, in perfect faith, in cheerful, unquestioning obedience, upon His will and wisdom, whether in life's trivial concerns or in those shades of darkness from which we recoil in fear. We can ask Him nothing beyond His power; some of us know the feeling, "In all but *this*, I could say *Thy will be done;*" but if we will only tell the story at His feet, pouring out our hearts before Him, we shall be able to trust our Father, even to rejoice in Him, through every changeful pathway. Not long ago a Christian visitor called upon a poor woman who had just been told by the matron of the hospital of the incurable nature of her complaint; the poor sufferer tearfully declared she accepted God's will patiently so far as her own pain and death were concerned, but she could not bear the thought of her motherless children; nobody could induce her, she said, as concerned the children, to feel patient and

resigned. It was a painful scene; the visitor could not remonstrate with her upon her spirit of impatience and murmuring, but felt as though she must weep with her, as she said, "Yours is untold sorrow beyond my understanding even, but God knows all about it—*God* understands. Will you not tell Him just how you feel—tell Him what you have told me—all your pain, anxiety, and dread of leaving your little ones alone? I am going now to tell the leader of our prayer-meeting about you; to-morrow, from three to half-past, prayers will arise on your behalf; will you not at the same time be on your knees before God and tell Him all?" The sufferer promised: next day, relates the visitor, earnest, pleading supplications laid her case before God, and what was the result? The next interview found that woman as calm as she had been impatient; she had poured out her own heart in prayer, and others had prayed for her, and she told the visitor, "I am just leaving *everything* with God—not only whether I live or die, but each of my little children. Everything is safe with Him; I feel it—I know it." Verily our God is the same now as in past ages—prayer-hearing, prayer-answering.

"Thou canst no more not hear, than Thou canst die."

IN A FAR COUNTRY.

It may be that we, to whom religious privileges abound, would value them more earnestly could we share the experience of travellers and colonists who in remote districts hear no church-bells ring, have no choice of Christian preachers and teachers, and find little in their Sabbath surroundings to remind them that the day of rest has returned. "People have been fined, imprisoned, martyred," said a lecturer on the Reformation, "for reading the Bible which the children of to-day can so easily possess, so freely read and learn." How great are our responsibilities who live in these days of privileges, and in this land of Christian blessings! may we be saved from lightly esteeming those streams of healthfulness and grace, for which many of our brethren in distant lands are sighing to-day. We have been touched by the story told in a private letter from Oregon, of an old man—one of the earliest settlers—who walked ten miles or more to ask an English family if they had a large-type Bible, as for twelve months past he had been unable to read the small type of the one he possessed. Those to whom he brought his request had only small-type books likewise; so the old man started back without his book, but one cannot forbear much sympathy with himself and his aged wife, long since strangers to their fatherland, yet reading to each other the familiar words they had heard as little children. In districts like these how welcome is the Gospel music when proclaimed among the colonists, and it is said suggestively that there would be rejoicing if some Christian preacher, not quite dependent on congregational support, could journey out to preach among the settlers, many of whom find it uphill work as yet to keep themselves and their families. And those of us who have friends beyond the reach of privileges like our own, may help and bless their neighbours as well as themselves by sending out regularly spiritual food in the shape of Gospel sermons, text-cards, and wholesome literature, which shall gladden unspeakably many a remote fireside.

THE STRANGERS' REST AT CARDIFF.

Many wandering lives come beneath the good influences of this institution, where religious services and Gospel Temperance meetings are held, and much helpful literature is distributed. This much-needed work of Christian sympathy has not proved in vain; the seed sown has brought forth fruit, in some cases not till the shore has been left far behind, and the sailor is toiling again upon the lonely wave. An interesting account is given of a Newfoundlander who once turned in to a meeting with a shipmate, and said lightly, "Do they think they are going to convert *us?*" About four years later, this sailor visited the steward of his ship in sickness, and, after his death, the steward's Bible was left to him; this Book had been received from the Strangers' Rest, and the address of the Institute was written within. The sailor was impressed by this reminder, and afterwards came to Cardiff, hoping to find help and blessing at the Rest, and by God's mercy his heart was changed, and he was enabled to bear testimony from a distant shore, "God is good—I trust in Him!" We hear of many other encouraging incidents connected with this mission amid lives that are rough and hard and careless to outward seeming, but can be moved by the love of God. One young man—a Russian officer—often spent his evenings thankfully at the Rest. Before long, this young sailor was fated to be cast adrift from a wrecked ship in a little boat with five of the crew: he had brought away his Testament, and, on the Sunday morning, he read to the troubled, exhausted men the story of the storm that was stilled by Christ. Heads were bared, and prayers were offered. A week later a ship was sighted, and when it took no notice of them, some of the men burst into violent language; then the story of that storm was read again, and their frenzy was hushed. On Monday, the Book was read once more, and they knelt to pray, when the cry was heard, "A sail—a sail!" The men broke into thanksgiving, for all were taken on board, and safely conveyed to New York. It is amid lives exposed to sudden perils like this that the Cardiff Strangers' Rest is spreading the tidings of the Redeemer's love, "that, loving the unworthy, loves him into worthiness."

"THE GARMENTS OF PRAISE."

"Who is this?" asked a father, showing his likeness to his child. "That's you, father," was the quick response; "I am sure it is you—the face is smiling so." We know of a Sunday-school teacher whom a little one christened "Smiling-Face;" happy are those whose names suggest gladness and brightness, whose presence acts as sunshine wherever they may move. "He scarcely needs to speak; he beams on all around," was the description once given us of a

Christian worker: we do not suggest that it is well to cultivate artificial radiance, which would tend to monotony and ridicule; but even those who are not joyful by nature may become thankful and bright by Grace, and recommend religion by putting away murmuring, complaints, and irritability. The Bible urges us, "*Forget not all His benefits;*" if we think about our mercies, our preservations, our deliverances, and more about the hope that is set before us, depression will be cured, and the spirit of heaviness will be replaced by the garments of praise. We once heard it remarked that while it is true we have no record that our Lord and Master smiled, it is true also that, His Name being Love, He is King of joy and light—He is the Sunshine of eternity—and above all others He is anointed with the oil of gladness. The very birds, the myriad lives of nature, bid us rejoice; even the faded leaves died smiling up to the sun and the autumn splendour, and before very long the land will again be a vision of golden rapture; but, in all creation, the Christian heart has most cause for the spirit and aspect of thanksgiving. Mr. Spurgeon has said that some Christians are too prone to look on life's dark side, and talk about what they have gone through, rather than what the Lord has done; a *healthy* Christian says, "I will speak, not about *myself*, but to the honour of my God. The Lord hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad."

"THEY SHALL PROSPER THAT LOVE THEE."

It is proposed that a "Women's Missionary Association House" shall be established in Jerusalem, whence ladies may go forth to mission-work in Palestine and other Eastern countries, teaching the Moslem, Arab, and Ethiopian women, and the "children of the strangers." Not less than two will labour together, and they will associate themselves as far as possible with those Christian women who are already at work in the "lands of the Bible." Ladies who desire to take up foreign work, and who seem to be fitted for it, will receive instruction in all the necessary qualifications for medical missions. Those who feel interested in the movement may communicate with Miss Lloyd, 143, Clapham Road; or Mrs. Meredith, 344, Wandsworth Road, S.W. An interesting feature of Gospel work among the Jews is the "Wanderers' Home," directed by the Rev. J. M. Eppstein, of King Edward Road, South Hackney. Here inquiring and believing Jews and Jewesses are sheltered, aided, and instructed. Their stay is limited as a rule to three months, but, if necessary, the time is prolonged, and many study Scripture diligently, and ask that they may publicly confess Christ by baptism. A Christian profession often means to the Jew distress and persecution, hence the necessity of a refuge where he will find protection and safety. The case is instanced of a young convert whose relatives tried to get him away from the Home by pretending his father was dead, also that he was in debt and must come out and pay. The police had to be called to stop the rioting and blows, and the convert was given into custody by the Jews, who declared he had stolen money. After several hours' detention, the inspector saw the accusation was false, and dismissed the case. The prisoner returned to the Home, and the prayers that had arisen on his behalf were changed to praise and thanksgiving. He has stood firm through much persecution, and is now in business, helping his poor Jewish brethren.

AT WORK IN BRITTANY.

Mr. J. C. Bolton, F.C.A., 26, Great St. Helen's, E.C., is hon. treasurer to a society which has no paid staff, and possesses free office-quarters through the courtesy of the Trinitarian Bible Society. Brittany seems in a most hopeful condition for Gospel work, although the Church of Rome contests each forward step, and in many cases gathers the Scriptures and publicly burns them. "We look upon the very ashes," say the evangelists, "as seed-corn of promise." Pains and penalties do not deter faithful souls from confessing "Jesus only," and the people themselves assist in scattering the truth, for their neighbours likewise beg to hear the glad tidings. Pastor Lecoat has started evangelistic work among Bretons labouring in Jersey and at the seaport of Havre; the priests opposed such efforts, but the New Testaments safely found their way into the Bretons' pockets, and the Gospel messages to their hearts. A Bible carriage is at work, despite obstruction and prejudice. One colporteur was attacked by women with reaping-hooks; but this work of visitation goes steadily on. A complete Breton Bible is now in prospect; Pastor Lecoat has translated various wholesome publications into Bretonic, among which are the "Pilgrim's Progress," and Miss Skinner's "Friendly Letters," which we noticed some months since in THE QUIVER.

"THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH."

After the great work of Delitzsch, any new exposition of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah must naturally suffer by comparison. Notwithstanding this disadvantage, however, the Rev. George Adam Smith has bravely come forward with the first of the two volumes to be devoted to the "Book of Isaiah" in Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton's excellent series entitled "The Expositor's Bible." There is a good deal of dash and freedom in Mr. Smith's handling of his subject. Many allusions and expressions are almost startling in their strangeness, considering the sacred connection in which they occur; and some will regard this feature of the work as a blemish. But we are bound to say that, on the whole, the tone is reverential, while there is a great fund of original thought and careful research on which the well-grounded Bible student may draw with keen pleasure and solid profit. We shall look forward with interest to the appearance of the second volume of this ably written book.

MISS DE BROEN'S BELLEVILLE MISSION.

We have received an interesting account of a day's work in connection with this mission, which carries on many-sided religious activities, and ministers to soul and body. Some patients leave home as early as five a.m., that they may get a good place amid the crowd which at nine on Thursday mornings surrounds the

Free Dispensary. The medical work goes on till six, or later, and meanwhile the poor and sick are visited, and Bible-classes are held for children. An evangelistic meeting is held in the evening, many converts of the mission being present as a rule, and tracts are distributed at the close. The dispensary is quite free, and the patients that seek its relief keep the doctor and two dispensers hard at work. These patients take part in a Gospel service, hearing perhaps for the first time the simple message, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Sympathetic friends busy themselves among those who wait their turn for the doctor, reading to them and striving to gladden their hearts. It is in the hour of trial and sickness that human hearts are most susceptible to the voice of the Great Physician. May many who seek this mission for bodily relief find healing and health of soul, and may the sphere of this good work be enlarged by willing hearts and hands and the influence of prayer! Miss de Broen's address is 3, Rue Clavel, Belleville, Paris.

"OLD CLOTHES!"

Parents whose boys and girls have outgrown or worn out their garments may take part in an excellent work by sending the cast-off clothes to "Old Clo," 25, Stanhope Street, Hampstead Road, N.W. Thence they will find their way to the Board and voluntary schools of Marylebone, where there are many poor scholars to whom they will mean warmth and comfort and rejoicing. We hear of kindly teachers, sympathising friends, even Her Majesty's Inspectors, sorting, arranging, and folding piles of garments. Repairing old clothes and making new ones have provided several poor women with work, and repairing boots and shoes has given further employment. The things are made to look as tidy as possible, and doubtless the knickerbockers and frocks discarded in many a well-to-do home would conduce to self-respect and bodily health amid less fortunate families.



INDOORS AND OUT OF DOORS.

We should think that of all writers for young people in the present day, no one has put forth more works, especially for girls, than Mrs. Marshall. Two works of hers have just been issued by Messrs. Nisbet, one called "Oliver's Old Picture," and the other "Dulcibel's Day-Dreams." The former is addressed to children still quite young, and tells how a lost picture was recovered. The latter shows how the heroine was led from idle day-dreams to good, honest, practical work, and has interwoven with it a simple love story. Both these books are well suited for Sunday-school libraries.—Another story from the same publishers is the Rev. Jackson Wray's latest work, "Will it Lift?" the story of a London fog, out of which the author manages to bring his characters into very clear light.—"A Prey to the Enemy" (National Temperance Publication Depôt), by Mrs. Zillah Dugdale, is described on the title page as a story from real life. This being so, the story is a doubly sad one, and its warning against the evil of intemperance doubly strong. — What progress the temperance cause is making may be seen from the National Temperance League's Annual for 1889, which we commend to the attention of all who are interested in this good work.—"Wee Willie Winkie" (Cassell) is the story of "a boy who was found," by that old friend of little readers, Miss C. L. Matéaux, who also relates the "Ups and Downs of a Donkey's Life" (same publishers). The author's name is almost recommendation enough for these works, but we may mention, also, that they are abundantly illustrated, and would form admirable birthday or other gifts for young people.—"The Mystery at Shoncliff School" and "Claimed at Last" (same publishers) are stories which originally appeared in the columns of *Little Folks*, and deserve to be widely popular now that they stand alone.—Mrs. William Gray has worked hard among and for girls, and in her recently published "Last Words to Girls" (Rivingtons) there is some really sound advice in the form of chatty essays on such subjects as life in school, life after school, sympathy, and tastes. The work is alike earnest and thoughtful.—We are glad to see that Mr. H. W. S. Worsley Benison's "Nature's Fairy-Land" (Elliot Stock), which we noticed some little time ago, has now reached a second edition.

DRIFTING SCHOLARS.

"I cannot think what makes them so irregular!" How often these words are spoken by teachers, either openly or mentally; they deny themselves their afternoon's leisure at times only to find their flock dwindled down to three or four, and vacant seats facing them in a manner depressing to behold. We heard of a plan of laying in a store of printed notices, which on

Monday would be posted to absentees. This saves time, and *time* is apparently the deficiency of the age. But a personal note is better when possible—a letter from heart to heart. A teacher found his class missing one Sunday, so he started off on a pilgrimage after the absentees, and inquiries in two cases at least proved that the parents believed their children to be in their places at school. These juveniles had not supposed "teacher" would take the trouble to seek them personally. Nothing is so effectual in the case of drifting scholars as home visitation, for the parents then feel a real interest is taken in their children, and they are concerned in keeping them regularly to their class. Many people conscientiously object to prize-giving; but we cannot see the harm, if the teacher can afford it, of giving helpful books for regularity and good conduct. "What makes my scholars irregular?" is a question that should cause the teacher some self-examination. "Do I give them anything worth coming for? Do I trouble to understand their circumstances, needs, and temptations? Am I a *week-day* friend to them, or do I see them only on Sundays? Do I conscientiously prepare my lesson for them—do I care for them as GOD'S children for whom the Saviour died—and, above all, do I earnestly pray for them, and remember these drifting absent ones before the Mercy-Seat?"



"Vacant seats facing them."—*p* 319.

MISS HEDENSTRÖM'S NEW HOME.

"I am now," says Miss Agnes Hedenström, of the East-End Temperance Home for Scandinavian sailors, "with our men in the new building, under our own roof—the old Home belongs to the past." More commodious premises were for some time urgently required; for the Home is very popular, and Miss Hedenström much in request as counsellor, sympathiser, and banker. "For the last fortnight we have had only mouldy biscuits and water," said two sailors, coming in from a hard voyage; "but each day we feel more cheerful, for, gnawing our hard biscuits, we thought, 'We are a bit nearer the day when we shall be well fed in the Scandinavian Home.'" The need of such an institution has been proved by the fact that places and people are in existence whereby Jack would soon be despoiled of his earnings and degraded in character. Miss Hedenström has also a benevolent fund to fit men out as to clothing, and to feed the poor men, women, and children in the neighbourhood of the Home. "To me," she says, "it is a hard thing to speak of God's love to those who have nothing for their bodies." Many will feel it a privilege to swell the right side of the balance-sheet of one who thus practically day by day is revealing the spirit of the Gospel to those in need, and stretching out "a loving hand

"To wrestlers with the troubled sea."

The Rev. H. Philpot, of Abaco, Bahamas, wishes to thank, through the Editor, an unknown donor who has kindly sent him THE QUIVER monthly for some years past.

The Editor has received 5s. from "Ellice," Worcestershire, which he cannot apply for lack of definite instructions (which the Editor would be glad to have from "Ellice"); and 2s. 6d. from S. S., which has been handed to the National Lifeboat Institution.


UNIV OF MICH



"MY DOVE HATH FOUND A REST."

"*A RESTING-PLACE.*"—*p.* 379.

RAGGED SCHOOLS—OLD AND NEW.

BY G. HOLDEN PIKE.



"ALL IN!" A SKETCH AT NELSON STREET SCHOOL.

WE can easily imagine that to the future historian one of the most striking characteristics of the Victorian era will be that gradual transformation of London which has taken place before the eyes of persons who have now arrived at middle age. One well-known writer on the old times and the new has shown to his own satisfaction that the shadow and the influence of the eighteenth century really extended to the end of the reign of William IV. According to this view, the accession of the present Queen really introduced a new order of things—the era of progress and of philanthropy with which we are so pleasantly familiar. So familiar, indeed, have we happily become with a number of things now reckoned among the common-places of our everyday life, that we may sometimes be disposed to forget that it was not always so; that not only is education on a national scale a new thing, but that widespread missionary zeal, whether at home or abroad, is also peculiar to our modern life—something that our forefathers would have regarded as impracticable, or quite Utopian, before the nation's religious life became quickened by its catching some of the divine enthusiasm of the New Testament. It is quite impossible for us, with our present surroundings, to realise what London was when there was an Alsatia between Fleet Street and the Thames; when St. Giles's retained its rookeries intact; when the East End had its bands of robbers, who were dangerous even in the light of open day.

When the Ragged School crusade commenced, more than forty years ago, our great capital, though only half its present size, remained what it had been for generations; and the amount of squalor, ignorance, and crime to be seen, made up an outlook which dismayed, or even seriously alarmed, the boldest adventurers in the new enterprise. Now, the conditions have altogether altered; and having grown with the times, the teachers have to adapt themselves to the altered requirements of the situation. The creation of the School Boards has rendered old methods of work in some degree obsolete; but, nevertheless, the distinctive religious teaching of the Ragged School Union is still a necessity, and will remain a mighty power so long as fifty thousand boys and girls are found in the schools of London alone on every Sabbath day.

While what may be called the transformation of London is one of the most characteristic things associated with the present reign, there are spots here and there which retain their old-time face, and these aid the social explorer to realise what the more hidden parts of the great city were like half a century ago. Of course, since the creation of local Boards of Health sanitation has made sufficient progress for it to be impossible for things ever really to be again what they once were; but although drainage and the water

supply have improved, there are purlieus which in general outward features still greet us with their old-time face. Perhaps one of the most remarkable of these comparatively little-known by-ways is Kent Street, Southwark, which in other days, before the construction of Great Dover Street, was the only entrance into London from the Old Kent Road. This is the identical highway that the Canterbury Pilgrims must have taken when they set out from the old Tabard Inn on their memorable pilgrimage. Five hundred years ago, when the fields of Surrey came up to within a few hundred yards of London Bridge, what afterwards became known as Kent Street would of course be a country lane; but in course of time the thoroughfare became so remarkable for its squalor, that Londoners who were visited by distinguished foreigners were scandalised at the city in which they took so much pride having to be approached by such a miserable street. Then, in about the middle of this century, the Lord Mayor in semi-state laid the first stone of the present Lansdowne Place school, which still remains, and which is apparently as much needed as ever. Persons interested in the subject, and who may wish to study what are, in some measure, photographs of the past—London as it was—should visit this district in the south, and Nichol Street, Bethnal Green, in the east.

Thus the transformation of London, which has been in progress for half a century, means that the



MR. JOHN KIRK.

conditions of Ragged School work have altered; and that they have altered for the better. The present generation of teachers are reaping the fruits of the seed-sowing of those pioneers who, as Lord Shaftesbury often insisted, found in their work a service of danger. The rags, the extreme filth, which at first characterised the majority of the scholars; their untamed hilarity, which suggested all kinds of horse-play, even in school hours—are things of the past; and boys and girls who are still, in conventional language, classed with the ragged, are decently clad, and are as teachable as those who go to boarding schools. This is so much gain—a matter for congratulation all round, so long as the public do not rush to the conclusion that the work of the Ragged School Union is obsolete. This would be to throw up the work because success has begun to attend it, or to turn back the tide of blessing which is coming in. It would not be difficult to show that the necessity for the work carried on by this band of teachers is greater than ever, and that never before did the expenditure of labour yield so encouraging a return. Even now to support the cause of the Ragged School Union is the most ready all-round method of benefiting the poorest people of all ages.

If the times have changed, how shall the teachers adapt their operations to the altered needs of their still teeming constituency?

In a number of instances they are doing this by rebuilding the schools. In other days, anything was thought to be good enough for a Ragged School; or rather, such was the crying need of their pitiable scholars, that teachers who began the work were content to gather their classes in any buildings that could be procured—a loft or a disused stable, lighted or warmed in a very primitive fashion, being readily and even thankfully appropriated. The teachers bore with the inconvenience, while to the uncivilised scholars there was nothing incongruous in the roughest accommodation. Even under these conditions such a wonderful harvest was gathered that Lord Shaftesbury is not supposed to have exaggerated when he said that the Union had been instrumental in saving three hundred thousand young persons from lapsing into crime.

But though wisdom was shown by beginning with the smallest possible capital, the shifts that did for other days would now simply ensure absolute failure. Thus the movement may be said to have entered on a new era; and in the conveniently arranged school-houses that have arisen in various quarters we have the best possible evidence that the work is not dying of inanity, but has, in reality, renewed its youth. The Ragged School in no sense disputes the ground with the School Board; it is rather its ally. It is, indeed, the complement of our national system of education. The houses in which the classes are now gathered would have struck the old pioneers with astonishment; but although we can imagine their confessing that Christian teachers among the poor were now enabled to walk in silver slippers, the buildings are by no means ahead of modern requirements.

Thoroughly to judge of the advances made, and of what is now being done, interested persons should visit such representative institutions as that in Nelson Street, Camberwell, and that in King Edward Street,

Spitalfields. The first, which is one of the oldest institutions of its kind in London, being associated in its early days with Cranfield and the Duke of Sussex—is now superintended by Mr. John Kirk, secretary of the Ragged School Union, of Exeter Hall, Strand; while that in Spitalfields is looked after by Mr. Charles Montague, who was formerly a scholar in the school.



AN OLD-TIME RAGGED SCHOOL.

To our mind, modern philanthropy can show no greater triumph than for a school in this way to rear its own superintendent, a man who has certainly proved himself a benefactor to the whole district.

Having thus provided school-houses more worthy of the times—a portion of the cost of which is supplied by the Shaftesbury Fund, established by the Committee of the Ragged School Union for that purpose—the teachers are endeavouring in every possible way to adapt their mode of operation to the requirements of the times. The Ragged School is compared to a fruitful tree which, as a reward to those who attend to its culture and show interest in its growth, sends out continually new fruit-bearing branches. No class of workers among the poor have been more ingeniously inventive than Ragged School teachers, and from the earliest days of the enterprise to the present time they have uniformly proved themselves to be the benefactors of the poorest of the people of all ages. Should any serious epidemic break out, we find them on the track of the destroyer, attending to the sick and supplying what is wanted. They teach the people the value of sanitation, and supply lime-wash and brushes to such as can be prevailed upon to use them. Poor women, who could not otherwise leave home comfortably to go to work, have their young children taken care of during the day; the "lowest down" of all are encouraged at Sunday morning breakfasts to make one more endeavour to rise; and in many other ways the helpful hand is held out to such as will take advantage of what is offered. For forty years or more, the Ragged School has even proved itself to be one of the best



of emigration agencies, and in all of our flourishing colonies its *protégés*—who, by doing well for themselves, have proved an honour to their country—are to be found. Then it should not be forgotten that the shoeblack brigades represent a Ragged School experiment, the thought of which originally occurred to the mind of Mr. John Macgregor ("Rob Roy") in 1851, when all London was excited over the Great Exhibition. Not that cleaning boots in the streets has ever been looked upon as a permanent occupation; it is merely temporary, a stepping-stone to something better. At the same time, it is not a business to be despised, in face of the fact that the Protestant brigades alone earn nearly £1,000 a month in the streets of London.

One of the things to which the teachers are enabled to give special attention with great advantage is that of pure literature. In the past, when children came to the schools to begin with the alphabet, there was no danger of their being injured by bad reading. But it is far otherwise to-day, when one and all are taught to read in Board-schools, and when, to meet the demand for reading thus created, the market is too plentifully supplied with that which can only enervate the taste and corrupt the morals. Newsvendors will testify that whereas, in other days, children gathered around shop-windows to look at the pictures in the papers, they now, having the ability to read, buy them for themselves. We all know what this means. The presses of St. Giles's, which of old supplied patterers and "flying stationers" with songs, broadsides, and chap-books, are now supplemented by other adventurous printers, who carry on business on a larger scale; and one of the most dangerous plagues of our modern life is represented by penny novels and cheap serials of a debasing kind, which are poured forth by hundreds of thousands every week. To check the progress of this plague, it is necessary not only to provide something better, but to make an effort to ensure that the children shall read something better when it is provided. This is what the Ragged Schools are doing, and the more that is done in this department, the easier will boys and girls find it become to rise to creditable situations in life. Again and again has it been proved, both in and out of the police-courts, that there is no greater snare to the young than bad reading, and nothing which more effectively trains them for a course of crime and ruin. When we know it to be a fact that one school will extend its influence to a thousand families, we can, in some measure, realise how great a work can be achieved in this department. Its importance will be further seen when we consider that unbelief in its varied phases is much more aggressive than it was a generation ago; and by every means, both fair and unfair, it is seeking to bring the common people within its toils. Atheism and Secularism are making efforts to identify themselves with the cause of the common people, and by means of a sham philanthropy to create prejudice in their own favour and against Christianity.

Then, more than was ever the case before, the Ragged School of to-day is endeavouring to retain its hold of the elder scholars; and to do this, rooms for evening classes and recreation have to be provided. It is therefore, in its own way, doing the work of a Young Men's Christian Association among youths of humble social station, who have no facilities for reading and amusement in their own homes. Lads and young men who would otherwise have to loiter away their hours in the street, or seek entertainment in questionable or even vicious places, are held together, and have conferred upon them positive good. A few may even be prevailed upon to continue their too scant education at the evening classes, and thus lay the foundation of future prosperity and usefulness. All this is a development which the pioneer teachers could hardly have foreseen when bent upon their original enterprise of rescuing a few miserable subjects from the pains of squalor, ignorance, and crime.

Another branch of the ragged-school tree which has been long instituted but recently developed is that of summer country holidays for children, who naturally pine for the fresh air of woods and fields which ought to be theirs by birthright. The time-honoured institution of "A Day in the Country" is, of course, still maintained, otherwise crowds of children would hardly see the country at all; but, in addition to this, the establishment of convenient holiday homes in attractive and salubrious districts within fifty miles of London has conferred greater benefit on poor children than can readily be told. At East

Grinstead, Thursley Common, and elsewhere, these pleasant homes—all of which seem to be remarkably well adapted for their purpose—invite the inspection of the friends of children, and the contributions of those who desire to confer on children health and pleasure. Throughout the summer, successive batches of visitors are received, who come for a fortnight at a time, very great care in selection being exercised in every instance. While it is necessary to avoid taking any who are suffering from disease, care is taken to select such as are most likely to benefit by the change. The experiment may be pronounced a success all round, and the more so because, as a rule, the children's relatives bear some small proportion of the expense.

The testimonies which come to hand of the extreme joy with which the country is greeted by the little holiday-keepers, and of the marked improvement in health which many of the most delicate show when their fortnight has expired, are a reward as well as an encouragement to those who take upon themselves the trouble of the enterprise. This movement also shows a disposition to expand; and it is not improbable that it may become more and more self-paying when the industrial classes of the better kind realise more the advantage which comes of their children spending a fortnight among bracing and educating scenes during a time when both the moral and physical nature are most susceptible of genial influences.

Hence the Ragged School Union is adapting itself to altered circumstances; but while this is so, the original idea which the great Earl of Shaftesbury and his heroic band of pioneers had in their minds is not for a moment lost sight of. The Ragged School is still both a preventive and a rescue agency; but unlike some other enterprises which give undue prominence to this department, it mainly exists to diffuse a knowledge of true religion among the people. The Union is therefore the fitting almoner of those who desire that their money shall go to benefit the poor in what one may call a thoroughly all-round fashion. To maintain the enterprise of such a comprehensive institution is not only the truest charity: it shows discerning wisdom as well as a large heart. It is wisdom which refuses to accept the notion that what is conventionally called Ragged School work is obsolete; the Christian work being, in point of fact, more needful than ever, now that secular education on a national scale has been undertaken by the State.

MISS HILARY'S SUITORS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF A "WILFUL YOUNG WOMAN," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.



"HE home where she was not wanted!"

Ah! that, in the thick of other very real troubles, was almost greatest of them all; but it was a fact kept constantly before our Hilary.

From her father's unvaryingly moody manner down to small Will's frank avowal, "Now I doesn't love 'ou, Hilary, 'tos 'ou doesn't div' me sweeties;" from Mrs. St. John's querulous grumblings over the more of everything needed now she was with them, to—presently—Jane's flat rebellion at having a full-grown member added to the family to be "waited on and dusted and done for;"—every hour of every day brought some fresh stab or sting on that score.

"Not wanted;" and yet there was no getting away from the position. Hilary's instinct foretold surely enough what would be her next news from Steeple Forncett. Her eyes were opening fast and painfully now to why she had once been much wanted by many people. She divined the purport of Gertrude Cavenham's letter before she read a line of it, and tore the smooth-running, insincere composition into fifty shreds, full of fierce anger with herself for ever having let this gentleman know he had stolen near even the outermost edge of her—no, no, not love; she could deny that to herself—of her fancy.

"I am glad I am poor!" the girl cried proudly to herself. "Now I am bait for no man's flattery;" and under the ruins of her lost wealth she bravely buried the first glimmering romance of her girlhood, so contemptuous of her own poor sense in ever having fostered it that she could actually laugh, some three months later, when she read in the newspaper of Captain Cavenham's marriage with the elderly heiress after whom his sagacious sister had sent him hunting.

But had the captain stood the sharp test of all the late changes, of a surety he could have offered a tempting way of escape out of her present plight. Now there seemed none.

Mr. Milroy sent, within a week of her leaving Abbotswick, one half-year's income to her; "by the late Miss Humphreys' direction," he wrote. Hilary, her nerves sore and chafed by the perpetual stream of small complaints poured on and at her, hailed the cheque as at least a temporary easement of her strained position. Instantly she carried it to Mr. St. John.

"Will you turn this into money for me, please, papa, and let me give mamma some for my living here?

Then perhaps I shall not seem quite—quite such a trouble to her."

For answer, her father solemnly drew from a pocket-book a list, carefully drawn up to meet this expected occasion.

"Hilary," he said, "on the strength of what I counted on your having, with a confidence almost as firm as a belief in my own existence—on the strength of that, and solely with a view of appearing as your closest relatives ought—I and my wife have embarked on different expenses which in the natural course of events I should have looked to you to pay. Events have unhappily taken an *un*natural course; but the expenses remain, and here are the bills." He laid a neat pile before the disappointed girl. "The dress your mamma wore on your unfortunate birthday. Observe: 'Sixteen yards brocade, cashmere, etc. etc.' She didn't need the brocade; she didn't wish for the cashmere: they were purchased simply to do you honour. The bonnet for the same purpose. And my own suit, too. I wanted no extra-superfine tweed at five-pound-ten; not I! Those clothes are practically as much yours as if you'd gone and ordered them. And then, this mourning," exhibiting a terribly lengthy account. "I can honestly confess an inch-and-a-half hatband would have sufficed for my grief, but we were actually driven into—what is it?" scanning the bill closely—"'crêpe cloth, lisse edging, etc. etc.,' and diagonal twill, frock coat, vest, and so forth to match—by our deep desire not to compromise you; by our efforts to appear in a style befitting the parents of Miss Humphreys' heiress. Now, will you tell me, Hilary, who do you think, in all fairness, is the proper and fit person to pay all this?"

Proper or fit, Hilary speedily discovered she was the only person who could, and such an array of items had her father laid to her charge, that not only her half but her whole year's income would be swamped by their settlement. "And thus, as you see," Mr. St. John said, with a long-drawn sigh, when he had presently cashed the cheque and pocketed the notes and gold, and with a generous air pushed a few odd shillings across the table towards his daughter, "you're still left to press heavily upon my slender means."

How that thought, which was never allowed to slumber, cowed Hilary, no one can tell. It perplexed her, it bruised her, it crushed her; but, hedged about hitherto with ease and money and comfort, no knowledge of labour in any shape whatever, no skill or taste for it, had grown up in her. "Work was for poor people," had been her easy, well-bred dictum from childhood up. Now she was one of these poor people; some way or other she was told so twenty times a day, and there was no Aunt Phil to joke off the spell; no one at all to laugh at her laziness, to scold her for her incapacity, then to make it up and pet her all the more for her ignorance. That soft-eyed, gentle woman, Mrs. Dasent, had gone away, she heard; if she had not gone it was little likely she would have wanted to see more of one she had known so slightly. Even—even Mr. Stafford——

One of the few sobs Hilary ever spent on the new order of things was due to him. It was rarely she went into the town, but so doing one December day she saw the curate of Netley at a very little distance from her. By rights, had her thoughts been like her father's, she should have steeled herself to passive enmity, to going by him with cold recognition; contrariwise, however, a foolish craving had come over her to talk with him in the old happy fashion of—of those years ago when she would bind him over to stand by her in any coming argument with Aunt Phil.

But, lo! the curate, when his glance fell on her, turned graver (and he was looking grave enough already—ill, or much, much older than when she had last seen him, she fancied), shrank back, and lifting his hat avoided her point blank by going down a side street, having no wish, it seemed, to speak a single word with her.

That filled up the measure of Hilary's desolation. She grew frightened at the maze she was in, and through the slow, cold winter changed into just a quiet, thought-laden copy of the girl who, full of innocent carelessness, had been the very light of the old house at Abbotswick. Mr. Bevis, coming in occasionally with Herbert St. John, was struck with the alteration in the lad's step-sister, and made a false move with Mr. Milroy on the subject, which nearly cost him dear with Hilary's old friend.

"Awful taken down is that Miss Humphreys' pretty niece, or whatever she called herself," he said one day when in his chief's private room he happened to see the lease of an Abbotswick farm on the table. "Suppose it is not pleasant for any of us to play out the proverb, 'Pride comes before a fall,' or rather, a fall comes after pride."

"I had not observed," said Mr. Milroy icily, "that Miss St. John was unduly, or indeed in any way, proud. Also, I was not aware that Miss St. John had a habit of 'calling herself' Miss Humphreys' niece. Oblige me by speaking more carefully of the young lady in my presence."

But Mr. Milroy took the opportunity of personally paying the second instalment of Hilary's income into her own hands, and closely observing her the few minutes they were together in the room that seemed so unfitted for the girl.

"You don't," he said, hesitating over just the words he wanted—"you don't feel, Miss Hilary—well, worse in health for your removal into the town, I hope? You haven't many roses, but you're keeping pretty well, eh?"

"Quite well," she said, bravely; "nothing ails me at all." (She was not going to be pitied; if anything could upset her, that would!) "Roses don't grow at Brainford so well as at——" then she could not help faltering, but rallied in a moment; "still, indeed, I am as strong as any 'Suffolk punch,' as dear old Aunt Phil used to say."

"'Dear old Aunt Phil, eh?'" said the grey-headed lawyer, looking at her with shrewd kindness; "oh, it's 'dear' still, is it, in spite of everything?"

"'Dear' always," said Hilary.

"That's right; that's right. That's the best way to take it," with a hearty good-bye. "Aunt Phil knew

whom to trust her memory with, that 's clear, serve them how she would."

Those genial words were cheering to the girl's heart, seeming forerunners of another pale gleam of light upon her path.

with sufficient for her to be considered once again worth pleasing; and the cause of this new departure was confidentially explained in due time by Mr. St. John to his wife.

"Oblige me, Maria, by getting that servant of yours



"'Here are the bills.'"—*p.* 328.

About this early springtime Mr. St. John slightly unbent from his rigidly affronted attitude towards our heroine. Much to their surprise, her young step-brothers and sisters were encouraged to show her small politenesses such as till now their father had repressed to the verge of snubbing. Some undercurrent of unknown influence was distinctly investing her—not with her former importance—far from that!—but

to keep the drawing-room less like a bear-garden than it always is now. I—er—er—we must pass our evenings in it more in future. Perhaps—I may say, I hope—we may have a gentleman frequently with us. I have sanctioned the visits of one: one whom we must receive well, for he has made what—considering her changed prospects—are really acceptable proposals for the hand of my daughter Hilary."



CHAPTER XIV.

THE interesting announcement Mr. St. John made to his wife was coupled with strict injunctions to mention it to no one, not even to Hilary herself. Premature disclosure of the totally unexpected proposal might upset everything. Though, with the greatest propriety, he, the parent, had been first consulted, his sanction gained before another step was taken, the offer must on no account be dragged into publicity till time and the delicate initial steps of courtship provided ripe and fitting occasion.

This, Mr. St. John, with some revival of the old pompous style in which he had accustomed himself to speak of his daughter, impressed emphatically upon his wife, and she—indulging in a little cry over the secret (she was somewhat romantic, and wept over the woes of a fresh heroine from the circulating library every week) faithfully promised to observe his wishes. So it came to pass that the first stage of Hilary's second wooing began and progressed without her having the slightest suspicion of what was afoot. But others who follow her fortunes need not be equally in the dark.

To return, then, to what he later on declared was the first dawn of his respectful affection.

Mr. Bevis, as we have said, was an occasional caller at Park Villas, and it is certain his first visits there were the outcome of curiosity pure and simple, of a desire to see how that fair young person who had wasted so little attention on him in her palmy days now bore her reverses. To some dispositions it is always delightful to see one's enemies in the dust. Everyone who entertained a lower estimate of Mr. Bevis than he did of himself was felt by that gentleman to be more or less of an enemy. To Hilary St. John in her gay security at Abbotswick it was clear he had been just a nonentity. Naturally, therefore, it was with a spice of satisfaction he now took the opportunity of watching her under what he considered humiliating circumstances, and a good deal of covert amusement he contrived to extract from Mr. St. John's totally changed treatment of his daughter, and Hilary's pale ill-ease amidst her new surroundings.

All unconsciously to herself, however, Hilary's face, bright and winning as once it had been, was acquiring through these cheerless months a something far better and more beautiful.

She was not a patient young person by any means; quite the reverse; but all her pride took arms against the notion of daily altercation with her father, such as his continual dwelling on what she had lost, and why she had lost it, would have driven some to. After the dainty luxuries of Miss Humphreys' establishment, its quiet regularity and perfect order, Mrs. St. John's eccentric housekeeping, with the jostle of thriftlessness and waste, and confused meals, and scolded maidservant, was utterly repellent to all her training in the proprieties of life; but her stepmother, in her own feeble way, showed that she meant kindly to her, and Hilary rigorously put a bridle on her lips rather than, by an incautious syllable, or half a smile, or the faintest sneer, vex the one person who least resented her intrusion into the family. And the result was written on her features.

The power to endure added to them something noble which had been lacking before. Perhaps this new charm, which he could not fail to mark, combined with her small assured income, may have gained Mr. Bevis's admiration. As a matter of fact, just about that time the first filmy lines of a matrimonial plot, with himself and Miss St. John as principal actors, began floating through his brain, though they were only vague at first, and, according to custom, the prudent young man refrained from developing them until he felt his way tolerably safe with the father, and so forth. An additional zest was added to the project through the conduct of other persons slightly concerned. Mr. Bevis was practically on probation in Mr. Milroy's office, it being by no means compulsory on the firm to make a partner of him. His father had been a steady clerk, promoted to the honourable position of "*Co.*" after years of trusty service. At his death Milroy and Gibson, always liberal, had promised the widow her young son's articles by-and-by—which they had given him in their branch office in the next county—and a small share in the firm should he prove worthy and capable of it.

Worthy and capable the young man had not the slightest hesitation in now pronouncing himself, and so secure felt he of his next step that he was now profoundly irritated by not being admitted fully and promptly to the most confidential business of their clients.

Poor old Miss Humphreys had deeply affronted his *amour propre* by declining his assistance in her last worldly arrangements, and it seemed as if everything connected with Abbotswick was doomed to annoy him similarly. Mr. Milroy had given him a snub direct at his mere mention of Miss St. John. He would have liked—he considered he ought—to know where the young lady's legacy was invested, but, approaching the topic, he was as good as told by the senior partner that it was no concern of his! That interloper, the parson, that Stafford, came backwards and forwards frequently during the winter, but was as close as a vice on the affairs that brought him there, which he discussed solely with Mr. Milroy behind closed doors.

"Bother the fellow's impudence!" said Mr. Bevis to himself, on one occasion, after he had exerted all his affability to entice the clergyman to entrusting him with instructions on whatever he had come about, but had failed to get a glimmer of the business, and Mr. Stafford had departed saying he should "soon meet Mr. Milroy by appointment."

"It's his will he's after, I'm positive. Why can't he use my services as well as that old Milroy's? I'll owe

both of them one for their being so uncommonly close."

So, by way of part payment of the debt perhaps, Mr. Bevis took a sincere pleasure in interrupting Mr. Stafford's next interview with his chief, entering the room of the latter with such a light tap of warning that he caught a few words of what was passing between them. They puzzled him a good deal, and set his imagination at work on Mr. Stafford's will in more lively style than ever.

"To Hilary St. John I give——"

That is what he heard. Now, what was Miss Humphreys' heir going to give and bequeath to Miss St. John?

Did he intend to leave her again some of that wealth he had so cleverly done her out of? If so, how much? and when would she be likely to get it? Mr. Stafford was years older than pretty Miss Hilary. Then, he did not look half as "right-up" and robust as he did six months ago. He'd aged fast; got a good weight of anxiety on his mind, perhaps, and serve him right. Mr. Bevis began calculating the chances of life for men of five-and-thirty or thereabouts. "Worry kills sooner than work," he cogitated, and out of this friendly forecast, combined with a distinct appreciation of Hilary's growing beauty, gradually evolved the idea of winning her good graces and the right to share Mr. Stafford's legacy, which he was now so bluntly refused knowledge of. That would take a most agreeable rise out of the parson, who wouldn't be likely to hark back, because his intentions were known to Mr. Milroy. Likewise, this marriage, when it came to marrying, would effectually bring old Milroy down from the high horse he always mounted when Miss Hilary was mentioned. The vision was alluring, decidedly, if only Mr. Stafford's bequest made the game worth the candle. A good deal hung upon that "if," and Mr. Bevis thought about the important monosyllable for many days before he could make up his mind how to proceed.

While still vacillating on this weighty point, the young man was one afternoon at the office in his own small room adjoining Mr. Milroy's. A clerk had just been summoned to the latter; he heard certain orders given in very emphatic tones; he fancied—the partition was too thick for him to be positive—that Abbotswick was mentioned. As soon as the directions were given, Mr. Milroy left, mounted his waiting dog-cart, and went off to his country house, three miles north of Brainford. He had been finishing something private with his own hand, evidently—something probably for Mr. Stafford. Mr. Bevis pondered a few minutes, then he got up and gently opened his own door that led into the passage. From the junior clerks' room just opposite came dismal grumblings.

"And it's the very last match of the year, and here have I got to go pounding all the way to Netley, and can't get back in time for it anyhow. And they'll scratch me! Oh, it's a beastly shame, that it is; why can't the old thing go by post?"

Mr. Bevis coughed very clearly; then he drew back and struck his bell. Mr. Herbert St. John, the youngest of the clerks, appeared, looking very red and discomposed.

"Who attended to Mr. Milroy just now?"

"I did, sir."

"What was he saying to you?"

"That," stammering, "I—I was to take this," indicating a long, stout envelope, "to Mr. Stafford at Netley Rectory, sir."

"At once?"

"Ye—s—s, sir."

"Then," sternly, "why are you not off?"

Herbert shuffled first on one foot, then on another, then blurted out—

"I dared n't tell Mr. Milroy, sir, but it's the very last football match to-day—town against grammar-school; and I was only just stopping to say to the other fellows I wished I hadn't to go to Mr. Stafford's. I should have been off in half a minute—I should indeed, sir."

"I'll take care you are now," said Mr. Bevis, frowning; "put on your hat and come at once."

The young lawyer relished being down on his juniors, who dubbed him "the sharp one." Now he walked Herbert off with an inflexible business air, which softened, however, before they had gone the length of a street.

"It is the very day for football, certainly," he said, looking up at the clear April sky, across which a brisk west wind sent the light clouds scudding "Can't you get back in time for your game?"

"Not likely, sir; Netley and back is six miles."

"Ah, so it is! That's a pity. Well, look here, Herbert, I was fond of football myself at your age. You've worked pretty well lately, so you shan't lose your game. I don't mind a walk such a day as this. Give me the letter, and I'll take it over for you."

"Now, that's awfully good of you, sir," said young St. John, his boyish face beaming with gratitude. "Mr. Milroy said it was too important to post, but of course he wouldn't mind you taking it."

"Of course not. Stay a minute, though," as Herbert was for bolting off instantly; "are those other two, Wade and Groom, going to play?"

"No, sir, no. Don't care a pin about it. Never see them at football."

"Ah, well, then don't mention to them that I've set you free for this. I should have them shirking work next, and expecting me to square it. So mind you hold your tongue about my being so good-natured this once."

"That I will, thank you, sir," and off shot Herbert, as gleeful as any mouse out of a trap; he did so hate that stuffy office and everything connected with it. For freedom and open air, he would sooner follow the tail of a plough than the quill of a pen, and now he felt as if he should be everlastingly grateful to Mr. Bevis for giving him the last hour of the season at his beloved game.

While he went joyfully off to the region of shouts and thumps, the young lawyer walked quickly and thoughtfully along the road that led out east from Brainford, and as he walked it occurred to him that he had hardly been wise thus to take Herbert's message on himself. He scarcely knew why he had done it. Nothing was to be gained by this stroke of

amiability. He half turned back, then knitting his brows changed his mind again, and jumped over a stile and took the footpath to Abbotswick beside a hedge of blackthorn, through fields of springing wheat. There, all alone, he examined what he carried. But Milroy and Gibson used excellent stationery. That envelope might have held the secrets of a universe, but he could not get at them. Not a line of the enclosed document was visible through its stout covering, securely fastened by the monogrammed seal "M. & G.," directed in Mr. Milroy's small, clear penmanship. "Confound the thing!" He wished he had not taken the trouble of coming with it; but, after all——

He went into a brown study so deep that he missed the right gate out on to the road at Netley, and presently found himself brought to a full stop by a low laurel hedge, the very one Hilary had taken for frolic the first day we saw her; and Abbotswick, with sunshine glittering on all its windows, from the broad bows below to the quaint dormer casements in the roof, stood before him.

What a very nice place, to be sure! the master of it must feel himself a somebody. But Mr. Stafford was not inhabiting it—that much Mr. Bevis did know; and the rooms had all their blinds close drawn. Still, Bell had not let the gardens down one whit. All Miss Humphreys' favourite geometrical beds were thickly fringed with golden crocuses; order was as absolute as if the hawk-eyed old mistress had still been there.

"A pretty place, uncommonly," repeated Mr. Bevis. "Now I'm here, I'll make a short cut to the Rectory, and take a look round as I go."

So, skirting the hedge till he came to a gate he remembered, Mr. Milroy's self-selected messenger strolled in, and proceeded to gaze about him as he chose. Along a path bordered with brilliant blue scilla, which he stopped once or twice and turned his eyes upon, though his thoughts were far enough from the innocent little flowers, a gardening lad came with a load of tools, and demanded, rather roughly, "Where he was a-goin' to, and who he was a-wantin'." To this Mr. Bevis answered, loftily, that he was from Mr. Milroy's upon business. Hereat, the boy, speaking more respectfully, said, "That Mr. Bell wasn't there to-day, if it was him the gentleman wanted. There was nobody about but himself, and Mr. Stafford had given him leave to go early, and he was just off. Was there any message he could take for anyone?"

"None at all," replied Mr. Bevis; then added, carelessly, "Do you happen to know if Mr. Stafford is up at the Rectory this afternoon?"

"That he bain't, sir. He be gone out by rail. One of our men drove him to Tey station, and is a-goin' to fetch him back to-night."

"Ah, well, never mind," said Mr. Bevis. "I can see——" then he checked himself. "Don't let me stop you. I shall take a turn up the garden and go out the way I came in. Good-day."

The lad departed, whistling. Mr. Bevis saw him vanish though a door in the wall of the kitchen garden, and heard him fasten the bolt behind him. Then he paced along between a row of budding espaliers till he came to Miss Humphreys' summer haunt, the old yew arbour, and there he seated himself, with no companionship save of blackbirds and finches, who were much more interested in nest-building and grub-hunting than in himself.

The wind had grown very active in the last half-hour, and now came swirling and eddying up in showery gusts. Mr. Bevis did not emerge from the arbour till the rain ceased. Then there was a look upon his countenance as if he might have taken a nap and awakened up startled. He glanced first at his watch then at the clouds. Then he turned up his coat collar, muttered, "That will be the best plan," and set off homeward again at his topmost speed.

By a short cut he regained his office just as the clerk in custody was locking up for the night. "Shan't keep you five minutes, Woods," he said, "but I'd forgotten something that must go by this post;" and to make good his neglect he was nigh a quarter of an hour up-stairs.

"Got a headache, sir?" said the clerk, as the young man came down, looking, it is not easy to define how, but scarcely up to the mark of his usual calm conceit.

"Not the least," snapped Mr. Bevis; "never felt better in my life," and he stalked out without a "thank-you" for the friendly inquiry—"which," thought Woods, "serves me right for trying to be civil to such a set-up young puppy."

The letter which had taken Mr. Bevis back appeared to be in no hurry, for he sauntered off quite away from the post-office and towards the Priory field, where the football match was just ended, and Herbert St. John, dashing off triumphantly, nearly ran into his arms.

"Hallo! young one," said Mr. Bevis, still sweet-tempered, "got your game? That's jolly! But, my boy," turning him about confidentially, "after all, I'd no business to let you off that run to Netley. You might get into desperate hot water with Mr. Milroy if he knew you'd shirked it, mightn't you?"

That was only too probable; this unwilling young law neophyte was always getting into hot water at the office. Now he stared up ruefully, and stammered out—

"Whatever am I to do, sir? Do you think Mr. Stafford will happen to say you took the letter instead of me?"

"Well, he might if I had done so. But I felt, as I was going, you might get into a scrape through my being too easy. So I turned back, and I've brought you the thing again. Here, you can have some tea at my rooms and cool down, and then start for Netley as fast as your legs will take you. Come along."

Very grateful to the mentor who had given him his game, and was guiding him in the path of duty at the same time, simple Master Herbert did precisely as he was bid, and when Mr. Bevis cautioned him, solely on his own account, to mention the episode to no one, he promised with the greatest alacrity.

The boy had rather a bad quarter of an hour when Mr. Milroy appeared next morning, lest he should ask the precise minute when his packet had been delivered at Netley; but the lawyer was far from suspecting anything but implicit obedience to his orders. It did just occur to him to ask: "You took what I gave

you to Mr. Stafford, St. John?" and the ready "Yes, sir," quite satisfied him.

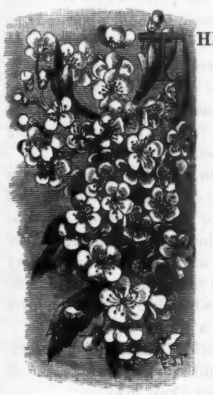
It also very much satisfied Mr. Bevis, who happened to hear both question and answer. He shut himself up in his own room and rubbed his hands with elation. Then he burnt sundry letters, answering one which had come that morning with care. When he went to luncheon at his lodgings he removed a portrait from his chimney-piece and consigned it to the darkness of his desk, and he found occasion to ask Herbert St. John that afternoon how he was getting on for his preliminary examination in June.

"Oh, awfully!" groaned the lad; "I shall never get through, I know."

Then Mr. Bevis had kindly offered to step round some evening and see how the case really stood. Which having done, and having found the youth's brains in a hopeless muddle, he had advised postponement of the examination for a twelvemonth, and a good coach throughout that time. To this Mr. St. John had returned, "that a coach was impossible for the poor boy now their means had such heavy calls upon them." This before Hilary, whose cheeks burned painfully. And Mr. Bevis had suggested that what little he knew was at their service. Would they permit him to help Herbert?

Thus having yoked himself to the family by bonds of thankfulness, it was not long before, with very proper deference, he disclosed the secret spring of his generosity: his long-planted and rapidly growing admiration for Mr. St. John's eldest daughter!

CHAPTER XV.



THE new leaven which was uplifting the small world about her had been at work some weeks before it seemed to touch Hilary's inner self. The dull, weary spring was well on the way before she recognised in the smallest degree what was astir.

Dull and weary! New words those for her bright nature to be spelling out of the dictionary of life! but she did so terribly miss the flow of Aunt Phil's love, wayward though it may have been, that all her hours now seemed blank and void. Her future looked emptier of sympathy and interest than her purse was of silver and gold. And as yet she could not master events or lay hold of any distinct idea of what she ought actually to be or to do. She could only drift along, guided this way or that by her better instincts.

It was a very new thing for Hilary to feel timid, but it was downright timidity of herself as well as of everyone about her that drove her to her little room with its outlook on tiles and chimney-pots, there to spend hours in lonely, puzzled wondering or listless reverie. And it was a newer thing still for Miss Hilary St. John of Abbotswick to make herself useful domestically; but she was rather roughly driven to that point by a task-mistress in the shape of Jane.

One chill December day she had been long alone in her little fireless den. Her father would cease talking to his wife when she entered one warm room, downstairs: the children would cease playing in another. Very, very chilled in body and spirit, she made her modest request to the servant for the wherewithal to warm at least her fingers. But Jane had the toothache, and was labouring along under a heavy tea-tray and a general sense of being "put upon." This last straw was too much for her, and she gave vent to her feelings with a rush.

"Hot water up-stairs, Miss Hilary? Then take it yourself. There's a-plenty in the copper, which many a maid wouldn't have this time of day, and you're welcome to it if you like to fetch it; but cart it up-stairs I can't and I won't, and that's flat. You come to run about and slave as I do from morning till night, and then have another grown-up person clapped on your hands, without a penny more wages or yet half a crown at Christmas, and see if you don't put your back up at something. I ain't no grumbler, for I've been a willing hoss ever since I could run alone, and minded seven little brothers and sisters, two bein' afflicted with fits; but there's nature's bounds to all things, and my teeth do ache that shockin', and my legs they're that tired, that any extra waiting on you want, miss, you'll have to do for yourself, or stop in the place I can't. There!"

Hilary's first feeling at this outburst was one of disgust and annoyance: for one single impertinent word to herself any servant of Aunt Phil's would have been instantly dismissed. Her next—well, this outspoken young woman had reason on her side. Hilary crimsoned, and her pretty brown head drew back with something of its old proud carriage. Nevertheless, she went and fetched what she desired, and thenceforth, though with remarkable awkwardness at first, set herself to spare Jane's labour up in her own small room.

But oh, how different it all was from Abbotswick, and how, as softer spring came on, she did long to see the old place! Her small sisters had quite lately asked her to take them walking countrywards. Once they had gone close to Netley. The distant beech-boughs, the dear familiar hedgerows, seemed to entice her back. But she fancied far up the white road she caught sight of—someone she did not want to meet, and turned hastily back.

It chanced though, one May day, Herbert was speaking of Mr. Stafford's absence from Netley—he had gone abroad after Easter—and a sudden desire came over her to revisit Abbotswick while he was not there. Her father was gone to town on business. He had been boasting lately of original designs for wells, which were to supply water from unknown depths at a minimum of cost, and talked of interviewing a patent-lawyer and setting the thing afoot. Where the funds were to come from Hilary knew not. Her second six months' income had nigh all been absorbed in pressing

back bills, incurred somehow for her advantage; but Mr. St. John had departed full of importance, with money in his purse.

Mrs. St. John fell placidly asleep directly after midday dinner; no one would care where she was gone, no one would even have known; but, as she went shyly through the streets, where Aunt Phil never liked her to be alone, Herbert, tearing up to his office—late, as usual—met and stopped her with a surprised—

"Why, Hilary, wherever are you off to?"

Then she just told him whither she was bound, and pressed on; for, as Herbert had said, it was a long pull, and it would be nearly dark before she got home. But it was not dark as she went; it was light and balmy and beautiful as Abbotswick the lost had always been. The smoky town, peopled with strangers, sank into distance. The sun shone gloriously out as she sped along. Soon she could just see the dark tops of the old cedars, just catch the sound of the Abbotswick bell. Her eyes glistened, then dimmed. She half wished she had not come, and, stopping short, leaned on a gate that she and Daphne had often made a joke of clearing.

Trot, trot, trot. A good stout quadruped came pounding by, and on it the very tenant whose fields and feelings she had made a frolic of over-trampling. Hurriedly she turned aside, but at the bidding of a second impulse pulled her courage together and frankly faced his half-doubting recognition. The farmer checked his cob, and stared at her in double amazement. First, that she should be there at all, and next, that she should be speaking to him. The briefest of "good-days" was all the young heiress had been instructed to bestow on her aunt's tenants. Now she was advancing on him with a smile that found its way to some soft spot of sentimentality in the good man's constitution, and "Dash my buttons!" said he afterwards, "if it didn't make me feel wholly queer."

"Why, Miss Hilary," he cried, dismounting with remarkable alacrity for fourteen stone; "what, you've come to have another look at us this fine day, have you?"

"Just for a few minutes," said Hilary; "I thought I should like the walk, and"—she drew herself up very straight indeed, spending her nervousness by tightly holding Aunt Phil's amethyst ring upon the hand she had ungloved to gather sweet-brier—"and I am so glad I have met you, Mr. Baker; I have thought often since I—went away, that I never ought to have taken your fields for a short cut and galloped over them with Daphne as I used to do. I'm afraid I did not think then the least about vexing you. But I do now. I hope we never did much damage, for"—feeling horribly humiliated—"I can hardly make you any return now, if we did. I can only—beg your pardon."

Hilary twisted her shining ring round and round while speaking. When Aunt Phil gave it to her she told her to be brave. She was trying to be brave now. It rather choked her, but it seemed to be right, so perhaps Aunt Phil—somehow—somewhere—could see she was not going to flinch from her order. She ended with a right-out honest look that was somewhat hazy withal, and it utterly discomposed John Baker.

"Why, sakes alive, Miss Hilary!" said he, turning violently red, and giving her hand such a grip as made it tingle for an hour; "don't you make any bones of a little matter like that. I don't say but what I was put out, but I bear no spite, and I've wiped it clean off my mind since—well, since you didn't get what we thought you would, you know; and I'd give, ay, I'd give that piece of young wheat to have you cantering about here, same as you used. We've no call to find fault with him that's here; 'cepting for the whim that gave it to him, he's the right man in the right place. Still, we miss you, a many of us, and," hastily mounting his nag again, "don't you go begging no more pardons of me for nothing! and," going a few yards, then turning on his saddle to shout as gruffly as if he were offering her an insult, "my missus is a rare hand at her dairy: we'll be proud to send you a taste of it into Brainford if you won't be above accepting it. There ain't much butter like hers finds its way to Brainford, I'll warrant."

Then the farmer trotted off, repudiating thanks, and Hilary, glowing and sorry, glad she had spoken out, pained she had lived so long among these people and never given a thought to the kindliness they harboured for her, went on to seek out other old acquaintances.

Were any of the servants left, she wondered? Not a syllable had she heard of or from them since the October day she quitted Abbotswick; but often and often had she positively yearned after the faces which had been about her from childhood. Would they be all gone, perhaps? She swung open the lodge gate, and glanced anxiously up at the little white dwelling with the clustering banksia roses abloom upon it from base to roof.

"Ah," she thought, "she would love to live even in that little cottage now, to be near Abbotswick;" and she gave a cry of pleasure as the servant of former days emerged from the door, full as amazed at seeing her as Farmer Baker had been.

With a dubious expression of countenance and a great succession of curtseys, Mrs. Pullen invited Hilary in, dusted a chair for her, and then stood at the furthermost corner of the small room answering in respectful monosyllables all the questions Hilary put concerning her husband and bairns, till she suddenly startled her guest by whipping her apron over her head and bursting into a fit of crying.

"Oh, Molly, what have I said?" exclaimed Hilary, going naturally back to the old nursery name; and at that Mrs. Pullen cried harder than ever.

"It's only seeing you settin' there, Miss Hilary, and bein' pleasant as if you wasn't a lady, and yet lookin' every inch as nice as you used to when you was one—leastways, when you was rich; and to hear you askin' after Molly and Patty and the whole of us that you never didn't use to take no notice of when I wanted you to, and was nasty enough to go and say you was growin' high, which you've proved you haven't!—oh, it's that turns me bad, Miss Hilary, and help cryin' I can't!" was poor Mrs. Pullen's response, and Hilary, being on the verge of the same mood, was glad to move on again before her self-command gave way.

"Wilkins and his wife were gone from the house,"

Molly said; "hadn't Miss Hilary heard? And who was there? Why, Joyce, that——"

"Oh! her I *must* go and see!" cried Hilary, and hastened that way, yearning to set foot in Abbotswick again.

Joyce, looking very dignified in a revived silk of Miss Humphreys', was by a front window, and gave a great jump when she saw who was coming. Uncertain for a minute how the young dictatress of months agone would greet her, she, like Molly, was for donning a respect that seemed stiff and cold. But the young mistress, with both hands stretched out, cried, "Oh, Joyce, dear old thing! how I have wanted you!" And that broke down all ceremony between them, and the next minute Hilary was sobbing right wholesomely on Joyce's shoulder.

The sunshine streamed upon the pair from the garden door as presently all the news of the long winter was poured forth, beginning with something startling.

"For Joyce I may be to you, Miss Hilary, for ever and for ever, but Joyce I ain't to no one else, nor haven't been since this day five weeks. So who am I? Why," with a becoming middle-aged simper, "I'm Mrs. Joshua Bell, Miss Hilary. Me and Bell have made a match of it at last, and"—very irrelevantly, as it sounded to her listener, who had known nothing of the servants' hall romances in bygone days—"*that* cook have gone to live at Brainford, and taken up with a sergeant! And Mr. Bell, he's as good a husband, miss, as he is a gardener, though that's saying much, and he 'll have to come in and see you, but not till you're looking more yourself, for he 's that feelin' the sight of you like this would right upset him. Why, only when we come back from our little weddin' tower to Brixton, and his poor cat that he 'd had nine year had run away by reason of hatin' a strange person to feed it, and then come back one dark night a-mewin' at the side door like a human bein', so thin you might have run a lucifer match through it, 'Oh, Sarah, Sarah,' he say to it—always callin' it Sarah, after his first poor wife, miss—'you poor skeleton of bones,' he say, 'wherever have you been a-hidin' of yourself?' and the m'isture stood in Mr. Bell's eyes, it did indeed, and not a mite of supper did he eat till that poor cat had got a skin full. *So*," consequentially argued the gardener's proud spouse, "whatever would he say if he was to come in and see you a-lookin' wexed, Miss Hilary?"

Hilary had cleared away those irrestrainable tears as Joyce chattered on, and could now ask all about Netley and its people. "They were getting used to the new state of affairs," she heard, "and to the house being empty, and there was talk that Mr. Stafford might bring his mother over, and live in it, perhaps, himself; and folks were beginnin' to leave off sayin' nasty things about Mr. Stafford gettin' Miss Humphreys' money. Some had spoke cruel at first, and he 'd found plenty to put up with." Joyce rather dwelt on that, as though it must be a retributive pleasure to Hilary. "But he was very still, and didn't seem to bear no malice about it; and, to be sure, he was spending freely in the village, so that ought to shut people's mouths. The church, hadn't Miss Hilary seen it? Well, it was bein' made as good as new. There were a score men workin' on it from morning till night. And all those houses where they used to have the fever every autumn were pulled down and fresh ones were buildin, with pumps, and ovens, and windows that went to open!"

"And are those Brands and Letty's old grandmother all well?" asked Hilary. "I only knew a few poor people, did I? I did so wish I could have sent them something at Christmas-time, though, but—I couldn't."

"They wasn't worth it," said Joyce tersely. "I darn't have said it to you before, asking your pardon, Miss Hilary, for you didn't like to be interfered with in nothin' in those days, though you do seem wholly different now; but them that got the most of your money was hypocrites. Most of what you give so handsome found its way to the 'Hare and Hounds.' But Mr. Stafford knows the ins and outs better than ever you did, and don't get cheated as you would have done if—— But there, though, for all that, and for all he's a gentleman that knows what money's sent for, there's most of us wish poor old mistress had never changed her mind about her will."

"Joyce," said Hilary, "do you know what made her change it?"

At this, to Hilary's perplexity, Joyce dissolved into tears again.

"There's them that have been cruel enough to say I helped to make her, miss."

"*You*, Joyce!"

"Yes, miss: and now I'll make a clean breast of it. She'd talk to me sometimes about you, 'specially of late, and—and you did get a little quick in your ways, Miss Hilary, with us servants; and mistress would question me, and I'd tell her—well, not the leasest word more than the truth, but more than I'd have said if I'd have thought trouble would come of it; and once she got right cross, and seemed to think you'd turn everything upside down here when you came to rule. It was just before you went to Steeple Forncett, and then Mr. Milroy was sent for, and the mischief all done in half an hour."

Aunt Phil had been angry with her, then!—perhaps had died angry with her. Hilary's heart ached grievously over that, and her mouth quivered.

"Times and times," Joyce went on, "I've felt tell you this I must; but I never dared come in to see you without askin', not knowing how you 'd take it. And now, Miss Hilary, my poor dear, seeing that perhaps this have come on you through some fault of mine, though Bell tells me continual it haven't, so I needn't worrit, all I can say is, I've a nice little lot of savings put by, and if ever you want it and would take it, it's freely yours. And it would comfort me for you to have it."

But Hilary could only shake her head at this, telling her penitent waiting-woman she was noways to be blamed for what had happened, the fault was—halting over the self-conviction—all her own.

There were sounds of other servants moving near: two more were retained to keep the house in order. Bell would soon be appearing. But Hilary could not face him that day. She would see him some time or other, "but," standing in the quaint old hall, and



"Next minute Hilary was sobbing right wholesomely on Joyce's shoulder."—*p.* 335.

looking round with longing, loving eyes, "not here, Joyce; I don't think I can ever come here any more." And now she would just look a moment at the church, and then go back to Brainford. Yes, she was walking, and alone, but that did not matter.

So with a hungry, lingering glance, such as she felt ought to be her very last—it was bitterer work than she had thought, this coming home and then having to tear herself away—Hilary bade Joyce farewell, and started on the last stage of her afternoon pilgrimage; and that brought her into unexpected contact with the last two people in the world whom by choice she would have met.

Threading her way among scaffolding and stones round to the eastern end, where Aunt Phil had ordered herself to be laid "in the morning sunshine," low voices met her, and in a moment, before she could avoid them, the speakers were upon her. They were Gertrude Cavenham and Norris Stafford.

(To be continued.)

THE SEVEN LEAVES OF THE VINE.

THOUGHTS UPON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF OUR LORD UPON THE CROSS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. WILLIAM ALEXANDER, D.D., D.C.L., LORD BISHOP OF DERRY AND RAPHOE.

THE FIRST WORD FROM THE CROSS.

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."—ST. LUKE xxiii. 34.

AT what point of the Passion was the first of the last words from the cross spoken? Which is the first of the "seven living leaves put forth by our Vine" upon the tree, as St. Bernard has said?

Four soldiers formed a guard who planted the cross,* and made all the ghastly preparations. They rudely stripped Him, laid Him on the wood, and then drew it up with Him fastened to it. His hands were nailed to the cross-beam, His feet nailed and tied. His body rested with some support on a peg or straddle, which prevented the hands and feet from being so completely rent and torn by the weight of their burden that the condemned might be in danger of falling off to the ground. The title of the accusation was fixed over His head. Worst insult of all to that gentlest and loftiest soul—"they crucified Him and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left!" He hangs there as the representative of fanaticism associated with crime.

Just at this point, almost with the first falling of the blood-drops upon the dust of Golgotha, Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

* Some points of interest in regard to the cross may here be noted:—(1) The cross is spoken of sometimes in the New Testament and in early writers as "the wood," "the tree" (τὸ ξύλον). In the LXX. version of the Old Testament, the words "crucified" and "tree" are found together in one verse "Behold the *gallows* (ξύλον); hang him thereon (σταυρωθήτω ἐπ' αὐτοῦ)." (Esther vii. 9.) The early Christians saw in this a representation of Satan plotting the death of Christ by crucifixion, yet smitten to death and overcome by the very gibbet which by his agency was set up for Christ. (2) The industry and learning of Byncus has collected all that antiquity tells us about the cross. It would seem that there were three crucifixion figures—one the X, known as the St. Andrew's cross; one the Tau cross, in the form of the Greek capital T, adopted in the Scandinavian Churches; one, and the most usual, like a mast with cross-yards. It consisted of three pieces: the upright stem, the cross stem, and a small projecting rest or straddle. The cross ordinarily was not more than three or four feet high, but in cases of special guilt a considerably higher elevation was supposed to indicate a peculiar crime and an exceptional punishment. This would probably be the case with one who suffered along with others, whose death it was considered desirable to emphasise. That our Lord's cross was higher than usual would seem to be indicated by the incident of the sponge wrapped round the hyssop stalk, and when steeped in vinegar, lifted to His mouth, as well as by the magnificent irony of the prophetic declaration—"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself." (St. John xix. 29; xii. 32.)

I.

Let it be most carefully noted that there is one thing which is *not* said here, nor anywhere else, by the Saviour.

One prayer has ever been upon the lips of dying saints. With the severe light of eternity full upon their souls, they have always seen the infinite distance between themselves and the perfect purity of the law of God. They cry, "Forgive me; pardon, O my God, pardon!" Sins revive in the dim perspective of memory. In the case of one with the lofty ideal of duty and holiness possessed by Jesus, the least mote or speck of imperfection would have blackened all the raiment of moral righteousness which was as white as snow—would have filled His heart and memory with a sense of intolerable discord. Neither on the cross or elsewhere did Jesus ever utter one half-sigh of penitence; never did He once associate Himself with sinners; never accuse Himself of a duty unfulfilled, of an opportunity wasted, of a thought uninfluenced by righteousness, of an aspiration that fell short of heaven. He might, and He did, pray for the pardon of others; He neither did, nor could, pray for His own forgiveness.

II.

We should never forget that we are here taught, in the first place, the simple and primary duty of forgiveness of injuries.

1. In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord had filled up the comparatively imperfect outlines of the picture of love drawn by the Law. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."* What He enjoined on those who would be His disciples He does Himself.

That sweet lesson of forgiveness we want. It seems to be quite lost sight of that our Lord is almost more exacting, if that were possible, in relation to forgiveness than in relation to purity. Few of us, perhaps, have really very much to forgive. An unkind letter, an implied taunt, a social slight, some worry, real or fancied, about money—that is generally all *we* have to pardon. We should ponder what possibilities of forgiveness there are in the Christian life from the first word of the dying Lord. All is included in St. Paul's loving exhortation, "Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgave you."†

* St. Matt. v. 43, 44. † Ephes. iv. 32.

2. But behind the first of the sentences from the cross there is also a dogma, and a vital dogma. We may read in it the *ground* of the pardon which was asked, and the *limitation* by which it was conditioned.

The ground of it is in the true Sonship of Jesus. The first and last of the seven words are recorded by St. Luke alone. Each contains an appeal to God as His Father. Our reconciliation to God is in the Sonship of Jesus Christ.

III.

But further. In the first word—a prayer for pardon, uttered at the very beginning of the crucifixion—we cannot fail to perceive an implied reference to the sacrifice which was just begun, to the blood just trickling down and reddening the dust of Golgotha. Truly we are brought very near in spirit "to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." The naked King, whose raiment is parted, for which the soldiers gamble, casting lots beneath the Cross—who possesses not a thread of the trappings of royalty, or even of the vesture that covers our shivering humanity—"weaves for Himself" out of His Passion "the purple robe" of which Christians in earlier days loved to speak. Thus, in the proclaimed Sonship of Jesus, and in the beginning of the long predestined sacrifice carried on into fact in the domain of history, the ground of pardon is laid. He asks for forgiveness Who has now the right to claim it.

To the forgiveness here asked for, a limit is affixed. Who come within the scope of this word, within the embrace of this appeal? It would seem as if this were purposely left indefinite. We have not any hint given (but one) how far we are to circumscribe the purpose of the intercession.

This prayer, then, must certainly include the *executioners*. The four Roman soldiers who were told off to superintend this sanguinary work, who were but the instruments through which the iron discipline of the Roman legion worked its tremendous mechanism—how can they come under our condemnation for an obedience which had become one of the nobler instincts of their life?

Nor would even the *chiefs* and *rulers* of the Jews lie outside the circle of the benediction. Apostles seem anxious, so to speak, to leave this impression on record, perhaps not without reference to this prayer from the cross. "And now, brethren, I wot that *through ignorance* ye did it, as did also your rulers," is St. Peter's frank acknowledgment.* "The hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of the world knew," exclaims St. Paul, with a yet wider charity—"for had they *known* it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."†

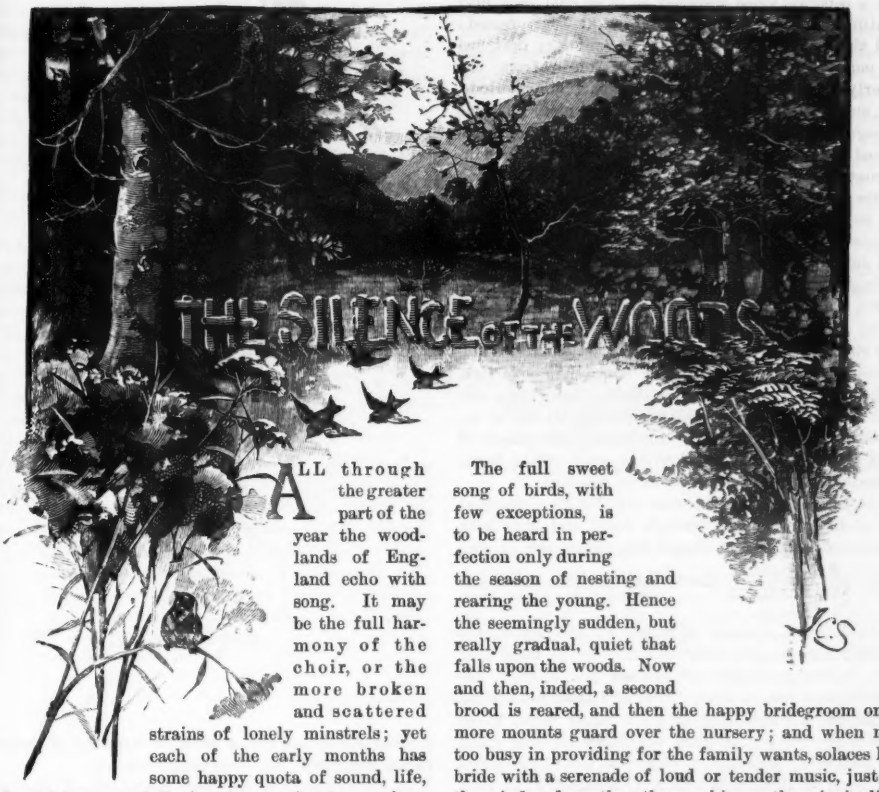
But we may, and we must, make these words still more amply inclusive.

All human sin leads up to the cross. "This word," it has been said, "has two arms; with one it embraces all the past, with the other all the future."

It has been argued that in all sin there is an element of ignorance; that this prayer is, therefore, the charter of universalism—the assurance that all sin will be remitted, and every sinner forgiven. But this conclusion is not warranted. The "for" in this first word has substantially the same signification as "if." "If, and so far as, they know not what they do, forgive them." There may be, as someone has said, a grain of ignorance in every ounce of sin. Yet sin is not merely a severer term for ignorance. No doubt ignorance lessens the guilt of sin. It subtracts from the *quantum* of presumption, of *high-handedness*, which sin contains. This is the view of St. Paul: "Before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."‡ But if ignorance and sin were convertible terms, the same thing seen from different sides, the rest of this prayer of Jesus would be absolutely superfluous, a spiritual utterance of the most unmeaning kind. If ignorance quite obliterates the guilt of sin, and if the sinner can always say boldly, "I knew not"—then there would have been no need for this intercession of the Mediator. But, at the same time, if ignorance did not mitigate guilt, He never would have used the plea. "Ignorance," says an old writer, "does not *deserve*, but often *finds* pardon."

We have here considered the first of the seven last words of the dying Saviour from the cross. "Mercy," cries Augustine, "Mercy prayed, that misery might pray; the Physician prayed, that the sick might pray; the Judge prayed, that the guilty might pray." In the depths of that word we have seen at once duty and the dogma of the Atonement; the crown of His life on earth, and the image of His work in heaven.

* Acts iii. 17. † 1 Cor. ii. 8.
‡ 1 Timothy i. 13.



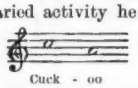
ALL through the greater part of the year the woodlands of England echo with song. It may be the full harmony of the choir, or the more broken and scattered strains of lonely minstrels; yet each of the early months has some happy quota of sound, life, and rejoicing, especially for the ear that knows how to listen. Every bird that has a voice seems to be taking part in the concert, and to be doing his utmost and best to make the harmony as joyous and complete as the most ardent musician could desire. But the time of quiet will come, when, turn where we will down the long avenue of beeches, or into any one of the winding green roads that meet us at every hundred yards, or along by the edge of the copse of hazel and dainty birch, not a sound is to be heard. The silence at first seems strange and unnatural enough—that the entire orchestra, which not so long ago filled and flooded the whole woodland domain, should all at once be dumb—but a moment's thought reminds us of the simple fact that most of these wild and artless strains, the wandering cry of the cuckoo, the passionate, sad love-song of the nightingale, the mellow whistle of the thrush, or the liquid melody of the skylark, were after all but the utterance of one happy message to the earth—"the days of joy and gladness, of sunshine and love, are come; let us choose our mates, and build, and sing, rejoice, and be glad." Such is the wondrous instinct which God has planted in these feathered choristers; and so take they their living part in the great anthem ever ascending from hill and valley, woodland and mead, to the blue sky above.

The full sweet song of birds, with few exceptions, is to be heard in perfection only during the season of nesting and rearing the young. Hence the seemingly sudden, but really gradual, quiet that falls upon the woods. Now and then, indeed, a second brood is reared, and then the happy bridegroom once more mounts guard over the nursery; and when not too busy in providing for the family wants, solaces his bride with a serenade of loud or tender music, just as the wind and weather, the sunshine or the rain, incline him. She knows his voice well, and can distinguish it among a host of rivals or imitators. Even the skylark, the woodlark, the titlark, though somewhat alike in many points of tone and trill, are to her ear quite distinct; and should any gay roving bachelor of another genus presume to come a-courting, or paying a morning call, not a word will she say to him. The blackcap and the nightingale may be close at hand on rival boughs, and vying with each other in eager and impassioned praises and entreaties; within a stone's throw may be a troop of finches, equally joyous and in full song; but each musician sings only to his own species, and rarely, if ever, but to the ear he loves to catch, and for which alone he sings. The peculiar call of the female cuckoo, which attracts so many contending suitors, and all the various caressing language of other birds, excites no influence generally, and to all but the individual species is an unknown dialect.

There is, in fact, but one note which seems to be of universal comprehension, and this is the warning cry of danger. The instant it is uttered, the whole flock of birds within hearing, though of many various species, repeat a separate signal of danger, and away they all hurry into the bushes or hedgerow for safety. Nature, in all her ordinances, has

a fixed design and foreknowledge, and each species has a separate voice assigned to it, so that each may continue distinct and unmixed, as at first created; and that the notes of birds are as language designed to convey a distinct meaning is clear from the utterly different sounds emitted at particular periods. As summer advances the spring voices become changed; the requirements of the early season have ceased; and the summer excitements, monitions, and informations, not needed in autumn, are no longer heard.

One strange fact, however, remains—and as yet without any certain or adequate explanation—that one sex only is gifted with the power of song: as many naturalists suppose, for the purpose of cheering his mate during the period of incubation; yet leaving us in doubt, in spite of the delightful melody of the songster, as to the exact meaning and object of his song. The singing of all birds seems to be an entirely spontaneous effusion, poured forth with little exertion, and without weariness or lassitude. In certain seasons and weather, the nightingale sings all day at intervals, and during most of the night; the power of song never becoming weaker, the notes never harsh or untunable, even after hours of practice.

The cuckoo alone would seem to suffer from constant use of his voice. All through April and May with unwearied activity he chants his one strain of two notes  (more than once in the woodlands I have counted upwards of 150 repetitions without a moment's cessation), but by the middle of June he has gradually got hoarser and hoarser, unmusical, and out of tune. Now and then his cry descends but a single tone, or more rarely down to an imperfect fourth; or even continues on one faint and quavering monotone; while just before the faultless song of Philomela ceases, it wanders away into a croaking sound, like a hush or warning of danger to his mate and the half-fledged brood.





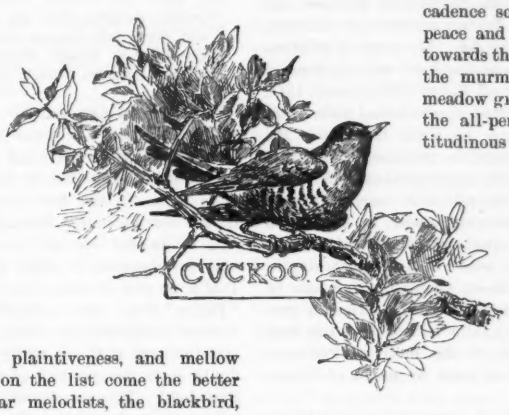
In round numbers, the chief song-birds of England amount to about twenty-five—among which the nightingale reigns chief and supreme. It is almost impossible to frame any accurate table of the comparative beauty and merit of these varied and happy songsters; but the attempt has been made by an earnest student of nature,* who devoted many years to this one express subject, and some of his notes are of curious interest. Taking "20" to express the point of perfection, at the head of the whole list stands the sweet bird of night: for mellowness of tone, compass, and execution, and an inborn plaintiveness of melody which is almost wholly his own. Pre-eminent, too, among the beauties of the strain is its infinite variety; as many as sixteen different beginnings and closes having been noted in the song of a single bird. Beginning, like many a famous master of eloquence, in a sound of infinite and tender softness, he gradually breaks out into deeper and fuller expression, reserving all his strength as if for some sudden touches of passion and delight, and then dying away into a fine and delicate thread of such exquisite and keen sweetness as to pierce the very heart. In the calm stillness of a summer evening this dainty note may be heard through half a mile of silent, listening woodland.

Next to the nightingale come the three happy

* Daines Barrington.

singers, the skylark, woodlark, and titlark, each having a special exellence of his own; the two latter singing both while on the wing and when at rest; their song being full of sweetness, variety, and swift changes; and the first surpassing even the nightingale in the rapid snatches of sprightly joy with which he rises up towards the blue æther,

"And ever rising, wins
his liquid way."



Then follow the whole throng of finches, headed by the linnet, who stands fifth on the entire list, and carries off (in these days of competitive examination) 74 marks out of a possible 100 for compass, execution, sprightliness, plaintiveness, and mellow tone. Far lower down on the list come the better known and more popular melodists, the blackbird, the thrush, and the whitethroat, the reed-warblers, and the robin—who, by the way, during the silent autumnal days deserves a whole column to himself. To these, however, must be added the blackcap, who, for beauty, power, and flute-like brilliancy of song, excels all other of these happy minstrels but the nightingale himself.

For a time all these joyous sounds one by one die out, and we talk of the silence of the woods and fields. But, in truth, the great song of earth to heaven never ceases; wander where we will in these pleasant domains, if the ear be but rightly in tune, one may catch in ever falling or rising cadence soft and happy echoes of peace and joy rising as in a cloud towards the summer sky. The hum, the murmur, the whisper of the meadow grass or the waving corn, the all-pervading sound of multitudinous insect-life, the faint rustle of the wandering breeze among the far-off tree-tops, the still fainter music of the streamlet in the next hollow,

"That to the quiet woods
all night
Singeth a quiet tune:"

all these, together, float dreamily through the balmy air, and yet tell us that the songs of summer never die. Even the silence has a voice. Happy they who can so join in it here in this world of changing sun and shade, that they may know at last of the deeper mystery, and the yet grander song, of another and a greater life.

B. G. Johns, M.A.

ABOUT STERNHOLD AND HOPKINS'S PSALMS.

THE history of the metrical versions of the Psalter which have at one time or other been authorised for use in the churches, is one of the most interesting subjects to be found in the by-ways of literature. One version still remains in constant use by Presbyterian worshippers; the other two versions are numbered amongst the things that were. All three have exercised an abiding influence on the sacred poetry of our country; and each has found an echo in the hearts of thousands of worshippers of various creeds and countries. The rugged lines of Sternhold and Hopkins, the more polished verses of Tate and Brady, the literal renderings of Francis Rous—all these have formed at various times the sole medium of praise to assemblies of Christians, most of whom would have looked upon the introduction of a hymn into the worship of the Church as not only inexpedient, but rankly heretical. An outline of the history of each of the three versions we have named is what is proposed in these articles. The records bearing on the subject are not generally accessible, and when collected into a concise and chronological narrative we feel sure they will be appreciated by many readers.

The earliest of all the versions of the Psalms in the tongue of the people appears to have been that of the brothers Wedderburn, known as the "Dundee Psalms," from the residence of the authors. How many were translated we cannot certainly tell; neither is it known at what precise date they were issued to the public. The first mention of them is in connection with the martyrdom of George Wishart in 1546. Knox, in his "History of the Reformation," records the fact that Wishart on the night before he was apprehended at Ormiston, "after supper, held comfortable purpose of the death of Goddis chosen children, and merrily said, 'Methink that I desyre earnestlye to sleep,' and thairwith he said, 'will ye sing a Psalme?' and so he appointed the 51st Psalme, which was put in Scotische meter, and begane thus:—

"'Have mercy on me now, good Lord,
After Thy great mercy.'"

These lines are from the second verse of the Psalm in the Wedderburn collection, and it seems therefore

probable that some at least of the renderings may have existed several years previous to the date we have mentioned.

In England the earliest metrical versions were by Miles Coverdale, the co-translator with Tyndale of the first complete English Bible, published in 1535. They were issued under the title of "Goostly Psalmes and Spiritual Songes," the Psalms numbering thirteen, and the "songes" twenty-six. The year of publication is not certain; but as the book was condemned to be burnt by an order of Henry VIII., dated 1546, we may safely presume that it was issued about that time. There is evidence to show that both the Wedderburn and the Coverdale versions, each set to simple music, were eagerly appropriated and freely used by the people in the religious services of the time. They do not, however, appear to have been used as Church-songs properly so called, nor to have received the sanction of those holding authority in such matters; and the most, therefore, that can be said of them is that they did good service in preparing the way for the public adoption of the first complete English version of the metrical Psalms—the version, well known at least by name, of Sternhold and Hopkins.

In giving an account of this version, it will be convenient to speak first of the author whose name is chiefly associated with it. Thomas Sternhold is generally described as a native of Hampshire, but this would appear to be doubtful, judging by the following entry, which has been found in the registers of Awre, in Gloucestershire. The date of the entry is believed to be somewhere between 1570 and 1580:—

"Let it be remembered for the honour of this parish that from it sounded out the Psalms of David in English metre by Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins. The former lived in an estate near Blakeney, called the Hayfield; the latter in an estate in the tything of Awre, called the Woodend. And in the house of the said John Hopkins there is now to be seen the arms of the Tudor family, being painted on the wall of it; and on both sides is written in Saxon characters the former part of the thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, which was done at that time."

The author of "Singers and Songs of the Church"—to whom the discovery of this extract is due—tells us that the Hayfield estate is still well known, and that the Woodend property came to its present owner directly from the descendants of Hopkins. Very unfortunately, the house referred to in the extract has long since disappeared, having, it is believed, been washed down by the Severn; it would have formed a most interesting memento of one of the leading authors of the now obsolete Psalter.

Of the early life of Sternhold we know nothing, except that he was educated at Oxford, which he left without taking a degree. He became Groom of the Robes to Henry VIII., and afterwards to Edward VI., to whom the first edition of his Psalms was dedicated, and in whose service he died in 1549. His heart appears to have been touched by the influence of the religious movements of the time, and he is said to have composed his metrical Psalms chiefly with a view to their taking the place of the improper songs used about the Court.

The first edition of the Sternhold Psalter contained nineteen Psalms, and was published under the following title:—

"Certayne PSALMES, chosē out of the PSALTER OF DAVID, and drawē into English metre by Thomas Sternhold, grome of ye Kyngés Maiesties roobes. Excudebat Londini Edvardus Whitchurche."

There is no date on the title-page, but the dedication to Edward VI. shows that the book cannot have been issued before 1547, and other circumstances lead to the conclusion that it can hardly have been later than this. In the first Act for the uniformity of divine service under Edward VI., 1548, it is allowed "to be lawful for all men as well in churches, chapels, oratories, or other places, to use openly any Psalm or prayer taken out of the Bible." The term "Psalm" is not here expressly defined as metrical, yet various authorities, as Strype and Burnet, so understand it; and if this is really the case, as there is little doubt it is, the renderings must have been those of Sternhold. This conclusion is, indeed, borne out by a statement in the dedication to Edward VI. of William Baldwyn's metrical version of the Canticles, published in 1549. "Your Majesty," says the author, "hath already given a notable example in causyng the Psalmes in fine Englyshe meter by your godly-disposed servant Thomas Sternholde, to be song openly before your grace in the hearynge of all your subjects." These facts show, then, that the first edition of the Sternhold Psalter was issued about 1547; and also that it had the honour of being at once authorised for public use—an honour which, as we have seen, had not been accorded to any preceding version.

By the year 1549 the Psalter had been considerably enlarged, and an edition was then published containing thirty-seven Psalms by Sternhold, and seven by a new versifier, John Hopkins. The latter was evidently editor of this edition, though it does not appear how he was led to act in that capacity. As a preface to his own Psalms—which are printed by themselves after those of Sternhoid—Hopkins writes as follows:—

"Thou haste here (gentle reader) unto ye psalmes that were drawen into English metre, by M. Sternhold, vii more adjoined. Not to the intent that they shoulde bee fathered on the dead man, and so through his estimacion to be the more highly esteemed: neyther for that they are, in myne opinion (as touching the metre) in any part to be compared with his most exquisite doings. But especially for that they are fruitful, although they bee not fine; and comfortable unto a Christian mind, although not so pleasaunt in the mouthe or eare. Wherefore, yf thou (good reader) shal accept and take this my doyng in good part, I have my heartes desire herein. Farewell. "J. H."

Very little is known of the life of John Hopkins; but it is certain that he was educated at Oxford, and that he ultimately entered the ministry. It has been

conjectured that he may be the same as one John Hopkins who in 1544 graduated as B.A. at Oxford. Wood ("Athenæ Oxon.") makes mention of a John Hopkins who died at Waldringfield, in Suffolk, in October, 1570; and this was doubtless the author of the metrical Psalms. Hopkins's versions, like those of Sternhold, are all in common metre, but with this distinction—that whereas the Sternhold stanza possesses only two rhymes, that of Hopkins has four. No less than sixty of the Psalms in the complete Psalter were from the pen of Hopkins.

Between 1549 and 1553 the "Forty-four" Psalter was several times republished, but without any alteration or addition. In the meantime the singing of metrical Psalms had become exceedingly popular, but the accession of Queen Mary put an end for a time to all public practice of it. During this reign, however, the work of translation was still going on, although not in England. The Protestant refugees at Geneva had framed for themselves an Order of Service in place of the Book of Common Prayer, and in this Order were included the forty-four Psalms already mentioned, together with seven additional renderings from the pen of William Whittingham. It is interesting to note that among the latter is the earliest L.M. version—"O Lord, consider my distress" (Ps. li.). The Psalms of both Sternhold and Hopkins were at this time submitted to considerable alteration—it is generally thought by Whittingham—and the text as so altered was adopted in all the subsequent editions of the Psalter. No doubt these alterations were made with the view of bringing the versions still more closely into conformity with the original Hebrew.

Whittingham was one of the chief translators of the Geneva Bible, and appears to have been a man of some ability. Born in the county of Chester in 1524, he was senior student of Cardinal College, Oxford, and after leaving it travelled in France, Germany, and Switzerland. He had hardly returned to his native country, when he had to fly from the persecution of Mary. At Geneva he married Calvin's sister, and succeeded Knox as pastor of the English congregation there, coming again to England in 1560. In 1563 he was made Dean of Durham, and this post he held till his death in 1579. Whittingham contributed in all twelve Psalms to the Sternhold Psalter, exclusive of those which were finally rejected. Several of these are in the irregular metres characteristic of the French versions of Marot and Beza, and must have afforded a pleasing contrast to the dominant common metres of most of the other writers.

In 1560 fourteen more renderings were added to the Psalter, thus bringing the number up to sixty-five. Of these fourteen, nine are by Whittingham, two by Robert Wisdom, two by John Pullain, and one (the 95th) is anonymous. The new authors need not detain us long, for they did not write again, and only one Psalm from the pen of each was included in the final edition of the Psalter. Wisdom was for some time incumbent of St. Catherine's, Lothbury, and was imprisoned for refusing to sign the Six Articles. He was one of the Frankfort exiles, but shortly after the accession of Elizabeth he was made Archdeacon of Ely, and this post he retained till his death in 1568. Pullain was a Yorkshireman, and in 1547, at the age of thirty, was admitted senior student of Christ Church. He preached the Reformation privately at St. Michael's, Cornhill, 1556, but afterwards became an exile. Returning in the happier period of Elizabeth, he was made Archdeacon of Colchester, and died in 1565. His influence on the Psalter was of course very slight, but the metre of his 148th Psalm has formed a model for frequent imitation.

In 1561 the exiles at Geneva produced an edition of their Psalter enlarged to eighty-seven Psalms. In this edition the 1560 renderings of the 67th, 95th, and 125th Psalms were excluded, and the new versions therefore numbered twenty-five. The fresh contributions were all from the pen of William Kethe, who will ever be remembered as the author of the noble rendering of the 100th Psalm—"All people that on earth do dwell." Kethe is described by Warton (who styles him "no unready rhymer") as a native of Scotland. He joined the exiles at Geneva in 1556, and after his return to England was settled as a minister in Warwickshire. If regard be had to fidelity to the original text, variety, energy, and elegance, many of Kethe's renderings are entitled to a very high place. The 100th Psalm has been well described as "the gem of the entire collection;" and it is certainly a very high tribute to its merits that even at the present day no metrical translation of any Psalm is in more general favour wherever the English language is spoken. Ten only of Kethe's versions were retained in the final edition of the English Psalter, but the whole twenty-five were included in the edition printed for use in the Scottish churches.

The next stage in the history of the Sternhold Psalter is that which marks its completion in 1562. In this perfected edition twenty-three of the previous renderings were rejected, and eighty-six were thus required to make up the total number. Of these eighty-six, three bear the name of Sternhold, and it is supposed that these had been discovered subsequently to his death. Hopkins, after long silence, again reappears, and no fewer than fifty-three of the new versions are from his pen. Two other translators now come into view. The first of these is Thomas Norton, who versified as many as twenty-six Psalms for this final edition. Norton was by profession a barrister, and, according to Wood, "a forward and busy Calvinist." He is said to have enjoyed some poetical reputation, and he was well known as the author of several tracts on the religious controversies of his time. All his Psalms are in the C.M. form, and rhyme like those of Sternhold. To four of the Psalms added in 1562 the initial "M." is attached; this is now generally believed to stand for John Marckant, of whom nothing is known that is worth stating.

The complete Psalter was thus the work of nine writers, whose respective parts it may be as well to summarise. At the same time that we do this we may show the difference which existed between the English edition of the Psalter and the edition published for the Scottish churches. The following table will make the matter plain as to both points:—

Authors.	English Edition.	Scotch Edition.
Sternhold	40	... 39
Hopkins	60	... 37
Whittingham	12	... 16
Kethe	10	... 25
Pullain	1	... 2
Norton	26	... 8
Marckant	4	... 2
Craig	... ...	... 15
Pont	... ...	... 6
Wisdom...	1	... ...
Anonymous	1	... ...
Total	155*	150

Finally completed and authorised, the metrical Psalter was before long everywhere adopted. The hold gained by it may be estimated from the fact that nearly three hundred and fifty distinct editions were published previous to the year 1700, when the more recent version of Tate and Brady began to divide the public favour with it. It had the honour of a Concordance all to itself; and in the time of Charles II. it was printed in shorthand. Most of the editions included the tunes with which the various Psalms were associated; "with apt notes to sing them withal" was the usual formula of the title-page. These tunes were few in number, and as they were always set to the same Psalm, both the words and the music would soon be known by heart to the congregations. Though generally superseded by the new version, the Sternhold Psalter was used in the English churches within the memory of some still living; among the Nonconformists it continued to be the medium of public praise only till the time of Watts, whose hymns began to drive it from the field.

* Five duplicates.

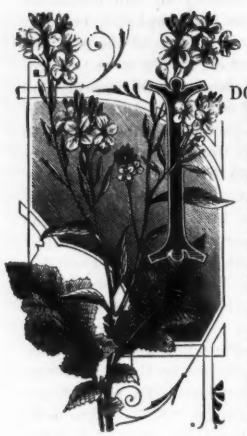
The literary merits of the Sternhold version are not great; indeed, it is certain that the book would not be tolerated in the present day. Many of the translations are low and ludicrous, and not a few offend against all good taste. The likeness of the version to the original Hebrew—a likeness which was proclaimed on all the title-pages—is, to quote the words of James Montgomery, "but the resemblance of the dead to the living." Probably Warton is right in the opinion, that had the renderings been more poetical, "they would not have been acceptable to the common people." At any rate, we shall not err if we say, with quaint old Thomas Fuller, that the versifiers were men "whose piety was better than their poetry;" and the only pleasant thought for us is that in the 100th and 104th ("My soul, praise the Lord") Psalms of Kethe, and one or two more versions which might be named, we "still retain some links with so venerable a book and history."

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

THE CRUMPLED LETTER.

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS.
BY THE AUTHOR OF "MY BROTHER BASIL," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

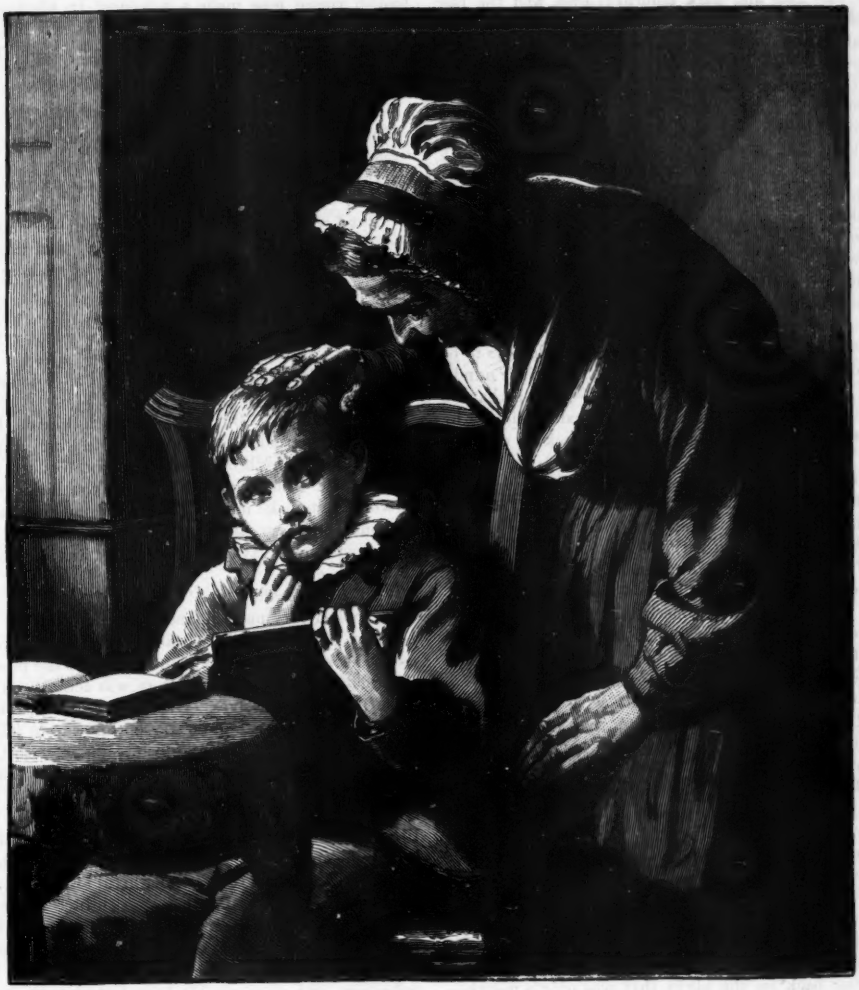


I DON'T know why he should have been called *little* Toto, for he was rather a tall boy for his age. Perhaps it was that neither his age nor his stature could possibly have been called great, for Toto was only eight years old when he went on this memorable holiday of his. His real name was not Toto, of course—it was Thomas Havilgar Desmond, and why he was called Toto was one of those perplexing mysteries which a celebrated nobleman was wont to declare "no fellah could understand." The origin of the queer appellation was probably lost in the remote nursery days which seemed as far off to Toto as the times of Aryan or Greek myths seemed to his elders, but in this case no one inquired very curiously about it, or tried to deduce any wonderful theories from its simple syllables. Toto he had always been called, and Toto he was still, and as he always answered to his name, it served its purpose well enough.

People who passed the little fair-haired, bright-faced boy in the street, might easily have thought that his life had been all holiday; but, short as it had been, Toto had not found life all play, as so many of his little companions had done. There had been a good many days, and even weeks and months, of sickness in it, times when Toto fought hard for the breath he could draw so easily now, and those who loved him fought harder still for courage to see him suffer, and for faith to believe in the Love that laid little Toto's cross on his small, tender shoulders. Toto had nearly forgotten all this now, but Toto's father and mother would never quite forget. Always Toto would be a little different from their other children; this child who had been twice given to them, who had come to them once through the gate of life, and once had been snatched from the very jaws of death.

Toto had been delicate ever since, and was just a little spoiled, as delicate children are apt to be. And first amongst his worshippers, and spoiler-in-chief to the wilful but loving and engaging little boy, was his eldest sister, Honor, under whose charge Toto set out on the holiday they would both remember all their lives.

"For I think a change will do *Toto* good," Mrs. Desmond had said, glancing at Honor's pale cheeks, but not venturing to say, "will do *you* good," under the gathering wrath of Honor's mutinous eyes.



"'How do you spell *penitent?*' Toto was asking."—*p.* 348.

If there was a thing Miss Desmond resented just now, it was the assumption that her health was not vigorous, nor her spirits of the best. Because Philip Western had jilted her, was she going to whine and pine like the heroine of a sentimental story? Certainly not! she assured herself, as she went about the house, singing gaily for the benefit of all who chose to hear. There was something in Honor's singing that brought the tears to her mother's eyes, but happily Honor did not know this, and believed her trouble unsuspected, as firmly as any ostrich who hides its head in the sand believes itself unseen. It was a month-old trouble now, if it was a trouble at all, which Miss Desmond vigorously denied, and Honor was looking rather white and wan, in spite of the good spirits which found vent in these untiring bursts of song. She was thin, too—from singing too much, she said—though the opinions of physiologists, and the aspect of most of the famous Queens of Song, were rather against her theory, and Mrs. Desmond was sincerely rejoiced when Honor vouchsafed her assent to share in the holiday that would be so good for Toto.

The Isle of Wight had been selected for their destination, chiefly because a friend of Mrs. Desmond's was going there, and had suggested that the brother and sister should share her rooms. Mrs. Bretherton would go on first and take apartments, and Honor and Toto were to join her a day or two later.

And so it came to pass that the tall thin girl with

the pale face and dark mournful eyes, and the fair pretty boy stood together on the deck of a steamer bound from Portsmouth to Ryde, on a bright June afternoon, and attracted a good deal more attention and admiration than either of them was conscious of. Honor was not so pretty, perhaps, as she had been a month ago, but she was striking and distinguished-looking, and as for Toto, everyone was in love with him. Very sweet and bright and engaging the little fellow looked, in his miniature sailor suit, with a real Jack-tar hat and pea-jacket, his small feet peeping from the long wide trousers that were a little difficult to walk about in, and his eyes shining with excitement and delight. He stood close to his sister, for Honor had charged him to keep by her, and Toto was quite preternaturally good this afternoon.

It is not difficult even for spoilt little boys to be good when everything is going exactly to their minds, and after all Toto was not spoilt—only perhaps a little in danger of being so. He stood obediently by Honor's side, looking as good and meek as possible, and watched the other passengers, and the sailors whose garments were not nearly so correctly nautical as his own, and none of whom could pass him by without quite an affectionate smile. And Toto smiled back at them with the most delicious mixture of fun and shyness and sauciness, and asked Honor a hundred questions about the construction and navigation of steam-vessels, concerning which it is to be feared that Honor herself had only the vaguest and most general information, but which she answered patiently, to the best of her small ability.

She was always very patient with Toto, though Philip Western could have told that it was by no means a quality she displayed to the rest of mankind. Everyone said—that is, everyone in Honor's little world—that Captain Western had jilted her; and many women, and some men who had found her decidedly impatient of their inanities, said that it served her right. But this was not at all how it appeared to Philip Western. He jilt her—*he?* Why, he would have died for her, until—well! until Honor's eyes turned coldly from his gaze, or met it with a proud defiance he could not understand. He could not understand anything about it, he thought, looking back on the night that was only a month—four little weeks!—ago, but that seemed as many years. He only knew that Honor had charged him with untruth and disloyalty, and that when his pride rose in arms, as any true man's might, she had taken him at his word, and given him back his ring, and sailed away on another man's arm, as gaily as if she had not just broken his heart. This was Philip's view of the question, and he believed it as firmly as Honor believed that she had wasted her love on a man who had only been flirting with her, and who had been only too glad to take back the pledge of a broken troth. It was the old story of the "whispering tongues that poison truth," of the little misunderstanding fanned by a false friend, of a tangle of slander and temper and pride. And the end of it all was that Captain Western sent back Honor's letters and received his own in return, together with sundry bangles, fans, work-cases, and other costly trifles, of which the foolish young man made a holocaust in his barrack grate; and that Honor was sent on this expedition to Sandown, which was to do so much good—to Toto.

CHAPTER II.

"HONOR," whispered Toto, in a very mysterious voice, "may I say something?"

"Haven't you been saying something ever since we started?" Honor asked, with a smile.

"But I want to say something different—something about Captain Western," explained Toto, "and mamma said I mustn't talk about him, for fear of making you ill."

This was pleasant information for a young woman who had sung herself hoarse in an evidently vain attempt to throw dust in her relatives' eyes!

"It wouldn't make you ill, would it?" Toto asked, rather eagerly.

"Certainly not! But you need not talk about him, Toto. I—I am not at all interested in him. I don't want to hear anything about Captain Western ever again," said Honor decidedly. "Do you hear, Toto? It would not make me ill—that is all nonsense!—but I should be angry, and you would not like that; so you must never say anything about him to me, or to anyone else."

"All right," said Toto, "I won't."

He looked very puzzled, and rather crestfallen; but he kept his promise honourably—whereby, if Honor escaped some future awkwardness, she lost the present information that Captain Western was actually on the same boat as themselves. His battery had just been ordered to Sandown, and he was on his way to join it there, but seeing Honor and Toto come on board, he had kept out of their way at the second-class end of the boat. Toto's sharp eyes had spied him out, but Honor had not seen him, nor did she guess what her little brother meant, or why his eyes wandered so often to the opening between the engines and the paddle-boxes. She had grown very thoughtful and silent, and sat with her eyes fixed on the smooth blue water, on which the little steamer was leaving a long white trail, and Toto, seeing that she was in what he called a "brown study," determined to leave her to her reflections, and go to see his friend at the other end of the boat. Toto and Captain Western had been very good friends, and Toto knew no reason why they should not be good friends still. It was true that Honor had told him not to leave her, but, as we know, Toto was accustomed to have his own way, and his fit of quite abnormal goodness and docility was a little wearing off. He slipped quietly away from unobservant Honor, and finding the deck impeded by passengers and luggage, climbed up on the broad ledge that runs along the side of the Solent boats, and tried to make his way to his friend. Perhaps, but for the sailor-trousers he was so proud of, he might have succeeded, but just as Captain Western heard his name pronounced in Toto's childish voice, the boat lurched, and the small sailor-clad figure lurched with it; and before anyone could hold out a detaining hand, the little fellow had fallen into the shining blue water below.

"Toto! It is *Toto!*" Philip Western cried, in

horrified tones, and the next instant he was in the water himself, grasping Toto's little blue sleeve, and striking away from the hideous suck of the paddle-wheels, while the steamer reversed her engines, and all the confusion reigned on board which the cry of "Man overboard!" always produces.

It was then, and then only, that dreaming Honor missed her little charge. Where could he be? And what was all the hubbub at the other end of the boat? She went towards the crowd, a good deal alarmed, and as she approached everyone made way for her.

"It's his mother," someone said. "No—his sister, more like," said someone else; but Honor did not think they were talking about her.

"Have you seen a little boy in a sailor suit?" she asked; but no one answered her. They only made way for her in silence, and as she pressed forward, troubled and amazed, the sailors leaning over the vessel's side drew on board a half-senseless man, with a quite senseless child clasped in his arms.

CHAPTER III.

SANDOWN is one of the prettiest and quietest of watering-places. It stands just in the curve of a bay, blue as that of Naples, and almost as beautiful, and has a background of soft, swelling downs, of villas set in trees, of common where the gorse blows, and the cuckoo calls, and the larks sing overhead. It seems a curious contrast to the peaceful, pleasant scene, to look at the ring of forts that surrounds the smiling bay, to meet in the quiet High Street the dark uniforms of Her Majesty's Royal Artillery, and hear now and again the roar of guns that tells of innocuous practice at floating targets, and does no worse damage than to shake the windows, and perhaps crash a pane in one that a careless housewife has forgotten to open. No prettier sight can be imagined than this Artillery practice on a bright summer day. Honor looked at it enchanted, as she and Toto and Mrs. Bretherton watched it from the window of their lodgings on the Esplanade. Sky and sea were both of the intense, metallic blue peculiar to the Isle of Wight, and where shot or shell struck the water, a little white puff of steam rose from it, as if in emulation of the small white clouds floating in the blue above. Toto clapped his hands as each white jet arose into the air, and held his breath for the dull reverberating roar that came so long afterwards that Toto could hardly believe it had anything to do with the shot just fired.

Toto was none the worse for his dip in the Solent. He had revived directly he was taken out, and, thanks to Captain Western's timely aid, was decidedly more frightened than hurt. Honor knew that she owed her little brother's life to Philip Western, and faltered out incoherent thanks, with white, quivering lips, when Philip emerged from the cabin where he had changed his dripping garments; while Honor and half a dozen eager helpers had rendered the same services to Toto in the velvet-cushioned saloon. They were at Ryde by this time, and everyone was crowding to the gangway; but Honor made a desperate effort, and came up with Toto's deliverer before he left the boat.

"I *must* thank you," she said, holding out her hand; but perhaps he did not see it. She hoped not, afterwards, blushing furiously at the bare remembrance, for he did not take the poor little trembling hand so impulsively offered to him. He only lifted his hat, and bowed ceremoniously; and then he passed on in the crowd, and Honor saw him no more.

She had not seen him in Sandown, except in the distance. Once or twice she had caught a glimpse of the well-known figure, a street's length away, and Mrs. Bretherton, who was short-sighted, had wondered at the sudden crimson in her young friend's cheeks. "Sandown is doing you good, dear! I always say it is the finest air in the world," she would say, innocently; and Honor did not know which she detested most—Mrs. Bretherton, or herself, or Philip Western. And yet she could not help being grateful to him—for had he not saved Toto's life?

Toto himself was very grateful indeed, and whatever Captain Western felt about Honor, he did not let his feelings towards her interfere with his fondness for his old friend Toto. Toto was made free of the Captain's quarters, and between his visits there, and the time he spent in erecting mimic fortifications on the beach, Honor and Mrs. Bretherton saw very little of him. Mrs. Bretherton was rather an invalid, and Honor decidedly preferred sitting on the balcony with her to going out alone, with the possibility of meeting Captain Western always before her eyes. So Toto went his own way: and the beach was so safe, and the little boy had made so many friends amongst the visitors, to say nothing of the friend with whom Honor always felt that he was as safe as with herself, that neither she nor Mrs. Bretherton felt any concern when he was out of their sight. Toto knew his way all over the place, and never failed to put in an appearance for his meals.

Toto's extreme punctuality made his absence at tea one night seem a little alarming, but Honor would not let herself be frightened. She had seen Toto go by an hour or two ago, with his hand in Captain Western's, and felt quite easy about him. But supper-time came, and still no Toto; and both the ladies became seriously alarmed. Mrs. Bretherton sent to Captain Western's to ask if he was there, and Honor's heart stood still as she saw the Captain coming down the Esplanade alone. He had outrun Mrs. Bretherton's maid in his anxiety, for he had not seen Toto since the afternoon; and it was evident that something must have happened.

"Is there anything I can do?" he asked Mrs. Bretherton. "I should be so glad to be of use if I may. I would do anything for Toto."

He did not look at Honor, nor Honor at him. She stood, white and silent, looking out at the moonlit water, and wondering in a dazed, stupid way, what the knot of fishermen were talking about who were standing just under the balcony, and pointing up at her, and then at the dark, silent sea, with its one track of silvery light.

Captain Western saw and heard them too. He pushed Honor quite roughly from the window, and

shut it in a quick, agitated way; and then he ran down-stairs, and she saw him talking eagerly to the men.

He did not come up-stairs again, but sent a message asking Mrs. Bretherton to come down to him, and when she saw his face in the moonlight it was whiter than Honor's.

"I have heard something—I am afraid I have heard all there is to hear," he said, with a short sob, of which he looked horribly ashamed, but that Mrs. Bretherton thought only did him honour. "He went out in a canoe, it seems, after he left me——"

"In a canoe! That child!" she ejaculated; "and I know Honor had forbidden him to go in one!"

"He had never had one before, and it was quite safe in the tide-pool; but the water was high, and they think it must have drifted over the sandbank, and so out to sea."

"They don't really know, then?" she said, fighting against his hopeless tones.

"No one knows anything; but they found the canoe an hour ago, bottom upwards, in Whitecliff Bay. Hush!"—with a quick look at the window above—"don't—*don't!* I think of *her!* It is not certain, you see, and they say the—the body—will be sure to come ashore there, if it is so."

Mrs. Bretherton forced back her tears.

"What shall I say to Honor?" she wailed.

"Tell her—no; tell her nothing! Keep this report from her if you can; at least, till I get back from Whitecliff. Say that people are looking for him, and that she shall hear as soon as there is any news."

CHAPTER IV.

THAT short summer night, with its awful burden of suspense, seemed to Honor the longest she had ever known. It seemed long to Captain Western too, waiting for the dawn, that seemed as if it would never come. He was to go to Whitecliff with the earliest streak of day, and, indeed, the sun's great red disc was hardly out of the water when a boat, with Captain Western and three fishermen, put off from Sandown and bore away in the direction of the Culvers. Whitecliff lies just the other side of the steep white cliff, a little sandy bay with a beach thickly strewn with rounded flints, hollowed out of the chalk-cliffs above. It was here that they landed, for here, if anywhere, the fishermen said the sea would give up its dead. And so they paced up and down the rough, pebbly shore, and looked at the calm blue waters, sparkling in the sun, and the little waves breaking so softly they scarcely stirred the sand on the beach, till the tide had come in, and turned again, and the sun was well overhead. It shone all over the little bay now, showing all the marvellous colours that make up the whiteness of the chalk, and glittering on Philip's watch-chain, on the metal buttons one of the men wore, and on something that the shadow of the cliff had hidden till now, but that glittered like a gem when the light fell on it. It was not a gem at all, but it was something which Philip Western would not have exchanged for the Koh-i-noor—it was a little silver whistle he had given to Toto to wear on his lanyard, and which he had seen round Toto's neck the afternoon before. It was Toto's whistle, undoubtedly, and it was lying here under the cliffs, twenty feet at least above high water-mark. If Toto had been wrecked, as they supposed, his whistle could not have got here; and Captain Western looked anxiously about him, almost as if he expected to find Toto under the cliffs, too. The little bay was soon explored, but the whistle in Captain Western's hand was the only trace of Toto, and having satisfied himself of this, the Captain told the men to wait below, while he ascended the cliff to make inquiries at the cottages above. There were only one or two, but as he approached the first, he heard the sound of a voice that was curiously like Toto's, and looking in, he saw Toto himself. It certainly *was* Toto, though the familiar sailor suit was replaced by some old-fashioned garments that changed his appearance so much that Philip would hardly have known him but for the unmistakable voice, whose pitch was so much higher than Honor's, but whose tone and quality were so like hers.

"How do you spell *penitent?*" Toto was asking an old woman, who bent over him with a very kind face.

"That I can't tell 'ee, dearie," she said, laying her wrinkled, toil-worn hand on Toto's little head. "Don't'ee trouble about the spelling, sonny. It's *feeling* it matters a deal more than spelling. The Lord 'll never ask if it's spelt right, dearie, nor your good kind sister neither."

"Oh, you don't know," objected Toto. "Honor teaches me, and she's awful particular about spelling. That's why I write it on a slate first—she always makes me, you know; and if you don't know how *penitent*'s spelt, I'd better look it out."

But as he turned to a large, old-fashioned dictionary on the table beside him, he saw Captain Western, and flew into his arms.

"Have you come for me?" he cried. "And is Honor very cross?"

"Cross? Child, you don't know what you are talking about," the Captain said, as the remembrance of Honor's dumb anguish came over him with a thrill of pity. "You can't understand the trouble you have caused."

"So I tell'd him, sir," the old woman said, with a curtsey. "I know'd the poor young lady would be in a dreffful taking, and no wonder neither. He were writing to her when you come in, sir, and my son he's just going into Sandown with the letter."

"But how did he get here?" Captain Western asked.

"Canoe," said Toto, briefly. And then he looked up with the eyes that were so like Honor's. "I *am* sorry," he said, "I really, *really* am."

"I think he really is, sir," Mrs. Jolliffe said. "He know'd well enough he shouldn't 'a done it, and when he found hisself a drifting out to sea, he were proper frightened, poor dear."

"But how did he get here?" repeated the Captain.

"Well, you see, sir, there's a current sets this way, and the canoe it just drifted into the bay, and little master with it. He were washed clean out of it, but my Jim were down there setting lobster-pots, and brought him up to me. He were that worn out, poor

dear. he fell fast asleep in Jim's arms, and I just took his wet things off, and put him to bed. It were only this morning he were able to tell us anything about hisself, and Jim is going off directly."

"There is no need. I have a boat down in the bay," Captain Western said. And then he told Toto to get ready to come with him, and rewarded good Mrs. Jolliffe with a liberality that exceeded her utmost expectations.

Half an hour later they were on their way back, and Toto, clad once more in his own habiliments, looked very little the worse for his adventure, though he had the grace to look exceedingly ashamed. Mrs. Jolliffe's homely remarks had found their way to Toto's heart, and—whether he could spell it or not—he was really penitent, both for his disobedience and for the trouble he had caused.

"You see," the Captain said, pressing home the lesson, "it was doing what you knew you oughtn't, that was really the sa't thing, wasn't it? I always think there's something sneaky about disobedience, and there's such a temptation not to own up afterwards."

Toto grew very red.

"I do own up," he said, "*nearly* always."

"But not quite, eh? I wonder what is on your small conscience now? You'd be much more comfortable if you made a clean breast of it."

Toto wriggled uncomfortably.

"You'd be cross—and Honor too," he said doubtfully. But when repentance is sincere, confession is not far off. "It was only about that note," he said, confidentially, "the note I didn't give you, a long time ago."

"What note?"—rather sharply.

"There! I knew you would be cross;" said Toto, with a sort of forlorn triumph. "And so will Honor too."

"What has Hon—what has your sister to do with it?"

"Honor asked me to give it to you, and I forgot, and I thought she'd be vexed, and I didn't tell. But I am going to tell her when I get home. She won't mind, if I tell her, will she?"

"How can I tell?" said the Captain, in a very odd voice. He would have given a good deal to know what was in that note.

"You don't know what you did with it, I suppose," he remarked. But equally to his contentment and surprise, Toto did know. He put his hand in his pocket, and produced an exceedingly dirty and crumpled envelope, addressed to Captain Western in Honor's well-known hand. Inside was a note, with a date six weeks old. How strange it was to read, "*My own darling Phil*," and to know that she would never call him that any more.

But as he read on, a hope so strong and sweet as to be almost painful sprang up in his breast. For the note was one that should have been answered at once, and he began to see how his failure to do so had offended Honor's pride, and even made her doubt his love. He remembered all about it now, and how, instead of going to the "Grosvenor" with Honor, as the note asked him to do, he had chosen that very day to go with his cousin Nettie, of whom Honor had always been a little jealous, and had met Honor there, and been cut to the heart by the coldness in her voice and eyes. But now, but *now*——!

There was a sudden mist in Philip's own eyes as he looked at the smudged and crumpled paper in his hand, and thought of all that perhaps it might do for him yet!

"How you blink!" said Toto, sympathetically. "Is it because the sun is in your eyes?"

* * * * * *

What a happy evening that was! Philip and Honor sat in the balcony together with happy faces and tight-locked hands, and Mrs. Bretherton—kind, considerate creature that she was!—felt suddenly well enough to go for a little walk, and took Toto with her. And the reconciled lovers rejoiced over their reconciliation, and only quarrelled as to which had been the most to blame. The moon came up and turned the little bay into fairyland, and life stretched before them sweet and vast, a fairyland such as most men only visit once, but that these were treading for the second time with undimmed faith and hope.

THE NAME CHRISTIAN.

BY THE REV. TRYON EDWARDS, D.D.

THE disciples were called Christians first in Antioch;" so we are told in Acts xi. 26, and most commentators and readers regard the name as given in contempt or ridicule to the followers of the blessed Saviour.

Before this they had been known by other names—*disciples*, for their knowledge; *believers*, for their faith; *brethren*, for their love to each other and to Christ; *witnesses*, for their faithful testimony to the truth; *saints*, for their holiness, as sanctified through the truth and by the Holy Spirit; and *the faithful*, for their trust in and their unwavering allegiance to the Saviour. And all these names are recognised by Christ Himself, or directly by the word of inspiration. But now, at Antioch, for the first time they are called *Christians*. What, then, is the origin of the name, and what is its meaning?

As already said, it is the common impression that the name was given in reproach by the opposers and

enemies of the new faith, in the endeavour, by ridicule or contempt, to cast discredit on the new doctrine and its recipients. This, however, can hardly have been the case, for though their *enemies*, as we know, stigmatised them as "Nazarenes" and "Galileans," it is nowhere said that they gave them any other name; and it is scarcely probable that the Church would so readily have assumed, and so willingly have kept, a name which had been given to its members only in contempt and derision. It is far more reasonable to suppose that the name was *divinely* given, for ever to associate the followers of Christ with His own blessed name. And the Greek word translated "were called" makes it almost absolutely certain that this was the case. Nine times in the New Testament that word is used in its form as a verb, and once as a noun, and in every other one of these cases it signifies a command or direction, coming as a message from God Himself, as when the wise men were *warned of God* not to return to Herod; and Joseph, being *warned of God*, turned aside into Galilee; and Cornelius, being *warned of God*, sent for Peter; and Moses, being *admonished by God*, was directed how to build the tabernacle; and the Hebrew Christians are *warned* not to refuse Christ, *Who spake* on earth, etc. And this uniform use and meaning of the word in these various cases seems plainly to point to the fact that here also it is used in the same sense, thus saying that the name was *given of God—divinely* given.

In the nature of the case there seems to have been a need of some *new name* that should sink the distinctions of Jew and Gentile, and embrace in its broad, and significant, and definite meaning all of every nation who should be converts to the faith of Christ. And it is more than probable that this was the very name alluded to and foretold by the prophet Isaiah when he says (chapter lxii. 2) that the people of God, under the New Dispensation, "shall be called *by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.*" And given, as it was, but a few years after the death of Christ, and at Antioch, where inspired men were so long ministering to the Church, it seems more than probable that they were divinely directed to give to believers this "new name," which so early became the mark of discipleship, and which everywhere, and to the end of the world, was to designate the disciples of the Saviour, and be a form of acknowledging and confessing Christ before men.

And this divine origin of the name, it is believed, is confirmed and illustrated by an expression in the Old Testament which throws light upon this point. Going back to the last verse of the fourth chapter of Genesis, we find it written:—"Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord." But the literal meaning of the Hebrew seems to be, "Then it was begun to call men (*i.e.*, good men) by the name of God—or God's sons." And this meaning seems recognised in the next chapter but one, where it is said that the "sons of God" (*i.e.*, good men) married "the daughters of men" (*i.e.*, irreligious and worldly women), and so, as mothers do shape the character of their children, a race of giants sprang up: not giants *in size*, for the word has no reference to size—but giants in wickedness, outbreaking men, *violent* men, the very word that is used when it is said (chap. vi. 13) that the world was "so filled with their *violence*" that God was led to destroy it by the flood. So the former passage in the New Testament is parallel to this in the Old. Then, in the Old Testament in the days of Seth, good men were first called "God's sons," and here in the New Testament, in the days of Paul and Barnabas, and at Antioch, good men were first called "Christ's sons," or Christians—for the latter word is but the synonym or equivalent of the two others. In each case the name seems to have been divinely given, to distinguish God's people from the world, and to mark them by name as His own.

And now if it is asked, "What is a Christian? And how may I know if I am one?" the answer is given by two other questions:—*First*, "Do you *believe* all that Christ teaches, so far and so fast as you understand it?" and *second*, "Do you endeavour *to do* all that Christ commands, as far and as fast as you understand that?" In other words, Do you receive all that Christ says as true, and treat it as true, and act upon it as true, cherishing His spirit in your heart, and endeavouring in all things to do His will in your daily life and conduct? *If you do, you are a Christian.* For when someone asked the blessed Saviour, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that ye *believe* on Him whom He hath sent." And when they told Him "that His mother and brethren were without, desiring to speak with Him," He said, "Whoso shall *do the will of God*, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

If then you believe all that Christ teaches, so far and so fast as you understand it, and if you endeavour *to do* all that Christ commands, so far and so fast as you know it, *you are a Christian.* You may be, as yet, but a weak and feeble Christian, just entering on the divine life, but you are *in* that life. You may be as yet but a mere babe in Christ, but you *are* in Him. And if you are but faithful to study His Word that you may know His truth and His will, and are earnest in prayer for the aid of the Holy Spirit that you may understand the former and do the latter, then you shall grow and increase in strength, till you come at last to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ Himself.

SCIENCE AND CHRISTIANITY.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE REV. W. H. DALLINGER, LL.D., F.R.S., ETC.

BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.



DR. DALLINGER'S LABORATORY.

AN almost unique position is occupied by the highly honoured and well-known Wesleyan minister, Dr. W. H. Dallinger. He is a renowned and eminent man of science, at the same time that he is a highly popular and powerful preacher; he is a recognised authority on biological subjects, especially those relating to minute biology and the origin of life; while he has borne a full share in the circuit work of the denomination to which he belongs.

Humanly speaking, a serious illness caused Dr. Dallinger to become also an eminent scientist. Of course he possessed the qualities for such a career—the ardent love of nature and the power of patient and steady research—but these and other faculties might have lain dormant or only been partially used were it not that when a young man he was struck down by severe illness, and for eighteen months was quite unable to pursue his vocation as a minister.

Being then wholly forbidden to occupy the mind by anything that caused it any strain, he was thrown back upon his old love of nature, and in fine weather he was taken, through the days and months of a long and brilliant summer, into the fields and woods. There, amid the murmuring breezes and the cheerful sunshine, he crept slowly back to health; and the old passion of his boyhood re-asserted itself. He became the possessor of a high-class microscope, and made himself thoroughly master of the delightful instrument. As a boy he had been wont to use it with considerable success; and now by steady practice he became thoroughly able to employ it so as to obtain the finest results attainable with an object-glass of $\frac{1}{25}$th of an inch focus—a lens at that time not commonly used; and subsequently he employed with equal facility a lens of $\frac{1}{50}$th of an inch focus, corresponding to that with

which Dr. Lionel Beale did his classical work in the demonstration of the nature of protoplasm. Both these "object-glasses" are now wholly surpassed by others of the same power, but transcendently higher qualities, which modern optics and opticians have in successive years produced. All these are to be seen on the tables of the Doctor's work-room.

Such instruments as these require the utmost skill for their really efficient use. To possess a lens of very high power and perfect construction no more carries with it the capacity to use it than the purchase of a Stradiuarius violin carries with it ability to evoke its music. The "front lens" of a $\frac{1}{50}$th inch "dry" lens, the same power "immersion," and another "oil-immersion" of equal magnifying capacity, is in each case so small that when a strong light is sent through the combination of lenses united in making the "object-glass," the front lens in each case is as a mere luminous needle-point. During twenty years of work, Dr. Dallinger has seen, and been the means of promoting, wonderful advances in the perfection and use of the microscope; but it was in the days of which we are writing that earnest study and practice were devoted by Dr. Dallinger to endeavour to obtain a complete mastery of the instrument.

"I attribute all the best results of my work," said he, "to my having, at the outset, made myself thoroughly master of the optical principles of the microscope, and the practical use in the best way of all the apparatus employed with it."

And now, what are some of the great results at which Dr. Dallinger has arrived? Briefly, he has proved, by his long and patient examination of some of the minutest living creatures, that "spontaneous generation," or the origination of life from not-life, is absolutely fallacious; and therefore the presumption, on purely scientific grounds, is that all life must have originated in a cause not operating in nature now. He has shown that the minutest and lowliest living things—the least known to us at present on earth—can only come, like the largest and most complex, from preceding living things. Hence the inference is inevitable that there was a point in the creative progress or genesis of the earth when a power operated as no power *now* operates, endowing matter dead and inorganic with the unique and wonderful properties and powers of LIFE. We may not even conceive of *how* this was done, but it must, in its primal nature, have been the act of the Creator. A scientific man himself, and one who has made profound and original scientific researches, he does not find anything in physical science to conflict with the great foundation on which Christianity rests.

Dr. Dallinger was born at Devonport in 1841, and educated privately. He was early imbued with a deep interest in nature, and amongst other things —as a boy—he was enabled to obtain and use a small microscope, which deepened his interest in nature, and led him at first to choose medicine as a profession. But want of health greatly interfered with his prospects of success, and when he was about



DR. DALLINGER'S LIBRARY.

sixteen or seventeen years of age he became moved with a desire to become a minister. Educated in the Church of England, he at that time became acquainted with several exceedingly earnest young men associated with the Wesleyan Church, and this resulted in his leaving the Church of England—for which he still has a great love—and joining the Wesleyan Society at Stonehouse. He engaged in Sunday-school work, and ultimately joined the Wesleyan ministry.

For some time, now, he devoted his mind to the study of sacred and classical languages, and to theology, and with great reluctance abandoned, for about five years, any special work in nature or in science. Then fell upon him the serious illness during the slow recovery from which he became master of the microscope, and subsequently, when he had partially recovered, but was still out of health, he spent twelve more months in endeavouring to discover the origin and mode of development of some of the organisms which set up putrefactive action in organic bodies. These organisms are the least and the lowliest in nature, and some remarkable results were obtained at the end of the year.

This was done at Bristol. Being now better in health, Mr. Dallinger was removed to Liverpool, where he remained, engaging in the work of the Wesleyan ministry for about twelve years, and where much of his special scientific work was done. At the time of his removal, the question of so-called "spontaneous generation," or the mode of origin of the lowest forms of life, was greatly agitating the biological world; and having no opinion either for or against either of the two opposing doctrines, Dr. Dallinger determined to thoroughly investigate the matter. One of these doctrines inculcated the hypothesis that these lowliest living creatures arose directly—without the intervention of living things—from not-living matter; the other affirmed that only that which was living could give origin to that which lived.

"The extreme minuteness of the organisms," said Dr. Dallinger, "was the greatest impediment to the solution of the question, but the highest powers then accessible were employed. The only mode in which it could be successfully done, however, was that a single organism should be followed by constant observation through all changes of its life, and the mode of origin of successive forms determined. I soon found this could not be done by one observer alone. The application had to be too close and too constant, and it was necessary to find a coadjutor. A thoroughly competent one was found in Dr. J. J. Drysdale, F.R.M.S., of Liverpool, who worked for six or seven years with me in my laboratory. During that time we worked out completely the life-histories of seven distinct putrefactive organisms. The details of our observations, and the results and methods pursued, are given in the Proceedings of the Royal Society and of the Royal Microscopical Society, and the general result of the work was a demonstration that these living things, like all the larger and more complex ones above them, originated in parental products—the equivalents of seeds or eggs altogether too minute for general conception."

This, in brief, has been Dr. Dallinger's special scientific work. But he has done much more; he has increased the number of life-histories of minute putrefactive organisms now known, and proved that they



THE REV. DR. DALLINGER, F.R.S.

are a group of minute creatures doing a special work for which they are more or less strikingly fitted; also that they are to putrefaction what the yeast plant is to fermentation. Dr. Dallinger has also shown that these organisms are capable of undergoing remarkable changes, which adapt them to live under adverse surroundings; so that the fittest ultimately survive in conditions that would have been absolutely destructive at the commencement of a long series of experiments. Thus, for example, the usual temperature in which they live is 60 degrees of the Fahrenheit thermometer, but after nearly ten years of adding heat very slowly, with extremely delicate and well-devised instruments, these organisms lived at a temperature of 157 degrees Fahrenheit! If the change were sudden, they were destroyed. Indeed, the normal adults are always killed at 140 degrees Fahr.

This Dr. Dallinger regards as direct evidence of the truth of the doctrine laid down by Darwin, that if the surroundings of an organism change adversely, variations take place in successive generations, which

enable them to adapt themselves to their surroundings, so that these are adverse no longer; and, said he—

"In my judgment, the existence of this power of concurrent adaptation, possessed by every living organism in nature, is the broadest and sublimest evidence of design that can be brought before the mind of man."

Thus, out of one of the Darwinian doctrines itself, this keen and resolute seeker of truth triumphantly draws an evidence of the existence of a Great Creator.

It is well, therefore, that it should be clearly understood, on the authority of an eminent scientist such as Dr. Dallinger, that there is nothing in the scientific facts Darwin brought to light which conflicts with the vital truths of Christianity; while Dr. Dallinger has himself proved, to use his own words, "that there is an absolute gulf between matter in a living state and matter in a state not living, in even the lowest forms. Therefore the conclusion is, that the whole series of living things originated in a primal and competent creative act, although the *method* of doing this may reveal itself to our present knowledge by no discontinuity in the order or succession of creative progress."

As a result of this work, Dr. Dallinger was elected a Fellow of the Royal Microscopical Society, and subsequently President—a post which he held for four years. He was also elected Rede Lecturer to Cambridge University, and received a grant of £100 from the Royal Society to aid in the prosecution of these researches. In 1880 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and about the same time became "Governor," or Principal, of Wesley College, Sheffield. For many years he has been on the staff of lecturers in the interests of the Gilchrist Educational Trust Funds; and, at the request of the Committee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, he visited Montreal to deliver one of the lectures before the Association when in session there, and while in that city received the degree of LL.D. from the Victoria University. He has also delivered the Fernley Lecture, in 1887, the title being "The Creator, and what we may Know of the Method of Creation."

After being the Principal of Wesley College, Sheffield, for about eight years, Dr. Dallinger left at his own instance, being desirous of devoting all his time and energy to working out more fully the problems still remaining in the biological work to which he had devoted so many years; and at the Wesleyan Conference, or annual parliament of the denomination, last year (1888), he, with a few others, was released from circuit work—*i.e.*, from the charge of a stated pastorate—and appointed a special preacher of the Society. Thus he might almost say, "The world is my parish;" for he may be called to preach at any Wesleyan church in the kingdom, though he has a discretionary right of refusal or selection The appointment of these special preachers is, we may say in passing, one of the new features lately introduced into the methods of Methodism.

The removing of Dr. Dallinger from Sheffield was made the occasion of a very remarkable demonstration, which was, in its way, quite cosmopolitan. At a large and enthusiastic town's meeting, the Mayor presiding, a silver salver was presented to Mrs. Dallinger, and a purse of money to her distinguished husband. Clergymen and ministers of various denominations were present, including the vicar of Sheffield (Archdeacon Blakeney).

Dr. Dallinger has now taken up his abode in a commodious house towards the end of a quiet and pleasant road in one of the London suburbs, in the South-East district. There, in as great quietude as is perhaps obtainable near the great city, he can pursue his studies. There two front rooms—one on the ground floor and the other on the first floor above it—have been quite remodelled and refitted (from his own designs) for use as his library and laboratory respectively. The whole of the front in each case has been made into a large bow-shaped window, so that as much light as possible can be obtained in the room. Tight-fitting sliding shutters are placed on the windows in the room above, so that (as sometimes happens) if the complete exclusion of the light of day is necessary for his work, it can be obtained. The great love of Dr. Dallinger for art is seen in the colouring, and carvings, and designs of the wood or other work, and in the beautiful little statuettes and busts and drawings which aid in giving grace and beauty to these delightful rooms.

In the library down-stairs, on a table before the window, is a superb microscope, which is in its way quite a marvel of mechanism. It can be turned with ease in any direction without disturbing the object under examination. This, like all his microscopes, Dr. Dallinger keeps under a glass case, while shaded paraffin lamps, in elegant brass brackets or suspended from the ceiling, diffuse a cool white light. He could not, he said, subject his instruments to gas.

A bust of Mr. Ruskin—of whom Dr. Dallinger is a personal friend and (as an art critic) a warm admirer—stands before the books on the left. He is also the happy and fortunate possessor of a complete set of first editions of Mr. Ruskin's works, and he has also a choice collection of selected editions of the British poets and of Professor Max Müller's editions of "Sacred Books of the East." In the large and handsome sets of book-shelves which line the greater part of two of the sides of the library are placed the volumes which apply to poetry, philosophy, art, and theology, while up-stairs in the laboratory is a most complete collection of English works on microscopy and those dealing with his scientific labours.

Dr. Dallinger has twelve first-class microscopes, all of which are more or less in constant use. Some of them are placed on low tables of their own in a line along the laboratory, each with an easily and ingeniously removable glass shade over it, a chair (made to admit of considerable changes in height, like a music-stool) near it, and a slab of glass forms the top of the table in front of each microscope. Glass was chosen because it can be easily cleaned. To give some idea of the perfection of the arrangements, we may say that parts of the tables on which the microscopes stand can be removed or replaced without

disturbing the instrument in the least, so that the operator can sit down to it at any time, and, by removing the parts of the table on either side, can have complete command of his microscope at once. A large semicircular table, which permits the operator to sit at it with the table all round him, and which is carefully fitted with drawers, is used for special kinds of work, and stands in the window. On the right, as one looks to the window, is a well-appointed sink and apparatus for dissections, etc. There is here a most beautiful instrument for obtaining very minute sections of any object to be examined by the microscope. The wall is lined with encaustic tiles of Dr. Dallinger's own design, representing Music and Science and Art, and executed in beautifully toned colours; also bearing, as a motto, Wordsworth's line—

'To the solid ground of Nature trusts the mind that builds for aye."

As may be supposed, Dr. Dallinger makes frequent references to the works of nature in his sermons. In preparing them, he relies but little upon commentaries or upon expositions. In each sermon he aims always at the development of a theme or idea, and endeavours to thoroughly work it out and carry it home to his hearers. In doing this he has found his resources from a knowledge of nature provide a rich and attractive method of illustration.

Dr. Dallinger writes his sermons out first in full; then he prepares special and ample pulpit notes. These he can use with great ease, but in fact he frequently does not use them, his sermons being often delivered almost extempore. But this complete preparation for the pulpit he regards as an element of success. It prevents discursiveness, and gives terseness and closeness to the speech. Generally a sermon occupies him a couple of days to think out and prepare, sometimes longer, according to the nature of the subject. He decidedly advises the study of elocution, but it should be directed to the most absolute naturalness and avoidance of mannerism. For effectiveness there is nothing that will compare with a deep sympathy with the subject and earnestness in proclaiming it.

When in Liverpool, Dr. Dallinger's ministry was attended by an increasing interest, which reached far beyond his own denomination, and again at Sheffield the same thing occurred. Here boys and young men formed a large part of his congregation, and some of his subjects were Christian manliness and the importance of purity of motive. He has felt the importance of dealing with great moral principles, and carrying them home to the common life of men, seeking rather to teach them the spirit in which all work should be done and the responsibilities of life discharged, than to bind them with a network of rules.

In preaching to and dealing with boys, he has especially found frankness and sympathy to be of great service. He would put before them frankly the possible dignity and greatness of the human mind, and the immense responsibility attaching to our moral nature. He would claim in the name of religion the enjoyment of all that it is possible for us, with nobility of spirit, to enjoy. One of his characteristic sayings is, "No man can ever be noble who thinks meanly or contemptuously of himself, and no man can ever be noble who thinks first and only of himself." High aims and a manly self-reliance, with confidence in God—these are the elements, he thinks, which, if taught boys and youths in a plain and earnest manner, with pertinent illustration from nature, are sure to arrest their minds and awaken their consciences; and he makes a point of appealing to the intellect and reasoning powers, as well as to the moral and religious nature.

One very remarkable illustration of the great confidence reposed in Dr. Dallinger is that he yearly receives a very large and increasing number of letters from men of varied social positions, including those at the Universities, who are manifestly anxious to be helped to believe. These letters Dr. Dallinger most industriously and scrupulously answers, and frequently receives replies thanking him, and telling him of the good effected by his letters. Dr. Dallinger has also had exceptional opportunities of coming into contact with intelligent working men, and he believes that men are much more disturbed as to whether the foundations of faith are being shaken than they are by any voluntary desire to yield to unfaith or agnosticism. It is the duty of ministers to concern themselves anxiously with the difficulties of the times, and acquaint themselves with the forms in which those difficulties may come. "There is," said Dr. Dallinger, "an immense amount of growing intelligence among the working men of this country, and to enable them to remain in enlightened association with the Christian Church is one of the highest ends to be sought by any ministry." And he is decidedly of opinion that no young minister is properly furnished nowadays for the ministry unless he have a general comprehension of the principles, and have mastered the spirit, of modern science, so that science can be pressed into the service of religion.
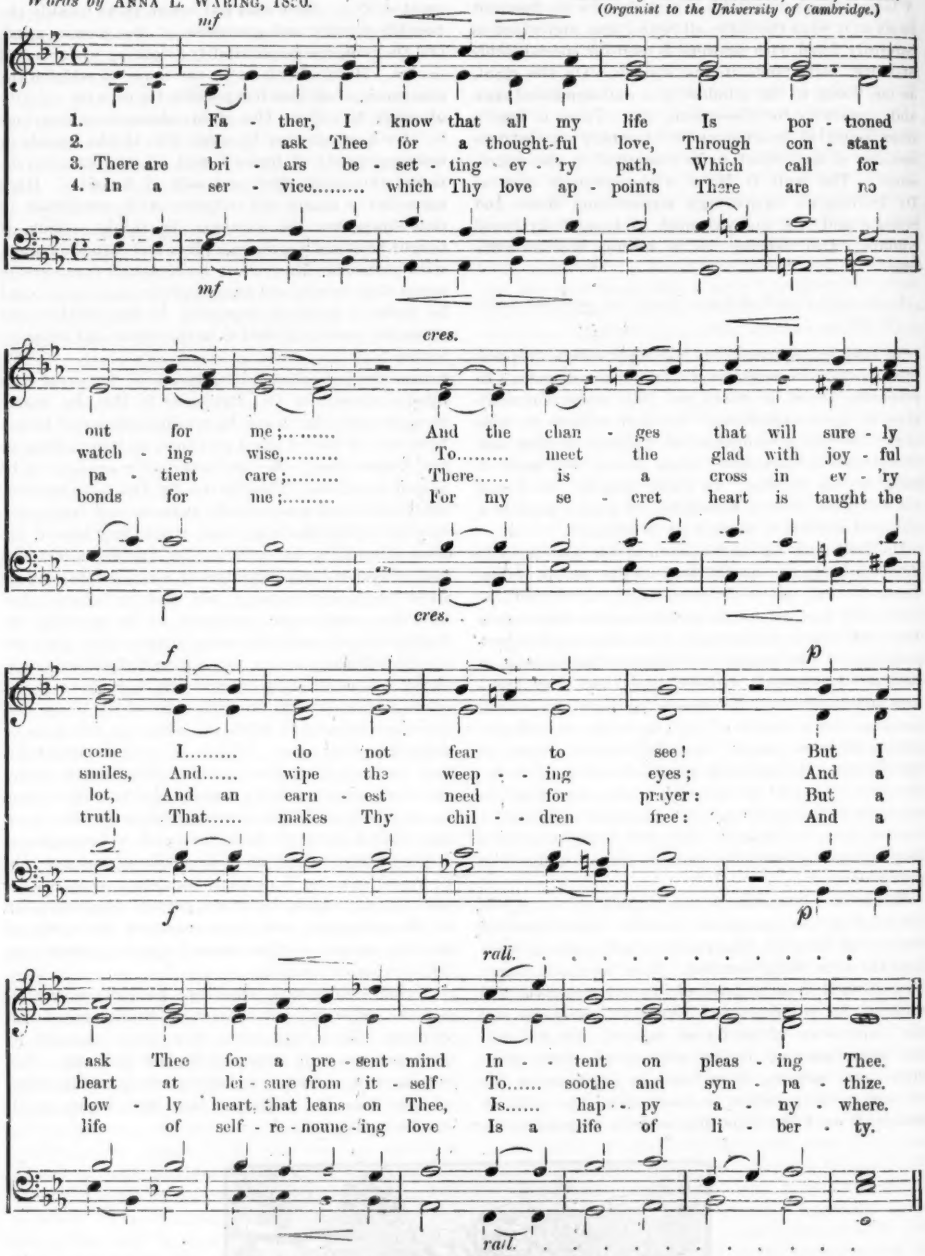
Rightly understood, therefore, physical science is not the opponent, but the loving handmaid, of real religion. Time was when they were supposed by some persons to be antagonistic, but that era is fast passing away. And it is largely owing to the efforts of men like Dr. Dallinger that this happy result has been obtained.



A Hymn of Faith.

Words by Anna L. Waring, 1850.

Music by G. M. Garrett, M.A., Mus.D.
(Organist to the University of Cambridge.)



Note.—The two chords at the beginning must be used in the 3rd and 4th verses only. The crotchets in bar 7 must be sung as one minim in verses 2 and 3. The ties in bars 10 and 17 are not to be used in the 3rd or 4th verses.

A CALL BY THE UNKNOWN TO THE UNKNOWN.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., MORNING LECTURER AT ALL SAINTS' AND ST. AUGUSTINE'S, SOUTH LAMBETH.

"And He saith, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."—St. Matt. iv. 19.

I.

THE call of St. Andrew, received by the shore of the Sea of Galilee, was by the Unknown; yet not altogether by such; more correctly speaking, we must say, by the only partially Known. As regards what he was called *to*, it was not the wholly unknown; for Andrew had had some previous knowledge of Jesus. He had been a disciple of John the Baptist, and had heard him say, "Behold the Lamb of God!" To him that saying must have been highly enigmatical, but it made him follow Jesus; and, at Christ's invitation, he spent some time with Him, and no doubt heard much from Him, for "he findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias!" But to Andrew this was a very partial knowledge of the Christ; it could be only that of a Messiah according to the Jewish conception; he, in common with the rest, looked, in his after apostleship, for great earthly things.

Those mysterious words, "Behold the *Lamb* of God!" might, indeed, have now and again awakened in him a wondering thought; perhaps some of what Christ said to him that night might have done the same; but Andrew had no revelation of Christ as the Messiah that really was to be.

Nor could he have gathered any from the call. No explanation was given; no previous conversation took place. Jesus must have been to Andrew and Peter, when He gave them that call so suddenly and abruptly by the Sea of Galilee, to a great extent "the Unknown"; and all that He advances is a personal claim, and all that He promises is a new position, of which they could from their present position have the merest glimpse of what it might be—and they responded to the call of the "Unknown."

Here, to a certain extent, we must part company with Andrew and Peter; for the call of Christ can never be to us—looked at from its intellectual side—such a call from an "Unknown One" as it was to them. To us, the whole fields of the Gospels, and Revelation, lie open with their manifestations. We have been taught from our very infancy Who Jesus was and is; and yet every first call, and many of our after calls, by Christ come to us—be it more or less so, yet really—from the practically "Unknown."

And yet it is true that to many a sinner amongst us, born and bred in ignorance of everything except the bare name of Jesus; to many—to all heathen—Christ comes in the first call as wholly the Unknown. To the most enlightened amongst *us* (even to St. Paul, who said, "I know in Whom I have believed"), so partial is our knowledge, that, when Christ speaks to us, it is partially as the Unknown; and as such, wholly, must the sinner, in the first call, listen to and obey Him; as such, partially, must we listen and obey also.

Look at the sinner in his first call. Christ comes to him as a primary revelation. His views might be as dim as St. Paul's, when, as Saul of Tarsus, he said, "Who art Thou, Lord?"—as the penitent thief's—as the London slum-dweller's who "never heard of the gentleman," and asked, "Who might he be?" But we must not shrink from presenting to the sinner "the Unknown;" we must not fear that, as "the Unknown," there will be no prospect of His being received; it is Christ's own way, and it must be ours.

And so is it with the heathen. There are those who would educate the heathen up to Christianity; but mere education will never make a man desire Christ. The Chinese are perhaps the most highly educated people in the world, in their own literature; the Hindoos are subtle to excess in their own philosophy; we also have our philosophical schools, and, I suppose, are destined to be highly educated too—but all this can exist with no felt soul-need of Christ. In no country is infidelity more rife than in Germany—perhaps the really best-educated country in the world; but a mere historic Christ (which is all that education can tell of), looked at from His secular side, will always be one unknown when presented to the *soul's* eye first of all, and when the call comes to a man to become a disciple of this Christ.

And to ourselves—who, I hope, know something of Christ—will come calls which will be from our own Lord indeed, yet from Him as only partially Known. For "now" indeed, as the Apostle says, "do we only know in part." And herein lies a continual trial of our faith; and so, herein, lies a continual glorifying of Christ. A call responded to by the Sea of Galilee—the call of a world-unacknowledged Christ, of a partially known Messias—is more honouring to God than a call responded to, when made to a fulness of knowledge, and in fulness of light. The response of Andrew is greater than that of Saul. Of this last Apostle, as Paul, we hear much; of Andrew, but little; yet it seems to me that the unquestioning response by the Sea of Galilee is more than the terrified cry on the way to Damascus.

The Christian life is full of after-calls of Christ; and in many of them he is to us but partially—only very partially—known. For all Christian life, like all national life, is progressive in development, and

in what calls out development too. The exercises of the man are different from those of the child; as his mind and his muscles expand, they have new calls made upon them, and by these calls they grow.

The Christian is exercised in the direction of which I am speaking now. He has to believe and to act with nothing but the voice of Christ to guide him, and but little information vouchsafed to him.

"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," must be his comfort and his stay. Like Philip, all that he hears may be a voice to "go down to the place which is desert;" but in obedience, he—even as Philip did, and as Andrew and Peter did—will find the blessing.

In these calls upon us to do this and that at the voice of Christ, you will often have to act simply in the power of obedience and faith. It was so with Andrew and Peter; it is so with all Missionaries; it is so with all Christians—with you. If you were to ask me what passed between these disciples and Christ which made them so willing to obey His call, which made them take up with so strange a notion as that they should be "fishers of men." I answer you, "I cannot tell." If you are asked, "Why have you given yourself to Christ?" I hope you will, while, as the Apostle says, being "able to give a reason for the hope that is within you," still say, "I cannot tell. True! I have heard of my need, and of His grace; but so I had long before I thought of giving myself to Him." Ah! the secret is the drawings of the Holy Ghost, both on those Apostles and on you.

But there is one thing which you must mark, for it is of great importance. There was here a bringing together of intense personalities; and wherever there is this there must be power. "*I* will make *you*." *He* was to make *them* something of which they had never heard before; something which was to be better than what they had ever been yet. But there is no intervening process announced. I do not say that such intervening processes were not to exist, and did not afterwards develop; there were to be many teachings of their Lord before they could become able fishers of men: Andrew, *e.g.*, had a teaching, and that with the very fishes with which he was so familiar. "One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto Him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down." Then, with those loaves and fishes, He fed the multitude. That was a teaching!—and an unlearned one, as you read in St. Matt. xvi. 9: "Do ye not yet understand, neither remember, the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" But, here, all that there was, was the bringing together of the "I" and the "you."

Yes! all after-processes will come in God's good time and way; what we have to do with is the personality of Christ, and our own—to hear Him saying, "*I*"—to hear Him saying it to "*me*"; He promising and commanding, I believing and obeying—that is all. And the missionary who can go forth with, if it need be, nothing but the bringing together of these close personalities, will go forth with power, and will be made a "fisher of men."

There may be much needed to make him a successful one: experiences, discipline, providences, disappointments; but all these may be left to the One Who has promised. What is needed to outfit the fisherman, and to fit him for his work, will come from Him Whose work it is. There will be a developed revelation all round—of Christ, of the work to be done, of the way in which we are to do it, whatever our work may be.

But let us turn for a moment to ourselves. How is Christ, and how must Christ be to us (in varying degrees, perhaps, but still in some degree at least) partially "the Unknown"?

It is not the believer here to-day who will challenge me on this subject, and say that he knows Christ well enough. The more we advance in the divine life, and the more we know of Christ, the more we know that there is ever so much beyond us which we do not know. Well might the Apostle say, "We know in part." Well might the Apostle cry out, "That I may know Him!" Little did we know of the extent of His love when He called us; little do we know of it now, little of His wisdom, little of His authority—all these have to unfold, and they will unfold; but at first it is simply Christ calls, and we obey.

And, indeed, it requires faith; faith all round, faith in the "I," faith in the "you," faith in the "make," faith to believe that there is something very good that we shall be made—something quite beyond ourselves, as was the case with the Apostles, when it was promised that they should be made "fishers of men;" and they believed the word.

The right study of this verse would half furnish a missionary for His work. If he could grasp it—live it out—it would make him a man of wisdom and of power. And it will do much for you. The "Unknown," in the One Who calls you, will not hinder you in your obedience to any call—however, wherever, and to whatsoever it may come.

II.

But next:—We have to think for a moment or two upon this as a call *to* the Unknown.

It was so in every aspect. "Follow Me!" Whither? It was all unknown. To what? To be fishers of men; this calling was all unknown. How were they to be so made? That, too, was of necessity unknown; and not a word of explanation was then vouchsafed.

But we know, to some extent at least, what is meant by being a "fisher of men." It was a call from the lower to the higher. And such is every call of Christ, and every such call involves "the unknown." Christ can give no call other than this. He cannot call from the higher to the lower. He

may indeed appear to humble us by some position which He calls us to take up; but that is only as a means to an end. He is ever moving His people up higher. There is an abundance of revelations where there is the thorn in the flesh. What happened to Andrew and Peter happens to us. It is the law of progression in the spiritual life. Christ "putteth forth His own sheep, and goeth before them; but they often know not whither: all they know is that He is going on before. He speaks to us, and there is a demand made upon our faith, and our faith in *Him*. But remember that it involves *obedience*—that is all that is required of us; all else has to be left to Him. I wish we realised this—it would be a great help to us. For we are continually troubling ourselves about what we have no concern with, *how* things are to be *done*, *how* things will *turn out*. And we may—and we do—fret ourselves immensely on these points, and nothing comes of it after all. Let us just go back to simple obedience; that, at least, is easily understood. Our Lord's words might well again be spoken to us—"What is that to thee; follow thou Me." The way of the work, the measure and nature of the reward—everything—leave it all; as Andrew and Peter did, who simply heard a call, and rose and followed Christ.

But let me comfort you concerning one thing in the midst of these—it may be—somewhat hard demands upon your faith. Remember that there is a great difference between the "unknown" and the "Unknowable." The "Unknowable" is the name which some philosophers of the present day give to God; though, as Agnostics, they cannot say whether there be a God at all.

You need only take down your concordance to see the numbers of texts which speak of man's knowing God, to show you that in part He can be known, even as in part He cannot.

With the Unknowable in God we have nothing now to do. I make no doubt that much of this will be revealed when our present faculties are exalted, and our present affections purified, and, it may be, new capacities added to our nature. But all this I can afford to leave. It is enough for me that with the "Unknown" is the "Known," and that the "Known" is so good that it tells me that nothing but real good can be in the "Unknown."

The hints—the partial revelations of the present—might be the key to the future. These Apostles here had a dim revealing hint of what was to be, even in the enigmatical terms of their call. They were "fishers." They knew what that meant—labour, human uncertainty, lowly occupation, great toil, and gain, the winning of the fish from the waste of water; these gave them a hint when it was said that they should be made "fishers of men." They were put on a track of thought which nothing but after-experience could unfold.

Obedience is always followed by development on Christ's part.

God give us grace not to fear any calls to the "Unknown," whether they be in life or death. There are solemnities of the "Unknown" in each. There is that in each which nothing but a bringing of Christ and ourselves together—close together—with nothing between, will enable us to be comforted in, or to go forward as Abraham did, not knowing whither he went—yet in assurance and in peace.

Only be sure you hear the words, "Follow Me;" only be sure that He is on before; only be sure of some good "I will" of promise; only have—even if it be but dim—yet some expectation of great destiny.

Then the two simple lines of the hymn now so often sung will sum up all your outlook for time and for eternity, and all your reason for obedience and for faith—

> "Peace! perfect peace! the future all unknown—
> Jesus we know, and He is on the throne."

And now take one teaching, and that direct from the Gospel which records the call.

You will observe that the first call of the first Apostles contained within it prophetic elements of expansion. Andrew and Peter were called; but it was not for themselves alone—"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

A like word came to Andrew's companion, Peter, farther on—"When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." A like word came to them all—"Freely ye have received, freely give." These all are only exemplifications of a great law, that "No man liveth to himself."

Accept, reader, the teachings which come to you through the Apostle St. Andrew. Accept all the teachings which God the Holy Ghost may give you direct on this subject, and those which, I trust, He has sent to you in these words. They will help you in hard passes of spiritual calls and temporal too, and God knows these are hard at times. They will comfort you, they will strengthen you, they will elevate you, they will make you live for others as well as for yourself, and, if only you have ears to hear, and a heart to understand, and a will to obey them, there is not one amongst my readers to whom, in some form or another, Jesus does not say to-day—

"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."



"He contented himself with stretching out his hands in a mute gesture of blessing."—*p.* 362.

'TO THE LIONS!'

A TALE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS. BY THE REV. PROFESSOR CHURCH, M.A.

CHAPTER XI.—A MARTYR'S TESTIMONY.



"He contented himself with stretching out his hands in a mute gesture of blessing."—*p. 362.*

THE young Lucilius was still hovering between life and death when the long-expected answer from the Emperor arrived at Nicæa. It was exactly the document that anyone acquainted with the character of Trajan might have expected. Above all things he was a soldier, and had a soldier's regard for discipline and obedience. Where these were concerned he was inflexible.

Certain forms of worship were sanctioned by the State; all others were forbidden. Anyone who adhered to these forbidden rites and refused, when called upon, to abandon them, was breaking down the established order of things, and must be punished. He might believe what he liked in his own heart—with belief the State had nothing to do—but in practice he must conform to certain rules. Refusal was an act of rebellion; the thing might be the merest trifle in itself, but the principle concerned was at the foundation of all order.

The practical application was perfectly simple. Those who had acknowledged themselves to be Christians, and persisted in the acknowledgment, were to be punished. But the offence was of such a kind that every loophole should be left by which the accused might escape, so long as the principle remained unimpaired. These were not a set of criminals whom it would be desirable to bring into the grasp of the law, by stopping every way of escape. On the contrary, ways of escape must be made easy and multiplied for them. The simple denial of anyone that he belonged to the society of Christians was to be accepted. There was to be no question about the time to which the denial referred, so that it at least referred to the present. If a man affirmed, "I have ceased to be a Christian," there was to be no curious inquiry as to when his withdrawal took place.

But the most practically important direction in the Emperor's rescript referred to the anonymous informations. All proceedings founded on them were to be annulled. Roman law took no cognisance of such things; and persons accused under them were to be treated as if their names had never come before the court. The immediate result of this order was a release of a number of prisoners. Of the two Roman citizens who had appealed to Cæsar, one—the Elder, Anicetus—was sent back into the province. The Emperor had heard his cause, and condemned him. The Governor was to deal with him on the spot, where the spectacle of his punishment might act as a salutary deterrent to his followers. The old knight, Antistius, by a merciful ordering of Providence, had passed beyond the reach of his judges. On the morning of the day on which he was to appear before the tribunal of Cæsar he had been found dead in his bed.

The Governor's first duty, on the reassembling of the court, was to deal with the prisoner who had been thus remitted to him. The Elder was placed before the tribunal, and the Governor addressed him:—

"Anicetus, or (as I should rather call you by the Roman name which, however unworthily, you bear) Lucius Cornelius: the Emperor, having heard you on your appeal and confirmed the sentence which was here passed upon you, has remitted you to my jurisdiction, thinking it well that you should suffer the penalty of your misdeeds in the same place wherein you have committed them. I should do no wrong were I, without further parley, to hand you over to the executioner. Nevertheless, I am persuaded that, in the great clemency of our gracious lord and Emperor, Trajan Augustus, he will approve my offering you yet another opportunity of repentance. Are you willing to renounce, now, at the last moment, this odious superstition which you have been convicted of holding, against the laws of the Senate and People of Rome?"

"For your clemency," said the Elder in reply, "I heartily thank both Trajan Augustus and yourself, most excellent Plinius. Yet, were I to accept it on the conditions which you offer, I should be casting away that which, for my whole life, I have held most precious. That which you call an odious superstition I do verily believe to be a truth worthy of all love and honour. The laws of the Senate and People of Rome I have ever most scrupulously obeyed, and to the Emperor I have ever been faithful and loyal. But there are laws to which I am yet more bound, and a Master whom I must prefer even to Augustus himself. But these things you have heard already, nor is there any need that I should repeat them. Let me not waste your time any further, nor do you delay to give me that which I hold to be more precious than all other things—the crown of martyrdom."

The executioner was summoned into court, and took his place in front of the tribunal. The Governor then pronounced his formal sentence:—

"In virtue of the power of life and death specially delegated to me in the case of the citizen Lucius Cornelius (commonly called Anicetus) by our Lord

Trajan Augustus, I hereby hand over to you the body of the said Lucius Cornelius. Take him to the third milestone on the road to Nicomedia, and there strike off his head with the axe. In consideration of his blameless life, I grant to him, as a special favour, that he be neither blindfolded nor bound. Of this sentence let there be immediate execution, of which execution I require that testimony be given me before sunset this day."

The court was adjourned till the next day, when the remainder of the prisoners would be dealt with. An interval of two hours was conceded to the condemned man. This the Governor's humanity permitted him to spend with his fellow-prisoners.

Of earthly ties he had none. His wife—for in those days it was held a duty, as the Eastern Church still holds it, for a Christian minister to be a husband—had entered into her rest some two years before. His marriage had been childless, and his brothers and sisters had predeceased him. Hence he could give up the time that had been allowed him to comforting and strengthening his brethren and sisters in the faith.

To Cleon, the young Phrygian slave who had fallen, and so manfully recovered his fall, he was especially tender. The unhappy youth was overwhelmed with shame and remorse.

"I have denied Him! I have denied Him!" he would go on repeating day after day, from morning till evening, and nothing that his fellow-prisoners could urge seemed to give him any comfort.

Anicetus was one of those who were accustomed to express somewhat stern views about the sin of the *lapsi* (those who fell away), but this was not a case in which he could insist on them. He even felt that to do so might be to place a fatal stumbling-block in the way of an imperilled soul. If this poor wretch was left in this despairing mood, he might even fall into the more deadly sin from which he had once been rescued.

"My son," were his parting words to the unhappy Cleon, "my son, listen to me, not only as to him whom God has entrusted with the charge of your soul, but as one to whom He has given the great privilege of witnessing for His truth in this place. You have sinned, but God has forgiven you, even as He forgave the blessed Peter. God pardon you; I pardon you in the name of the brethren."

He laid his hands upon the young man's head, and pronounced the solemn words of forgiveness. That finished, he gave him the kiss of peace, and so took the fallen back into the brotherhood of Christ.

We shall not have occasion to speak of the young slave again. Let it be sufficient to say that he suffered the next day the cruel death of crucifixion with an exemplary courage and patience. His agony, however, was not protracted as long as it was in the case of some sufferers, for the Governor, who had been struck with the real heroism with which he had struggled against the weakness of a timorous nature, gave instructions to the centurion in charge that death should be hastened with a spear-thrust.

To return to Anicetus. His solemn declaration of forgiveness to the penitent Phrygian was but just spoken when the presence of the executioner was announced.

"I am ready," he said to the apparitor who summoned him. Then turning to his fellow-prisoners, he stretched out his hands, "The blessing of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be upon you. Pray for me, and for yourselves, that we may be faithful and steadfast to the end. So shall we be together in Paradise."

The procession of death moved through the city. In front was a guard of half a century of soldiers. They were armed with swords only, and wore no armour beyond their helmets. Then came the executioner, carrying his axe with the edge turned towards the condemned man, who had also a soldier fully armed on either side. The remainder of the century marched behind him. A vast concourse of all ages followed. No man was better known to the poor of the city of Nicæa, and no one certainly more beloved than Anicetus. He had fulfilled to the utmost the apostolic precept, "Do good unto all men," putting less stress, perhaps, than some of his brethren thought right, on the words that follow, "especially unto them that are of the household of faith." It was no idle curiosity, therefore, that brought this great crowd to see him die. To judge from their dress, one would have said that they came from the rabble of the city; but they followed with a silence and an order that would not have misbecome the funeral of the first citizen of the place.

At the spot appointed for the execution there was an open space of about an acre in extent. The milestone stood where four roads met, and close to it, as marking where the territory of Nicæa touched that of a neighbouring township, stood one of the statues of the god Terminus, the boundary-marker, a roughly hewn pedestal of granite, surmounted with a human bust of the rudest shaping. In old time it had been an object of reverence, and had been daily adorned with fresh garlands of flowers or evergreens, according as the season served. Two or three of these still hung from it, but they were dry and withered, and the decaying fragments of others, which no one had taken the pains to clear away, lay at the base of the pedestal; while the pedestal itself had long leaned somewhat out of the perpendicular. It was a type of the neglect into which the old worship was everywhere falling. Possibly this was the motive that made the Governor choose the spot as the place of execution.

The block was placed close to the pedestal. The soldiers drew a *cordon* round it, but as the ground rose somewhat on all sides, this did not shut out the view from the crowd which thronged the whole of the open space. The centurion in command had forbidden the condemned man to address the spectators, and Anicetus, always obedient to lawful commands, so that they did not trench on higher duties, did not attempt to speak. He contented himself with stretching out his hands in a mute gesture of blessing. Many of those who could see him bowed their heads in reverence, and, dangerous as it was to show anything like sympathy with the faith of the sufferer, some even fell upon their knees. All kept a silence

which was almost terrible in its depth and intensity. Then, after a pause, which seemed to the strained attention of the crowd to last for hours, the executioner raised his axe and struck. It was a strong and skilful blow, nor was there any need to repeat it. The head of the martyr fell upon the ground, and the blood, spouting out in a torrent, drenched the pedestal of the god.

And then followed one of those strange occurrences which we may or may not call miracles, but which are certainly signs; so full are they of meaning, and not the less truly signs because they come from causes strictly natural. The statue of the boundary-god had been leaning, as has been said, for some time out of the perpendicular, and the piety of the two townships, whose borders it marked, had not been active enough to restore it. Anyone might have known that but a little impulse would be sufficient to overthrow it; and this impulse was given by the slight shock of an earthquake at the very moment when the martyr's blood spurted on the pedestal. The half-suppressed groan which had followed when the headsman's axe was seen or heard to fall was checked; first, by the sensation of terror as the spectators felt the ground reel, as it were, under their feet, and then by awe as the statue of the god was observed first to totter and then to fall.

No one in all that great assembly was so dull as not to read something of the future when this ancient landmark—symbol as it was held to be of all that was most stable—was removed, as it were, from its place by the touch of the martyr's blood. If the champions of the old faith had thought to advance their cause by that day's spectacle, they had signally failed. The "senseless earth," as the philosophers called it, had seemed to speak against them, and its voice had found its way into many hearts. Seldom has the saying been proved more true than it was that day, that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church."

It was an incidental result of this strange event that the friends of Anicetus were allowed, without hindrance, to take possession of his remains. Commonly the authorities took care to dispose of them otherwise. In the consternation that followed the fall of the statue this care was forgotten, and the Elder's body was quietly removed, and accorded Christian burial.

CHAPTER XII.—A DISCOVERY.

"THE mills of God," says an old writer, "grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small;" and Lucilius was beginning to find out this truth for himself. Again and again he bitterly reproached himself for lending his help to the conspiracy which had been hatched in the wine-shop of Theron. So far, none of the gains that he had expected to flow in from the confiscated estates had reached his coffers. Antistius, who was a really wealthy man, had died (as has been said) in Rome, and it was a doubtful point who would benefit by his property. Would it go where the appeal had been decided—that is, in the Capitol—or where he had been condemned in the first instance? The provincial claimant might have the better right in law, but Lucilius knew perfectly well that when such rights came into collision with the demands of the Imperial purse, they were pretty sure to go to the wall. Anicetus had been far too generous in his lifetime to leave anything behind him after his death. Most of the richer among the accused had saved their properties as well as their lives by denying their faith. In short, the speculation, so far, had been a failure.

On the other hand, the prospect at home grew darker and darker. Whatever feeling his long-indulged habit of avarice had left him was centred in his son, and this son's life was trembling in the balance. At first it had seemed a lucky chance that brought the two sisters to his house. They had kept the boy alive. Latterly, Rhoda's increasing weakness had compelled her to give up her share in the nursing, and Cleoné had assumed the whole.

She was simply indispensable to the boy. It was from her hand only that he would take food or drink. When his delirium was at its worst, it was her hand that soothed and quieted him. But if she had to leave him, it would have been better that she had never come.

The old physician was furious at the thought. All his cases interested him deeply, but in this he was especially wrapt up. Never had he fought against disease more pertinaciously and more skilfully, and never had he been more ably helped by the physician's best ally, a good nurse. It was simply maddening to him to have this assistance removed, for the loss meant defeat. He cursed with impartial rage everyone concerned in the matter: the busybodies who had stirred up the movement against the Christians; the foolish obstinacy—for so he described it—which made these people cling to their absurd superstition.

But nothing could be done. The Emperor's commands had to be executed, and all persons who had confessed their adherence to the Christian faith would have to be dealt with according to law. Among these were the two sisters. A formal demand was made by the officials upon Lucilius for their surrender, and he had no alternative but to submit. They were included in the company of prisoners arraigned before the Governor's tribunal on the day that followed the execution of Anicetus. Lucilius was among the crowd of spectators which thronged the court-house, and awaited the result with feelings of despair.

Nothing could save the sisters. He knew them too well to have the least hope that they would renounce their faith to save their lives. A vague suggestion to that effect on which he had once ventured during the time of their sojourn in his house, had been received by Cleoné with a scorn that brought conviction to his mind. Their condemnation, then, was certain.

Hard-hearted as he was, he could not contemplate this result with indifference. They had lived in his house for some weeks. Their grace and goodness, seen in the close intercourse of family life, had touched him as he had never dreamt of being touched, and he shuddered at the thought of their being handed over to the shame and torture of the slave's death.

And then there was the thought of his son. Even if he were to battle through the disease without the help



"He stood nervously shifting his cap from one hand to the other."—*p.* 366.

of his nurse, what would be the result when he heard, as hear he must, of the horrible fate which had overtaken her? The wretched man groaned aloud when he thought of what the future had in store for him.

He was roused from the stupor of despair into which he had fallen by the voice of the court-crier calling aloud the names of Rhoda and Cleoné. Rhoda was described as an *ancilla*, *i.e.*, a female slave, and as a deaconess attached to a certain unlawful society which called itself by the name of Christus. Cleoné was also described as being of servile condition.

When the clerk of the court had finished reading what we may call the indictment, the Governor addressed the prisoners. "The clemency of our most gracious lord and master, Trajan Augustus, has ordered that even for the most obstinate offenders there should be provided a place of repentance, if only, even at the last moment, they will submit themselves to lawful authority, and renounce their obstinate adherence to a mischievous superstition. Therefore I call upon you, Rhoda, for the last time. Are you willing to burn incense to the statue of the divine Trajan, and to curse this Christus, whom you superstitiously and rebelliously have honoured as a God?"

Rhoda had remained seated during the proceedings. Her weakness did not permit her to stand with the rest of the prisoners. She now rose, and confronted the Governor. Fear she had never known; and, for the moment, her bodily strength seemed to have been restored to her.

"I thank the Emperor," she said, in a voice which never faltered for a moment, "for the clemency which he offers, though I cannot but refuse the conditions. For him, as our ruler appointed by God, I pray all blessings; and especially light, that he may discern the truth. Such honour as a man may receive, I willingly pay; more I refuse; for it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.' That I should blaspheme my Lord and Saviour is a thing too monstrous to be thought, much more spoken."

"What say you, Cleoné?" went on the Governor, addressing himself to the other sister.

"I am of one mind with my sister. I will not worship a man; neither will I blaspheme my God."

"Rhoda and Cleoné," said the Governor, "are condemned to suffer the punishment of death in such manner as is customary with those of servile condition."

At this moment a commotion was heard at the back of the court. The young Greek, Clitus, whose acquaintance we have already made in his character as Cleoné's suitor, made his way with difficulty through the crowd that besieged the door into the body of the chamber. He had just arrived in Nicæa, and his dress bore the marks of travel.

"My lord," he said, addressing the Governor, "is it permitted me to speak on a matter of urgency, which concerns the administration of justice in this matter, and especially the case of the two prisoners Rhoda and Cleoné?"

Rhoda, who had sunk again into her seat, seemed not to notice this interruption of the proceedings. But Cleoné turned an eager look upon the speaker. She had never seen or even heard of the young Greek since the day on which they had spoken together among the vines. She had striven to school herself into the persuasion that it was well that it should be so. He had spoken of love in days past, it was true, but all was now changed. He was a citizen of Rome, and had it not been proved that she was a slave? In any case, there was henceforth a hopeless separation between them. And then, what had she, a condemned woman, to do with thoughts of love? No, it was well that he had not attempted to hold any communication with her. It was only what prudence, and even duty, dictated—that he should keep aloof. So she had thought, or tried to think. Nevertheless, her heart gave a glad bound when she knew that, after all, he had not forgotten her; and the exalted look on her face, which showed how she had braced herself up to confess and suffer, changed to a softer and more tender expression as she listened to what he said.

"Speak on," said the Governor, "if you have anything of importance to engage the ear of the court."

The young Greek proceeded. "Your excellency is aware that the two women Rhoda and Cleoné, hitherto reputed daughters of one Bion and Rhoda his wife, were adjudged to be of servile condition on testimony by which it was proved that they were not in truth

daughters of the said Bion, but were castaway children, adopted by him and his wife.

"I have now to bring under your excellency's notice the terms of an Imperial rescript quoted by yourself in this court last December, as settling a certain question concerning the condition of exposed children submitted by you to the Emperor. These terms were in substance as follows—your Excellency will correct me if I am wrong, but I took them down in writing at the time, as seeming to me to be of great importance:—'*If it should be proved that children so exposed were born of free parents, their free condition shall not be held to have been impaired by such exposure.*' This, my lord, is exactly what I am now prepared to prove of the two women Rhoda and Cleoné. And first I will, with your permission, produce the witness on whose testimony I chiefly rely, though indeed it can easily be confirmed by other evidence."

"Inform the court of the name and condition of this witness. But it will promote the ends of justice if you will first inform us of your own proceedings in this case, and of how you were led to believe that our adjudication needed to be corrected."

"My lord," began the young advocate, "it must have occurred to you and to others who were present on the first day of trial, as certainly it occurred to me, that nature had committed, if I may so speak, a strange freak when she ordered that maidens of an appearance so noble, so worthy of freedom, should be born of slaves."

"The thought was not unreasonable," said the Governor; "but such eccentricities are not unknown, and the evidence seemed to support the presumption."

"Further, my lord, I was aware that this nobility was not of appearance only, but of mind also and disposition, for I had been admitted into the home of Bion, the reputed father of the two, and know that none could be more worthy of respect and love."

Cleoné cast down her eyes, blushing to hear these praises from her lover's lips.

"But I will leave suppositions, my lord, and proceed to facts. I gathered from the evidence that there was a secret connected with the birth of these two children—that the only person who had been known to be cognisant of this secret was a certain nurse, and that this person was now deceased. It was also proved that, when about to die, she had refused to communicate the knowledge that she evidently possessed. The only hope that seemed to me to remain was, if I could discover that there had been some other person who had shared, or might be supposed likely to have shared, in this knowledge. I made many inquiries for such a person, and for a long time could hear of none. Her husband had been long dead. She had left no children behind her. But at last I heard from a woman of the same age, who is yet alive, that she had a brother who followed the occupation of a shepherd. All that I could learn about him was that he had suddenly disappeared from this neighbourhood; that some supposed that he had been drowned, but others doubted, seeing that his body had never been found. Here, then, my inquiries seemed to have an end.

But now, my lord, listen to what followed. Your excellency sent me on business, wholly unconnected with this matter, to a certain village on the borders of Phrygia. It was finished sooner than I had expected, and as I could not return till my horse had had a day's rest, I had some time to spare. I spent it in wandering about the downs which are above the village, and in the course of my walks I fell in with an old shepherd. The man interested me with his talk, which touched upon more things than such a man commonly knows. He happened



"He fell swooning upon the floor."—*p.* 368.

to let fall something, from which I gathered that he knew this town. When I asked him a question about it, he seemed unwilling to speak. I pressed him. Something seemed to warn me that by chance, if there is such a thing as chance, I had found the man whom I wanted."

"You are a student," interrupted the Governor, "and you know doubtless how one of your historians speaks of an 'inspired chance.' It was that, if I remember right, which made the baby Cypselus smile in the face of the men who came to murder him. Chance, I take it, is an ordering of things which we do not understand, and we may well call it inspired. But go on."

"Well, my lord, as I said, I pressed him, and he told me that he knew this town well. And then he gave me the story of how he came to leave it. But as this story bears directly upon the matter in hand, I would suggest, with your permission, that you should hear it from the man's own lips."

The witness, who had been waiting outside in the charge of one of the officers of the court, was called in. His face, curiously seamed with lines and wrinkles beyond all counting, indicated an extreme old age; but it was an age that was still vigorous and green. His blue eyes were bright and piercing. His hair was abundant, and showed amidst the prevailing grey much of the auburn which had been its colour in the days of his prime. His tall figure was but little bowed by years; and his broad shoulders, and sinewy arms (the right of them left bare by his one-sleeved tunic) showed that he might still be a match for many a younger man.

It was evident that the scene into which he had been brought was wholly strange to him, and that he was not at all at his ease. He had stood nervously shifting his red Phrygian cap from one hand to another, while his eyes roved restlessly over the crowded court.

"Tell us your name," said the Governor.

"My lord," said the man, in Greek, "let me first implore your protection." The refinement of his voice and accent contrasted curiously with his uncultured look. In garb he was a rustic of the rustics; but it might be seen that he had once been a dweller in cities.

"You can speak without fear," said the Governor.

"I shall have to say that which may be brought up against myself. It concerns years long past; but if the man against whom I offended still lives, he is not one of those who forgive."

"No one shall harm you if you will speak the truth. I promise it by the majesty of Augustus."

"More than twenty years ago I was steward in the household of a certain merchant in Nicæa."

"What was his name?" asked the Governor.

"With your permission, I will reserve this to the end of the story which I have to relate. I was a slave, but I had been well taught, and he trusted me with much of his business. I kept his accounts, and I knew much of his affairs. He was, at the time of which I speak, a man of about forty years of age. Five years before, he had married the only daughter of the merchant Lycophron of Nicomedia. Lycophron was reputed to be rich, and my master, who was very greedy after money, expected to inherit much wealth from him.

"Lycophron had given but a very small portion to his daughter on her marriage. This was a grievance with my master; but he hoped to have it made up to him. I have heard the two talking about it—they always spoke openly before me. 'Never mind,' the old man would say; 'there will be the more when you come to unseal the tablets,* and by that time you will know how to use it and keep it better.' This was a joke of the old man's, for no man could make more of money, or cared less for spending it, than my master.

"Well, at the time of which I am speaking, news came that old Lycophron was dead, and my master started at once for Nicomedia. He was not very willing, for my mistress was then not very well. Three days after, he came back. He was in a furious rage, and broke out as soon as he saw me. 'Listen, Geta,' he said: 'that old villain has deceived me. He has not left so much as a single drachma behind him. His house was mortgaged; the very bed on which he died was pledged. When I came to open his will—for he had the impudence to leave a will, though there was nothing to dispose of—I found written in it—"*The only possession of value that belongs to me I have already given away, to wit, my daughter Eubule. My son-in-law, who has now known for five years what a treasure he has found in her, will not be disappointed to know that I can give him nothing more.*" These were his very words. Yes; he palmed off his beggar's brat on me very cleverly. A treasure, indeed!'

"Just at this moment the nurse who had been attending on my mistress came into the room carrying two babies, one on each arm. Her face was wreathed in smiles, and she was so full of her own importance—as such women, I have observed, are wont to be—that she did not see what a state my master was in. 'Thank the gods, sir,' she said, 'who have given you two most beautiful daughters.'—'Curse them!' he began. By chance one of the children began to cry at the very moment, and the woman did not hear what he said. By the time she had quieted the baby he had recovered himself. He kissed the children, and went up to see his wife as soon as he was allowed to do so.

"Some days afterwards my mistress became very ill. Fever showed itself, and she became delirious. The children had to be taken from her, and brought up by a nurse. I think my master was getting reconciled to his disappointment, when, as bad luck would have it, he heard of another loss. This time it was his wife's brother had failed. He farmed some of the taxes of the province, and my master had become security for him. I heard him say to himself when he had read the letter that told him about it, 'This family will be my ruin.'

'That night, after I had been asleep about an hour, he woke me up. He looked very wild. I think his losses had half-crazed him. He was carrying a cradle, and the two babies were in it, lying head to feet, and sound asleep. 'Geta,'

* Wills were commonly written on tablets of wood.

he said, 'these children will be my ruin. If they were boys, now—but how can a beggar like me keep two girls? You must put them out on the hill.' —'Oh, master!' I said, 'not these beautiful babies!' —'It is better than strangling them,' he said.

"Well, I had scarcely a moment to think what was to be done. He looked as if he might do the poor things a mischief, so I made up my mind. 'Very well, master,' I said, 'it shall be done.'—'Their mother,' he said, 'knows nothing; perhaps never will know. Take them, and do it at once.' I got up and went out with the children. It was a stormy night, and raining in torrents. I was at my wits' end. Then a thought occurred to me. I had a sister, a nurse, living in the town; perhaps she might help me. I took the babies to her house, and told her the whole story.

"'You have come in time,' she said; 'I know of a home for the dear little beauties. It is with one of the best couples in the world, but the gods have not given them any children.'—'So be it,' I said; 'but you must swear that you will never tell where they came from.' So she took an oath, and I left them there. But I did not dare to go back to my master. I ran away, leaving my hat and shoes on the riverside, to make people think that I had been drowned. I made my way to a village in Phrygia, and took up a shepherd's business, in which I had had some experience when I was young. There I was when this young lawyer found me."

"And now tell us your master's name," said the Governor.

The whole audience listened in breathless silence for his answer.

"My master's name was Lucilius."

CHAPTER XIV.—A LETTER FROM TRAJAN.

"Is this man Lucilius in court?" asked the Governor of one of the officials.

"I saw him this morning, my lord," said the person addressed.

"Crier, call Lucilius."

The crier called the name, but there was no answer. The wretched man had listened to the evidence of the slave with growing apprehension which was soon changed into dismay. At first, indeed, he had wholly failed to recognise the man. The lapse of twenty years and more had of course made a great change in Geta's appearance. The old shepherd, tanned to an almost African hue by exposure to wind and sun, with his grizzled beard and moustache, and long, unkempt locks falling over his shoulders, and his roughly made garments of skin, was as different a figure as possible from the neat, well-dressed, closely shaven indoor servant whom Lucilius had known in time past. Still, some vague indication of the voice, as soon as the man began to speak, had troubled him; and of course little room had been left to him for doubt as soon as the man began to tell his story.

Lucilius was not so heartless but that he had often thought with regret of the two beautiful girl babies whom he had put out to die. The crime was indeed far too common in the ancient world to rouse the horror which it now excites. Indeed, it was a recognised practice. The fate of a newborn child was not considered to be fixed till the father by taking it up in his arms had signified his wish that it should be reared.

Still, the remembrance of that night's deed had troubled him. Prosperous days had soon come, and the losses which had infuriated him had been repaired. Then the grief of his wife, whom he loved with all the affection of which his nature was capable, had much troubled him. As a mere matter of domestic peace, her mourning for her lost darlings—though, as we shall see, she did not know of their actual fate—had destroyed all the comfort of his home. And for some years his home was childless. When, after an interval, a son was born, and, the mother forgot something of her grief in the care which she lavished upon him, the father was stricken by a new fear—what if this child should be taken from him by way of retribution for the hard-heartedness with which he had treated his first-born? Every ailment of infancy and childhood had made him terribly anxious; and he watched over the boy who was to carry out his ambitions with an apprehension such as the most timid of witnesses would have felt.

As the lad grew up these fears had fallen into the background. But we have seen how they had of late been revived, and, it seemed, justified. The shepherd's story made them more intense than ever, while it added a new horror. It was a hideous thought that he should have helped to doom his own daughters to torture and death; and he saw what would be the end when his son should know of it. The wretched man waited in court till he had heard enough to banish all doubt from his mind, and then hurried home, half expecting as he came near the house to hear the lamentations for the newly dead.

As a matter of fact, no change had taken place in the condition of the invalid. He had woke two or three times since the departure of Cleoné, but never so thoroughly as to become aware of her absence. He had taken mechanically from his mother's hand the nourishment offered him, and had almost instantly fallen asleep. The physician had just paid his morning visit, and was more hopeful. For the present at least the lad was doing well. But when the explanation had to be made, that was another matter altogether.

Lucilius entered the sick boy's chamber with a silent step. His wife took no notice of his coming; but when he stood fronting her on the opposite side of the bed, and she could not help seeing his face, her woman's heart was touched by its inexpressible misery. She went round to his side, and laid her hand with a caressing gesture on his arm.

"What ails you, my husband?" she said. "Our darling, I hope, is doing well. The good Dioscorides speaks well of him."

He made no answer, but, falling on his knees beside the bed, buried his face in the coverlet. She could see his body shaken with silent and tearless sobs. At last he managed to articulate, "Call Manto"—Manto was an old and trustworthy servant who had been long a member of the household—"and let

her watch for a while. I have something to tell you."

When Manto had obeyed the summons, Lucilius, who seemed to have become almost helpless, was led by his wife into an adjoining chamber.

Then, in a voice broken by sobs and tears, he told the miserable story.

He had scarcely finished when an official arrived from the Governor's court, bringing a summons for his attendance.

The wretched man rose from his seat as if to obey. But the limit of his strength and endurance had been reached, and he fell swooning upon the floor. Before long he was restored to partial consciousness; but it was evident that his attendance at the court was out of the question. In fact, he was suffering from a slight shock of paralysis.

"Let me go instead of him," said the wife. "I can at least tell what I know, and you can examine him when he is fit to answer."

Accordingly, after giving directions to Manto as to what was to be done for the patient during her absence, she accompanied the official to the court.

It was not much that she had to say; but, so far as it went, it confirmed the shepherd's story.

"I became the mother of two female children," she said, "on the fourteenth of May, twenty-one years ago. They were born alive, and were healthy and strong. I nursed them for fourteen days, as far as I can remember. Then I fell ill of a fever, and they had to be taken from me. I remember seeing them several times in the day for two or three days afterwards; then I knew nothing more. When I recovered my senses they were gone. It was then nearly the end of June. My husband told me that they were dead."

"Had you any doubt whether he was telling you the truth?" asked the Governor.

"I had none. Why should I? And when we were reckoning up our expenses at the end of the year, I found a paper which seemed to show the sum paid for the funeral."

"Do you remember the slave Geta?"

"Yes; I remember him. My husband said that he had been drowned. Some articles of his clothing were found by the river."

"Have you had any suspicion at all up to this time?"

"Lately I have had. Since my son has been ill, my husband has been much troubled in mind. He has talked in his sleep; and he said the same things over and over again, till I could not choose but heed them. 'Why did I kill them? Why did I kill them?' 'Geta, Geta, bring them back!' and 'Childless! Childless!' These were the things that he repeated. I put them together till I began to suspect that there had been some foul play. And then I remembered some words the old woman, Geta's sister, had said."

"And have you anything else to say?"

"Nothing, my lord, except that within the last hour my husband has confessed to me the whole."

"Why is he not here?"

"He is paralysed."

Here the poor woman, who had given her evidence with extraordinary firmness and self-possession, utterly broke down.

The Governor took but little time to consider his decision. It was to this effect:—

"The legal proof in this case is not complete, for it needs the formally attested confession of the man Lucilius. Substantially, however, the truth has been established, and I have no hesitation in pronouncing the sisters Rhoda and Cleoné to be of free condition."

Clitus now rose to address the court.

"I have an application to make that the proceedings in this case be annulled."

"On what ground?" said the Governor.

"On the ground that they were essentially illegal; that the evidence of the free-woman Rhoda was extorted from her by questioning that could not lawfully be applied."

"And you contend, therefore, that she should be set free?"

"That is my contention."

"And how about the woman Cleoné?"

The question was embarrassing. Cleoné had suffered no actual wrong, and Clitus felt that here his case was weak. He tried to make the best of it.

"She has been treated as if she were of servile condition. The indictment against her is made out in these terms—'Also the slave-girl Cleoné,' are the words. I contend that it is informal, and ought therefore to be quashed."

The young advocate had the sympathies of the court—so far, at least, as the Governor was concerned—in his favour. He adjourned the court in order to consult his assessors. He found them adverse to the claim. A long argument ensued. In the end the opinion of the Governor prevailed, and he returned to the tribunal and began to deliver judgment.

"Having carefully considered the circumstances of this case, and remembering especially that the law, if ever it has been unwittingly betrayed into error, is anxious to make such amends as may be possible, I direct that the free women, Rhoda and Cleoné, wrongfully condemned as being of the servile condition——"

At this point the delivery of judgment was interrupted by the arrival of a messenger bearing an imperial rescript.

The Governor rose to receive the messenger, took the despatch from his hand, and, after making a gesture of respect to the document, proceeded to cut the sealed thread which fastened it. He read it, everyone in court watching his face as he did so with intense interest.

It ran thus:—"Trajan Augustus, to his dearly beloved Cæcilius Plinius, Proprætor of Bithynia, greeting.—It is my pleasure that all persons, whether men or women, bond or free, who shall have been found guilty of cherishing the detestable superstition which has taken to itself the name of Christus, be forthwith sent to Ephesus, there to be held at the disposition of the Proconsul of Asia."

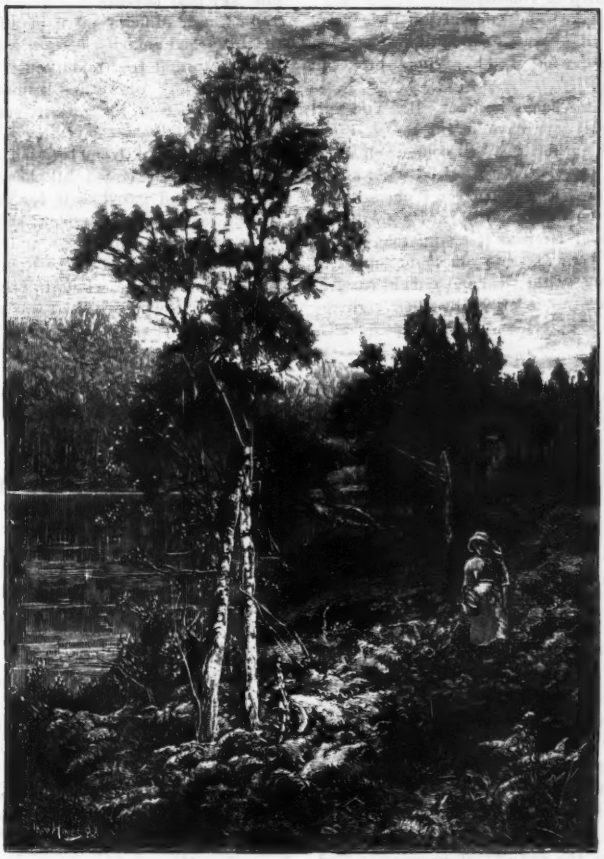
Everyone knew what this meant, for the great show of wild beasts and gladiators that was about to be exhibited at Ephesus was the talk of the whole province.

(To be concluded.)

PASSING CLOUDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "OUT OF REACH," "SUNDAY EVENING IN A SICK-ROOM," ETC.

"Calm me, my God, and keep me calm."



ALL night long a wild wind and rushing rain held fierce revelry; all night long the sound of sighing waves and breaking branches kept up an undercurrent of reproach and remonstrance, and the waters of a Lake lying far up amongst the hills joined in the swelling chorus of complaint.

But when morning dawned, matters seemed far worse than in the darkness of the night, which at least had acted as a kindly screen.

"What have I done to deserve this?" murmured the Lake, as she felt herself beaten and baffled by the strong wind—"why can't I be left in peace? Yesterday all was so bright and calm, I could see nothing and reflect nothing but the blue sky overhead; and now here I am tossed and helpless, all my beauty gone, all dark and grey and troubled."

"Don't fret; they are only passing clouds," said a Robin perched on the bough of an alder-bush close by. He was always hopeful, and could not bear to see anyone out of heart. But his voice was drowned the next moment by the Lake suddenly lashing herself into a fresh fit of fury against her fate.

After a time this got monotonous, and from laying the blame on outward circumstances the poor Lake began to turn her thoughts inward, and to try if she could not find the root of the mischief there.

"It must have something to do with myself," she murmured, in a lower and yet more despairing key than ever. "I never used to be gloomy and restless, but now I suppose I have got into such a bad way

I can't get out of it again. Oh dear! whatever shall I do?" and she flung herself against the bank in self-abasement.

The eastward sky was getting brighter now; the wind had lulled and the clouds were quickly dispersing. The Robin thought it high time to come in with another chirp of consolation.

"You poor old Lake!" he said, "I am very sorry for you, but really it is your own fault."

"Yes, that is just what I am saying," broke in the Lake agitatedly.

"Hush! that isn't what I mean at all. You will never be better until you have learnt to *lie still*," said the Robin with authority. "Of course you think it is easy for me to say that, because I have got a pair of wings and can use them whenever I choose; but I have gone about the world and learned a great deal from observation, and I repeat it again, that this is at the root of half your misery—you won't submit to the darkness. If you would yield and remain passive, you would soon find things gradually come right of themselves."

"Do you really think so?" asked the troubled one.

"Think so? I *know* it. Now you take my advice. Make up your mind to bear all this as long as it lasts; give up torturing yourself as to *why* it is, and *how* it is, and fix your eyes on the first bit of blue sky that appears."

It was a difficult piece of advice to follow, for the Lake had found a certain satisfaction in all her tossings to and fro; and though she was now quite tired out, any alteration seemed better than just quietly to accept the present state of things.

But the advice *was* followed; and when a rift of blue shone out from between the cloudland overhead, she concentrated all her attention upon it, and gazed and gazed as if for dear life. Her task became easier every moment; she found "strength," not weakness, "in quietness and in confidence," and very soon all followed as the Robin prophesied. The clouds vanished, the wind dropped altogether, and a blue serene heaven overhead was reflected in the calm surface of the sunny Lake beneath.

RELIGION ON EARTH AND RELIGION IN HEAVEN.

BY THE REV. JOHN TELFORD, B.A.

And I will establish My covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee.—GENESIS vii. 7.

And God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.—REVELATION xxi. 3–5.

PART I.—RELIGION ON EARTH.

NEARLY a quarter of a century had rolled by since Abraham, surrounded by a little band of kinsfolk and servants, set out from Haran to begin his new life in Canaan. God had been with him and had blessed his strange pilgrim life with much earthly prosperity; but so far as the hope of posterity and the possession of the land were concerned, he was still resting on the unfulfilled promises. God had led him forth from his tent under the dazzling starlit sky, and had told him: "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, so shall thy seed be." God had also spoken after Lot and his family departed to the Plain of Jordan: "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it, for unto thee will I give it." Yet, despite these promises, Abraham had no foot of land in the country, and the son of the bondwoman was heir to all his wealth.

The weary time of waiting had not, however, been lost. God was beginning a great experiment in the world. Henceforth religion was not to be left merely to the gracious influences which moved individual hearts. Such men as Abel, Enoch, and Noah had indeed walked with God as patterns of faith and holiness. But the corruption of the antediluvian world which cried for judgment, and which only the Deluge could sweep away, showed that the hour for a new dispensation had come. There was to be a peculiar people devoted to the service of Heaven, and drawing others into fellowship with God. That nation was to keep alive His worship, to preserve truth and purity in the earth. It was to train up such saints as Samuel and David, to call forth such service as Solomon rendered in the erection of the Temple, to make ready the soil in which Christ should scatter the seed of the Kingdom of Heaven.

It was fitting that the man whom God chose to be the founder of that new order, in which all the families of the earth were to be blessed, should earn the stamp of Divine approval ere he inherited the promises. Already that glorious portrait is taking shape on the canvas. In definite form and outline there begins to rise before us the character which has riveted the attention of all ages, dear alike to earth and heaven—the Friend of God, the Father of the Faithful. How often the Lord delays the fulfilment of His promises, that the character of the saints may ripen under the tests which hope deferred and joy

delayed bring to all. A Christian man will assuredly silence his doubts about the mercy of God, if he studies this feature of the story of Abraham.

The trial of the patriarch was now almost at an end. A definite promise of the speedy birth of Isaac is given at the time these words were spoken. God, therefore, chose this hour to reveal to Abraham the purpose for which he had been raised up: the blessing he was to prize as the crown and safeguard of every joy to him and his for ever.

Standing here, we see the great river of religion begin to flow. All nations are to be enriched by its life-giving waters. Abraham's seed was to become as the stars of heaven for multitude; but the influence was not to be confined even to that countless host: all families of the earth were to share the grace. God Himself stands by its brink to show what the world is to gain from this river of water of life. Such a thought adds unutterably to our interest in those words. What God intends us to find in religion, that must become the hope and aim of every worshipper.

Man cannot live without religion. His necessities and his sorrows seem always lifting up hands of prayer. "Oh Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." God's covenant with the patriarch shows that He intended religion to be a personal walking with Him. Abraham is to be the father of a great multitude—a holy race, a peculiar people. But he is not lost in the presence of that countless host of his descendants. He is to know in his own life those blessed and hallowing influences which spring from personal fellowship with his Maker. Nobly did he use those precious opportunities. His character ripened, his trust in the unseen Helper gained ever-increasing strength, till at last he became known to all generations as the Friend of God and the Father of the Faithful, honoured alike by the love of Heaven and the praise of all who follow him on faith's pilgrimage. The personal character of religion, then, is its fundamental, its most glorious feature. Of what avail would it be unless it met our individual needs? Religion may fill the whole earth with peace and salvation, but it can only do this by filling each soul with Divine light and comfort. Life's battle with sin and trouble is a personal struggle from beginning to end.

ITS INFLUENCE ON CHARACTER.

"I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect."—Genesis xvii. 1.

GOD Himself has placed this phase of religion in the forefront. The first word He spoke to Abraham when He opened out the blessings of the Covenant was, "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect." It is not possible to exaggerate the influence exerted on human character by this personal fellowship with God. Character is largely moulded by surroundings. Fellowship with a noble spirit acts as a never-ceasing incentive to nobleness. Ten thousand nameless influences stream forth to others. Duty becomes a sacred obligation; care for others eats out the canker of self-seeking. We live in an atmosphere that braces our energies, that gives new purpose to all we do. Not long before his death an eminent English divine paid a tribute in Baltimore to the effect of such a fellowship on his own early life. "The lapse of years has only served to deepen in me the conviction that no gift can be more valuable than the recollection and inspiration of a great character working upon our own." He had come at a most impressionable age under the spell of Dr. Arnold, and to his dying day his character bore the impress. Years before, his mother, kept at home by the pouring rain, had read her son's notes of Arnold's sermons. "What a peculiar feeling of gratitude," she wrote, "it gives one to the man who makes such thoughts pass through one's child's mind." If such words may be spoken, and spoken truly, of communion with a great character, what words can express the influence of fellowship with God? There are ten thousand lives that may never hope for such a friendship as that of Arnold. Those are privileged circles into which few can enter. But who cannot enjoy this friendship of God? It is the great regenerating force of the world.

These thoughts may indicate the foremost purpose of religion. Abraham was surrounded by idolatries which brought a taint on society. Morality was sapped, the sanctions of religion were given to man's basest passions. Amid such surroundings the Patriarch enjoyed fellowship with the Almighty. "A God of truth and without iniquity; just and right is He." Abraham's character began to reflect the character of his Master. There were seeds of mischief in the deceit which almost wrought shipwreck of his prospects and of his domestic relations in Egypt. The incident betrays that want of veracity which is still the canker of the East. Like us all, Abraham needed the ennobling grace of religion. Nor was it long withheld. God saw his weakness, and supplied the force which alone could elevate and purify.

This, then, is one great purpose of religion: to enable us to walk before God and be perfect. For us such influences have a new meaning. The world's failure to follow this rule made God translate it into another and more alluring form. When Bunsen was dying he said, "I have ever lived and striven after the best and noblest only, but the best and noblest is to have known Jesus Christ." The world has only one perfect pattern. The graces of others may be stepping-stones towards the ideal, but we must test every earthly pattern by the heavenly. Judged by that standard, how few there are whom we can implicitly follow! John Ruskin laments over the same fact in his "Lectures on English Art." "Is it not a strange thing," he says, "and a lamentable, that no British artist has ever lived,

of whom one can say to a student, 'Imitate him and prosper;' while yet the great body of minor artists are continually imitating the master who chances to be in fashion; and any popular mistake will carry a large majority of the Britannic mind into laboriously identical blunders for two or three generations." Such words may well make us thankful that the greatest art—the art of living—has found expression in Him

> "Who wrought
> With human hands the Creed of creeds
> In loveliness of perfect deeds
> More strong than all poetic thought."

THE RESTRAINTS AND SUCCOURS OF RELIGION.

BUT there is another side to this subject. The restraints awakened by the acknowledgment of God are not less precious than the influences which lift up to holiness. What life is not exposed to temptation? Happy is it, then, to walk before God. Reverence for Him rules our life; it quickens the perception of evil, it makes the conscience more tender, it gives strength of resistance to the will. Where nothing else could save, religion keeps us, by bringing thoughts of God to the heart. "Oh, do not that abominable thing which I hate," He cries; and our inmost soul responds, "How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Looking back on his heroic life-work, Nehemiah was able to contrast his conduct with that of others, and rejoice that it had been free from the self-seeking which had ruled their lives. What had made him to differ? "So did not I because of the fear of God."

These, then, are the twofold effects of religion on character. The spur to rouse and the bit to check are here. Life is braced for endeavour and held back from deeds of shame.

Religion is also a Divine provision for all the necessities of human life. That life is God's gift. "He hath made us, and not we ourselves." When God established the covenant with Abraham, He included in it providential blessing as well as heavenly grace. No religion can hold its place in the world which does not satisfy the needs of the worshipper. Where his unaided resources would fail, the grace and succour of Heaven must step in. "Hereafter," said our Lord to Nathaniel, "ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." Jacob's vision is not to be the joy of one night of loneliness and Divine interposition. It is to be set before the eyes of every pilgrim right through his pilgrimage. "The way to heaven out of all places," as an old writer has put it, "is of like length and distance." Prayer can rise and succour can find us at every stage of the journey.

PERPLEXITIES arise. The way is dark. No lights of human reason or experience can be found to guide us. Such times come to every thoughtful man who is placed in a position of responsibility. To whom can he turn in his need? A false step may wreck his life, and not his only. The lives of many may be clouded by his error. The conduct of life—what a problem that is for a man who is awake to his perils! Religion brings God in to solve it. We "inquire in His Temple."

But it is not only in perplexities that we need God. TROUBLES also come. What sorrows may spring up around us in this road of life! Worldly comforts may pass, and leave us to a hard struggle with fortune. Friends may fail or death may snatch them from our embrace. Fidelity to principle may expose a man to ruin. He may suffer the loss of all things for Christ's sake; but whatever form the trouble takes, it finds our Helper near. This aspect of religion commends it to all who mourn. There are some who only awake to their need of heaven when earth is shorn of joy.

> "Ay, sooth, we are too strong in weal
> To need Thee on that road;
> But woe being come, the soul is dumb
> That crieth not on God."

Nor must we forget to show how religion equips men for the STRUGGLE of life—it supplies a new motive power which consecrates duty. The lowliest work and the loftiest are alike done to the glory of God. It opens new stores of grace and providential succour to those who thus labour. All the resources of the Master are given to the servant. "Man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human nature in itself could not attain."

Religion in this first great picture of its influence is, however, something more than a personal blessing for its earliest recipient. The gift which became the first patriarch's stay and inspiration was to be an abiding heritage to his children. If life brought like perils to all, the Almighty Friend would be near to all in every hour of need. This is the promise.

What a field for illustration the Old Testament affords! Abraham's children found the covenant sure. Of his son's religious life we know comparatively little, but we are told that God was the Fear of Isaac. He walked in lowly reverence before his father's Friend. Jacob's biography first shows us grace wrestling with human selfishness and unbelief. What an instance it is of the need of Divine power to transform the character, and to support in hours when all earthly refuge fails!

At the outset of his painful flight to Padanaram God steps in as the Companion of his wandering. Jacob arises from his pillow of stone at Bethel, to feel that life is lighted up with a Divine presence. God preserved him in his lonely pilgrimage, God prospered him in his exile, God brought him to his father's house in peace. Nor, with all his faults, was Jacob slow to recognise or to acknowledge the Architect of his fortunes. "Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty." It

was not to Laban only that Jacob thus spoke of the blessings of religion. Years afterwards, in Egypt, when his chequered life was closing, he paid another tribute to the Good Hand that had been upon him for good. "And he blessed Joseph, and said, 'God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lad."

Joseph too. What did religion do for him? It gave him God, and God was his only Friend in Egypt. St. Stephen, with eyes enlightened by the glories of a martyr's crown, truly read the secret of Joseph's blessing. "God was with him." That was the one blessing he possessed, but it included every good. As a slave, as a prisoner, and as the ruler over all the land of Egypt, he never lost the smile of God. He adorned every position; he overcame every temptation because religion was the soul of his life.

Here, then, is the Old Testament picture of religion, with the sunshine of the better dispensation streaming upon it. For nearly four thousand years this great river of religion has been making glad the nations. How many hearts "have throbbed with an exquisite bliss"! how many drooping souls have shaken off their burdens! how many have awaked to new life under its influence! It has created saints and reformers; it has filled the Church with praise, it has raised up ten thousand ministering angels to relieve human sorrow.

PART II.—RELIGION IN HEAVEN.

"And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

"And He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more: the first things are passed away.

"And He that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."—Rev. xxi. 3–5.

WE have seen that in the covenant God made with Abraham, just before the birth of Isaac, there are wrapped up all the possibilities of religion on earth. Not that the fulness of meaning was developed in one generation; all the added lights of revelation are poured upon that covenant: star after star shines forth among the exceeding great and precious promises. We gaze on the growing glories with feelings such as the poet attributes to

> "Some watcher of the skies,
> When a new planet swims into his ken."

But though the exceeding riches of religion are for ever unfolding, they are all included in the promise, "To be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee."

The description of the new heaven and new earth which is given in this passage of the Revelation forms as comprehensive a statement of the place which religion will fill in heaven, as God's promise to Abraham gives of the office of religion on earth. Not that all is clear as yet. We must learn to wait. Only Heaven itself can reveal to us the glories of the fellowship and succour that await the Christian beyond the grave.

There is no room for thoughtlessness as we face the responsibilities of life on earth. A wise man will never forget how many paths there are by which he may go astray and bring upon himself, it may be, lifelong disgrace and mourning. How much more solemn is the outlook on that life beyond the grave! This is for a moment, that is for eternity. We shall carry into the future the same nature, the same capacities.

What questions rise in our hearts as we face a change so unutterable! Are the dreams of any adventurer starting on the quest of a new world, the fancies of any youth leaving his village home for the capital of a world-wide empire, for a moment to be compared with our thoughts about the Home where we hope to dwell together when this life on earth is done? Circumstances are constantly forcing such questions upon us. We watch the feet of our friends touch the waters of that river which divides the home on earth from the home in heaven. Perhaps sickness brings us to the very verge of the waters, but God's mercy restores us to our earthly toil for a season. Who is there in all the earth whose breast has not been stirred by such thoughts a thousand times?

This attitude of mind gives exhaustless interest to the Voice from heaven which St. John heard. It assures us that the lights which gild this world of sin and sorrow beam forth in their glory in that world beyond the grave. That after-life is not to us what it was to the masses of Greece, "a poor, washed-out, shadowy copy of the brilliant life on earth."

"God Himself shall be with them, and shall be their God." All the possibilities of heaven are there. The whole soul is entranced by the glories on which St. John gazed, the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb; the tree of life with its twelve manner of fruits and its leaves for the healing of the nations; the streets of pure gold like unto clear glass—all these we have been familiar with from our childhood. But these are but the setting of the gem, the framework of the picture, the decorations of the Home above.

Its glory is the Divine Presence. Rob it of that and it ceases to be heaven: take all else away, whilst that remains it is still heaven for the true pilgrim. This is the thought which reveals to us the fulness of meaning in this best description of heaven. Tennyson's picture of the ideal society, under King Arthur's rule, may furnish a suggestive comparison:—

> "And all about a healthful people stept
> As in the presence of a gracious king."

"GOD HIMSELF SHALL BE WITH THEM."

THESE words are not found in the promise to Abraham. They are, in one sense, implied in the command, "Walk before Me." They are more perfectly anticipated in the promise to Jacob: "I will not leave thee!" The nearest approach to their fulness of meaning is in the parting words of Jesus to His disciples: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." But that was only a spiritual presence. One of those who heard that promise wrote to the scattered disciples of the apostolic age: "Whom having not seen, ye love." Yet the spiritual presence on earth is the crown and seal of every blessing. It made Moses great; it nerved Joshua for the conquest of Canaan. Fear died away when that promise was spoken: "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee." The Epistle to the Hebrews reminds us that this is the heritage of every pilgrim. "He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And on our lips and in our hearts there is that answer which shows that the promise is the very breath of Christian life, "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Yet, however true it be that "God is the bounden companion of a good man's life," the "great voice out of heaven" means more than this. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall tabernacle with them." As the Shekinah was the glory of the camp of Israel, so the Divine Presence is the glory of heaven. The tribes pitched their tents around God's tent, for He dwelt among them, making them His peculiar people. But there is another illustration. He who wrote the Revelation wrote also those words which record how God once dwelt on earth. "The Word was made flesh, and tabernacled amongst us." Here, then, is the joy of heaven. As Christ dwelt among His disciples, God will dwell among the citizens of heaven. "The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads."

But if God is with us in this more perfect sense, He still holds the same relationship to His people; "and shall be their God." Every want shall be anticipated, so that strong crying and tears to Him Who is able to save shall be unknown in heaven. But praise shall live, if prayer is at an end. Love shall still bind our soul to God, if faith be swallowed up in sight. The nobler part of worship will thus remain in heaven. Service, too, shall endure, though its privations and disappointments are past. What comparisons and contrasts between service on earth and service in heaven are suggested by that verse: "His servants shall serve Him."

The old relationship between God and His people survives, adapted to new conditions. God will not sever the links which bind Him to His people, but will only draw us more closely to Himself. Did He for one moment withdraw His Presence, heaven would be darkened. "If Thy Presence go not with us, carry us not up hence," would be our prayer. The abiding Presence of God is the pledge that all our need will be satisfied throughout eternity.

Bishop Butler supplies a pregnant thought in his description of the future world as a dispensation under the more immediate government of God. That is, the Divine Will shall rule. There shall be no sin, no unbelief to thwart it. Our Saviour taught His disciples to pray that earth might thus be modelled after the pattern of heaven: "Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven." Every triumph of religion in the soul, or in human society, hastens the fulfilment of that prayer. But if sin were banished, our frailty would still prevent its perfect answer. Insight often fails us. We err even in our holy things. All such elements of discord will then be removed. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth." What a change that must mean we can somewhat conceive by asking ourselves what this world would be if God's will became the universal law of life. Crime and passion would expire, every unloving thought would cease for ever.

LIFE IN HEAVEN.

WHEN God is able to accomplish all His will, He will appear as the Comforter of His people. How the pity of God shines forth in His first act of love! He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. Here we must often be content with grace to suffer. We rest on the assurance: "Like as the father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." God cannot yet close the doors of the school of sorrow. The soul has a strange insight when the eyes are dimmed with weeping. Here, at least, our tears do not "put out our eyes." Sorrow teaches lessons of the vanity of pleasure, of the frailty of earthly joy, when all other teachers have failed to fasten the nail in a sure place. We have much need to bless God that He does not yet wipe away the tears. But in that new life, when character is perfected, when sin is vanquished, God can close the chapter of suffering for ever. What an individuality there is in the revised translation: "every tear." "All tears" wakes up before us the world of mourners; "every tear" shows us that not one shall steal down any face. God Himself shall wipe them away. Who would not weep, someone said, if this be so! It is one of His most God-like acts. How gladly we would wipe away tears from the eyes of those we love, yet how powerless we are! When was Jesus more alluring to the world than when He went about doing good; when He wiped away the tears of the widow of Nain and, Himself weeping, spoke those words which dried up the tears of the sisters of Lazarus? Yet, if Christ comforted many mourners, how many, even in His own generation, never heard of His mercy! How

many, who had once been comforted, were found again among the mourners! When God wipes away the tears, His saints will never mourn again.

For the sources of tears are also dried up. All that could move to weeping is banished. There shall be no more death. That home shall hear no heart-breaking cry, "Would God I had died for thee!" To wait for Death, to hear his footfall, to feel his cold hand upon us—that shall be an experience unknown in heaven. Yet not unknown; for who among the redeemed from among men but rejoices the more in that deliverance because he once knew the form of the King of terrors, and for himself or for others trembled at his approach? Death shall make no inroads on that company; he lies for ever vanquished at the feet of our victorious Saviour: that is the crowning triumph of the redeeming work. "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death."

Sorrow, the wailing grief that masters body and mind, and cannot be hid; that, too, shall be a stranger in the new heaven and new earth. When every avenue of trouble is closed, who will be left to mourn! "Crying," too, is done. The despair and dismay which roused it are not known where "Christ Himself doth rule." Pain is the last of the banished crew. The bootless, wearying toil which the word brings before our eyes, that too has died with death and all the company of troubles.

Such is the fruit of God's more immediate rule. But one word is yet to be added. "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Out of the trials of the present there is growing up the glory of the future. It is a new world, and all things in it are fresh—bearing the stamp of the wisdom and love of God, unstained and unperverted by His enemies.

This, then, is religion in heaven: God more perfectly revealed, yet still holding the same relation to His people, moulding the life of eternity for their perfect blessedness. Religion on earth finds its limits in ourselves and our surroundings. It wages a hard war with our frailties, it is sorely taxed by our troubles. But it is preparing the world for a more perfect exhibition of Divine power, which begins with the wiping away of every tear. Whatever development religion in heaven may know must be on these lines: richer fellowship, more abundant succour. Richard Baxter, whose "Saint's Everlasting Rest" has lighted so many pilgrims on the way to that better country, caught this thought in his hymn:—

> "My knowledge of that life is small,
> The eye of faith is dim,
> But 't is enough that Christ knows all,
> And I shall be with Him."

GRANNY'S JUBILEE.

CHAPTER III.

GRANNY, let me peep."

Nance stood among the sunbeams glinting through a high window athwart the landing, and down the front stairs. She had stolen upon Mrs. Manly unawares, and surprised her taking a look at that turned picture, always in shadow.

"I hardly know that I ought," said she tremulously.

"Yes, Granny, you ought; then, if he comes, I shall know him"

"Hush, dear, hush!" Granny looked down the stairs and hearkened: all was quiet.

"Well, your grandfather never told me not," she observed: "he only said 'Shut him away, out of light and sight, like one dead and gone,'" she murmured to herself.

"Did Grandfather say that!" asked Nance, her quick ears hearing all.

"Yes, dear: but that was when the blow came."

"Did my—did my Uncle Jack hit Grandfather!" Nance's eyes were growing round.

"No, not with his hand, dear, but—but with his heart."

"Oh, Granny, how funny! how could a heart hit anyone! Mine only goes pit-a-pat," laughed the innocent child.

"'T was his want of love did it—no, his want of thought. Oh! child, that was a terrible time when that blow was struck, and he went out," continued Granny, as if she must talk of it to somebody.

"Do you mean when *he* went away who is to make your jubilee?"

"Oh! Nance, I can't think it will ever come," cried the hungering woman.

"Not your jubilee?"

"No." Nance's face grew a shade graver.

"But, Granny, He said it would."

"Who, dear!"

"Jesus. He said, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you;' Jane read that to me in my Bible; and whatsoever means anything, doesn't it!"

"Oh yes," agreed Granny.

"Then jubilee is anything, and 't will come, Granny, 't will come."

"But how?" Ah! the doubts and fears come between us and our prayers. "He doesn't know we're hungering after him."

"Write to him," said Nance, sitting down on the topmost stair to have it out.

XUM



"Nance's pretty, rosy lips were pressed to the pictured ones."

"I daren't, dear, I daren't; Grandfather told me not."

"Then show me his picture—and he 'il know, and come, *somehow*."

Mayhap, had the child been o'der, the words of the hymn would have come to her ready tongue, instead of that "somehow"—

> "It may not be my way,
> It may not be thy way,
> And yet in His own way,
> The Lord will provide."

"Well, dear, just one peep, and you mustn't ask me again; remember, Grandfather has never forbidden this."

"All right, Granny," and the picture was turned to the light for an instant. A fair-faced youth, with blue eyes very like Nance's, looked at her from the canvas. The fellow to this, that of Nance's mother, was down in the parlour. They both had once hung there, one on each side of the glass door, so that Granny could see them as she sat by the fire. But Granny was speaking.

"Kiss him, dearie, kiss him;" and Nance's pretty, rosy lips were pressed to the pictured ones.

"He smiled—he really smiled," she whispered, when the picture was hidden again, and she went tripping down the stairs with Granny.

"Yes, Nance, pictures of those whom we love always seem to smile when we look at them," returned the patient little woman, pathetically.

"And I and you love him, and so does Jane; and only Grandfather doesn't."

"Hush, Nance! Grandfather loves him; 't is because of the love he is so bitter."

"Because of the love that he is so bitter," and "How will he know that we are hungering for him?" were subjects for thought with small Nance for days. She was pondering of this, walking among the lambs and daisies, one fine afternoon, she and her dolly, both in their sun-hoods.

"Well, little woman, what are you thinking of?" Grandfather surprised her thus, with a pat on her head.

"I was thinking of you, Grandfather, and how we can get Granny's jubilee to come."

"It won't come, child; I 've said it, and I mean it."

"But, Grandfather, we 're praying for it, and Jesus

and praying are stronger than anyone," lisped the child.

"I wasn't thinking of prayer, Nance, I was thinking of—of——"

"The bitterness? The bitterness is love, Gran—somebody said, and I think so too."

Mr. Manly groaned.

"You love Uncle Jack, Grandfather—don't you?" Such a daisy-faced pleader.

"I did once."

"Granny says, love never dies, that it lives on in heaven."

"Nay, child, my love is lost;" he walked away, and here was a third subject for Nance to ponder over.

"If Grandfather's love is lost, the bitterness is lost with it, and bitterness means cross. If Uncle Jack knew Granny hungered for a jubilee, he'd come; if he knew Grandfather's love was lost, he'd bring it back; for, of course, he wants it back when 'tis gone out into the far country. And the bitterness may be put off with the rags;" she fancied Grandfather couldn't be cross with him, dressed like his son again, as she pondered, tripping among the bleating lambs and nodding daisies. "Granny mustn't write, and I can't." Somewhat of a dunce was she; though reading so glibly, she could not form a letter. "But I can make a letter from my pretty printing, as Jane calls it," was the bright thought. She often amused herself by cutting out letters from placards and the like, and stringing them together on paper, with a little gum, into words and sentences. Why not make Uncle Jack a letter? She fairly skipped at the thought, and went dancing into the house. Oh! the hours and days of patient toil, up in her own little nest of a room in secret, and anon the work of art was complete—two sheets of paper, and by no means a lengthy letter. It ran thus:—

"DEAR UNCLE JACK,—I'm Nance, and Granny hungers for a jubilee, and wants you to come and make one. She does not want a queen's one, you know. I, and Granny, and Jane are praying for you. Grandfather says his love is lost—that's you, and the bitterness. COME."

The *come* was all capitals. Away she flew down the back-stairs to Jane. She was ready to cry, she was so tired, so glad, as she clung to the old servant's arm while she read it.

"Yes, dearie, that'll do, and I'll direct it, and we'll have a secret, you and I, even from Granny. Yes, Miss Nance, I know where he went to—I'll direct it; and you post it."

Tears were in Jane's eyes as the child danced away to the cross roads to meet the postman with her precious letter. Now to the praying and waiting again; surely an answer of peace would be vouchsafed them.

"That's a secret," Nance told the postman, as he took her missive.

"My dear, that's what all letters are," he answered, smiling, and trudging on.

CHAPTER IV.

THE glad jubilee time came and went, Nature's jubilee time of harvest and rejoicing likewise passed, but Granny's jubilee seemed as far off as ever: nothing happened, no one came. Nance still clung with child-like faith to her hope, and kept her secret. "Praying always brings things, Granny; 't will come, your jubilee will come."

But the frost and snow were abroad at last, winter setting in right severely, and Grandfather even setting aside a Christmas log from the large pile in the shed; little Nance, in fur-tipped garments, standing by, watching him.

"'T will soon be Christmas, Granny," she cried, dancing in, after this.

But Granny was crying quietly to herself, by the fire, and only answered the prattler with a kiss.

"Is it about the jubilee, Granny?" she asked, and Granny answered—

"Yes, dear, about the jubilee."

"But 't will come, Granny; Jesus knows all about jubilees. Why, He had one once, didn't He?" A glad light broke over Nance's face. "When He went home to heaven, you know. Don't you mind—'Lift up your heads, O ye gates?' Oh! Granny, jubilees in heaven are most beautiful things, aren't they?"

"Yes, dear, and jubilees on earth are beautiful," returned Mrs. Manly, her face reflecting something of the light on the child's; "at least, one was."

"When, Granny, when?"

"Why, the first Christmas was a jubilee, and Jesus brought it; the angels told it, 'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will toward men.' God took us back to His love and His favour; that was the world's great jubilee."

"Yes, and we keep it every year," said fur-clad Nance, looking thoughtfully into the fire. "Oh! Granny"—her blue eyes danced—"if your jubilee should come at Christmas, that would be better than having it with the Queen."

"Bless the dear child!" cried Granny, "thy faith and hope are stronger than mine."

So Mrs. Manly dried her eyes, and again prayed her longing prayer, Nance and Jane echoing it, as the hours and days flowed on, and, anon, it was Christmas Eve. Nance and Granny wreathed the rooms with evergreens, a sweet expectation on lip and brow, ringing out in the trip of Nance's dancing feet, in her glad young voice.

"He may be coming to-day, or to-morrow, Miss Nance, who knows?" said Jane that morning; and the child was as in a golden dream.

"Granny, if Uncle Jack should come for Christmas!" she could not forbear from whispering, as they twined and wreathed their fairy wreaths together.

But Granny, sick with longing, cried, "Don't, dearie; 't is more than I can bear."

Still the day wore on, the early shadows fell, the wind sank to rest, and Nance fairly wept, kneeling at the kitchen window, and watching till her faith and hope waned as the day died.

"He may come to-morrow," she thought, with a lump in her throat; "praying always brings things—and He said it, about 'two or three.'"

The tea was laid, the log fire stirred into a blaze. Grandfather tramped in, and sat down in his chair on the hearth. Hark! a knock at the front door Nance

heard Jane answer it, heard the heavy door open and shut, Jane tarrying and waiting somewhere. Granny heard, yet gave no sign, but Nance sped out to see and hear. A tall, giant form was there, which Jane was ushering into the fireless parlour.

"He's come, Miss Nance," whispered Jane, after shutting him in.

"Who, Jane, who?" panted the child.

"Uncle Jack—'tis Granny's jubilee. Now steal in, and whisper to Granny that Jane knows he'll be here 'in the midst;' so Jesus is here, come to see your jubilee, and 't will be all right. You know He brought a jubilee once, and knows all about what they are."

"Abel! our boy, our son, is here!" Mrs. Manly seemed as if waking from a dream, and rose, laying her hand on her husband's arm.

"We have no son, Anne, and this—this stranger no home here"—his voice was husky, but he said it.

"Yes, Grandfather, yes—'He came unto His own, and His own received him not'; that is what the



"Into the firelight they went."—*p.* 379.

soon—that she has heard so—or, may be, 'twill break her heart with joy."

Dear mouse-like herald, how gently she did it!

"Granny"—her arm stole round Mrs. Manly's neck—"Jane says she knows your jubilee will come—come soon—perhaps to-night; someone has told her so," she whispered in her ear.

"Oh, Nance!" they clung together, the old woman and the little child.

"Why, what secret have you two got between you?" inquired Grandfather, jokingly.

"A secret all about Granny's jubilee," lisped Nance.

"He hasn't dared—he hasn't come——" How hard was the father's voice.

"Yes, Grandfather, he has dared, he—he is come." Brave, wee Nance, how she seemed to gather Granny to her, as to shelter. "Never mind, Granny; He said, Jews did to Jesus, and they were wicked men," pleaded Nance, standing between them, holding Granny's hand, and trying to take her grandfather's.

"Hush, Nance, hush!" spoke stern Mr. Manly.

"No, Grandfather, I mustn't hush: I've prayed for Granny's jubilee, and 't is come. You say, 'This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found'"—tears were not far from Nance's voice.

Ah! when did a child, clinging to the words of Holy Writ, fail? How quiet Mr. Manly was, after this.

"Abel, have pity; for the sake of the love between us, the love that is doubly crowned to-night, do as the child says," pleaded Mrs. Manly through the silence, the old clock ticking "Come in! come in!" and nothing else—so wee Nance fancied, hearkening and waiting.

"Fetch him in, Nance.

"You take care of Granny, Grandfather," said the child, winding the old man's arm about her before she left her, and then darted away.

In the starlit parlour he waited—that tall giant.

"Uncle Jack, 't is me—I 'm Nance:" the little peace-maker was holding his hand. "Come to Granny and make her jubilee." He half hesitated. "Yes, Grandfather said so too," was the persuasive assurance, and she drew him on.

Into the firelight they went—the child and the repentant prodigal.

"Mother!"—"Jack!" "Father!"—"Jack!" So they met, the mother clasping her boy in her arms, the father's strong right hand wringing that of his son's.

"Well, mother, the thought of the grand jubilee you were having over here set my heart hungering with a great hunger, the same as you say it was with you; but this is what brought me," said Jack Manly, after the tumult of joy had subsided a little, and tea had been partaken of, all sitting around the fire: and out he drew Nance's letter from his pocket.

"'Twas a secret, Granny—mine and Jane's," whispered Nance.

Ay, the child has done it. What is man's obdurate pride before a child's clinging faith and love! They have played their part well, in many a good work, before to-day; and even He Who came to bring our jubilee, as Nance put it, condescended to take the form of a little child; as children we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven—every man to his possession, every man to his family. Ay, Abel Manly's heart was broken; the husk of pride would never lay so thick around it again.

"Thank God!" said Granny that night. "Thank God!"

And Nance whispered to herself before going to sleep, "Jesus heard; I knew He would"—and to-morrow it was Christmas.

A RESTING-PLACE.

THE Dove could find no rest,
The heaving waters' ebb and flow
Revealed the awful tempest's throe;
O'er wreck and ruin rolled the waves,
And murmured o'er a world of graves.

The Dove could find no rest,
And when the crimson sunset burned,
With weary wing she homeward turned,
And one put forth his hand and pressed
The wanderer to his pitying breast.

My Dove hath found a rest!
When rough winds ruffle and distress,
In love's soft soothing and caress,
And by my open lattice lured,
She flies to me in faith assured.

O ye who mourn for rest!
There 's One Whose deep compassion waits
To ope for us the sunset gates,
And draw the weary wanderer in
From storms of sorrow and of sin.

CLARA THWAITES.

A MOTHER'S CONFIDENCES.

THE GOSPEL INSTRUCTION TO PARENTS.

WE have made a discovery, or rather, Evan has made it, and I assist at the rejoicing; I wonder will it strike you as anything new? Of course, I cannot keep it more than a day from you, for have we not told each other everything, since the secret was pretty beads which chubby fingers could just manage to thread? Well, I daresay you remember that Evan likes to get a quiet hour on Sunday morning while I am looking after the children, and various necessary matters. He does not talk much about the best things, but I have always fancied he liked to work out some idea which may have struck him in the readings at family prayers, and that this was the time for his weekly "think."

Yesterday morning he came out of his den looking radiant, running over with something he wanted to tell. But I only got—

"*Eureka!* Mrs. Burnet."

"What's the find?" said I eagerly; for I could see it was something to rejoice our hearts.

"Oh, it's too good to be handed round like afternoon tea; wait till we can sit down to it properly."

And so I had to wait until the evening service was over, and the babes in bed, and we were all to ourselves! 'Now for it!' thought I, as I came down, after doing myself up a little for the evening. And there was Evan in his special chair, looking deliciously

happy, and—is inspired too strong a word? I drew my chair up beside him, and then—

"You have found it?" said I, by way of breaking the ice.

"Yes, little woman; and what would you give to know its name?"

"Oh, Evan, don't tease me," said I; "you know I never can bear to wait!"

"I know; 'in a minute' is madame's time for everything she wants to have done."

"Don't play, there's a good boy! We shall talk nonsense till bed-time, and then I shall not know this great thing till it's quite stale."

"Great thing" did for Evan; he felt I deserved to be told, and at once there came the serious, earnest look that would frighten all the nonsense out of me if he did not belong to me for jest and for earnest.

"You have been a discreet little wife to ask no questions about what I did with myself on Sunday mornings. I have had qualms—couldn't I help you with the children or something? And now, my perseverance and your discretion are to be rewarded. I have found it!"

"But, Evan dear, *what* have you found?"

"Can't hold out any longer, eh? Well, she shall be told what there is to tell 'in a minute.' Not long after we were married, I made up my mind that the chief part of the world's work *must* be done by parents; I mean, by parents in their own homes, not in their professional, philanthropic, or other callings. Don't be afraid, my dear; I'm not going to serve notice of ejectment on that excellent dame, Philanthropy, who puts poultices on many a bad place in this unwholesome world of ours. I only say *if*—*if* all parents knew how to bring up their children and did it, the world would want no more poultices, and we should be free to wish philanthropy a civil good-morning."

"I see; and therefore the bringing up of the children is the first business in life. But don't most people, like ourselves, for instance, know how to bring up their children? Don't you think that when we have children we somehow get into the way of managing them properly?"

"I think parents, you mothers especially, are gifted with love and insight, the like of which outsiders rarely enjoy. But no doubt we need knowledge, to help us to use these gifts from above. What is the lever to a man who knows nothing of its powers, nor how to use them? The lever we parents are in need of is firm grip of a few broad principles, one or other of which will raise out of the way every obstacle that occurs in the bringing up of children. Is any difficulty in the way, try it with one or other of these levers until it moves, as it certainly should. And even fairly right-minded people like ourselves, who live to do our duty by our children, if we don't get at these principles, make miserable mistakes which result in incalculable harm and loss to the children."

"Oh, Evan, you frighten me! I thought it was enough to do your best, and to do all you know how. Even that is more than I do. And as for working out the principles one should act on, why, I never thought of it. But I see now about your Sunday mornings. You have been hunting in the Bible for a sort of parents' code?"

"Just so; now you, as a parson's daughter, brought up as a Sunday-school teacher, and all that, should know your Bible a deal better than I, and small thanks to you, ma'am! Where should I look for this same 'parents' code?'"

"Let me see; there are a good many things in the Proverbs, and the Psalms, and Deuteronomy, and all over the Bible there are examples, bad sons and good sons; to say nothing of our Lord's example, and His 'Suffer little children.'"

"Ah! that last nearly touches the question; the rest are, for the most part, advice on particular points, and illustrations—most helpful, every one; but not just what I feel we want—the whole of the principles of education in a nutshell, put ready for the use of parents. I have thought all along that it was a curious omission for our Lord to make, for there is hardly another detail of Christian living of which He has not given us the principle, either in parable or precept. It would be strange indeed for Him to leave us parents out in the cold, when we, more than others, have the work of forwarding His Kingdom."

"But, Evan dear, don't you think it's all for us? The Sermon on the Mount, the sower and the seed, the good Samaritan, and all the story of the blessed



"While I am looking after the children."—*p.* 379.

life? Can we not get every principle of good living out of these for the use of our children? I don't see that, even as parents, we can want any more."

"You are right, Mary; here is all, and more than we can need. But what will you say to this—that our dear Lord Himself, foreseeing the special needs of parents, *has* vouchsafed to us a complete code of education—not a lengthy book of precepts with attendant rewards and punishments, but three short sentences, each but two words long, containing the sum of the whole matter; and beyond these it is impossible to go in educational thought or work. Oh, the wisdom and consideration of our God! There they are, the perfect rule of life for parents! But, like the treasure hid in the field, you may run over them a thousand times, and never know they are there. Searching, ye shall see; and seeking, ye shall find! I wonder how many generations of perplexed parents this wondrous law and gospel of education has enlightened? But isn't it odd that one never comes across much mention of this 'instruction to parents' in the writings of even the wisest and best? Tell me, Mary, the three sentences of this law?"

I ran over fifty passages in my mind, but none of them would fit. That "two words" of Evan's made it hopelessly puzzling. I could think of no two-word text in the Bible but "Jesus wept," and it would take a good deal of twisting to make that fit.

"Surely, 'Suffer the little children' must be one of your principles, but there are many more than two words."

"You're right; I only meant that the gist of the principle lay in two words. But you have one of the three; now find the others."

But even with that much light on the subject, I got no further, for I have always thought *that* the *one* command of our Lord's especially about children. Evan saw I was in a muddle, and came to the rescue.

"Throw that sentence into a negative form, and that will help you: 'suffer' plainly means that there were those who would prevent or hinder the children from coming to Jesus—the disciples, as we know. Now use 'hinder' for your verb, and you get—'Hinder not,' that is, 'Hinder not the children.'



"'Where should I look for this same parents' code?'"—*p.* 380.

"I see; but that is only one of 'three nots.' Where are the others?"

"Oh, the others are close at hand, in due form. 'Suffer' is the only verb we have to change at all to get at the meaning."

"Oh, I have it, '*Offend not* one of these little ones.' '*Despise not* one of these little ones;' how odd! I never thought of applying these words to children at all. My idea was that they taught us to be careful lest by our careless living we should set a bad example to younger or less earnest Christians—and only that."

"And I believe most people have the same notion, and so it comes to pass that the children lose the great safeguard of a complete law and rule of life for parents, spoken with authority by the Son of man Himself."

"But would you, then, shut out the weak believers from all benefit of these protective clauses?"

"By no means; so far as these are ignorant and defenceless, prone to fall and ready to err, they come, in some ways at any rate, into the children's estate, and the protecting arm of the Divine guardianship

is passed about them also. But to make over these precious counsels to the weak and erring and to deprive the children of any share in them! why, it's madness! And don't you see, Mary, how it seems as if our Lord were aware of how men would torture the first and principal meaning out of His words! He fences them about, and points their meaning in an unmistakable way, by calling a little child and setting him in the midst; and then, with the little child to point to, He says, "Take heed that ye offend not, take heed that ye despise not one of *these* little ones;" and a little later, as if the subject were still in His thoughts, to the disciples who would hinder the pious mothers, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and *forbid* them *not*." Oh, we should get much insight into Christ's thoughts of the children, and the place they take in His Kingdom, if we would only pick out and ponder all the astonishing statements made about them in the Gospels. We begin by believing that we, the wise, are near and dear to the Father, while they, foolish and ignorant, must become like us before they can enter the Kingdom. And all the time Jesus says just otherwise, "Except *ye* be converted, and become as little children."

"Ours, the weary, long endeavour;
Theirs, the happy entering in:
Ours, to strive and wait and labour;
Theirs, to joy before the King!

"'Except ye be as the children,
Have ye in My courts no place;'
Ah, how meekly would we ponder
The glad secret of their grace!

"But I am wandering: the whole subject is full of fascination: but I know you want to think first about the 'three nots.'"

"Yes, it is all, as you say, fascinating, beautiful, and wonderful; and I'm sure it's true, for a hundred times a day I bow down in my heart before the babes, and feel that they are so much better than I, as though we were beings of a different class, they nearer the angels, in fact. Still, may I own that I do not see how these three precepts cover the whole of education?"

"Well, in the first place, do you notice that all three commands are really prohibitions? It isn't 'Do this,' but 'Don't do that!' Now, what do you gather from that?"

"I don't know, unless that we parents are apt to do the thing forbidden."

"In other words, that we are much more likely to do harm to our children than good."

"Oh, I don't see that! It's only the worst parents that are without love for their children, and love *must* be good for the poor little beings."

"I'm not sure you're right in either of your warm-hearted conclusions. I know of a case of lovelessness and neglect towards a new-born infant on the part of quite respectable and rich parents which would send a poor mother to gaol; not because the law favours the rich, but because these things are more easily found out among the poor. Then, I am sure there are few of us who do not know of cases of fond indulgence ending in the ruin of the child."

"I begin to see; we are not to be trusted: the touch even of baby fingers may fail to melt our cold hearts; or, we may lavish on them the fondness of an animal for its litter, and be unable to *deny* our children the most hurtful indulgences."

"I'm afraid you're right; we harm where we would most bless, unless we keep our necks ever under the yoke and keep pace with our Divine Fellow-labourer in this field. But there is another thing I want you to notice: these three sayings, which, when you examine them, cover the whole ground of education—so it seems to me, at least—are all negative prohibitions; and you think it is because we are such poor things—we are more likely, left to ourselves, to hurt than to bless our offspring. Now, where is the DO? Where are the positive commands? Are they here? and if not, why not?"

"I'm half afraid to say what occurs to me; but why should I be so, after all? It is treason, if at all, only against our common way of thinking. Is it that the children, being more innocent of evil than ourselves, are nearer to God than we; therefore, our one care in their bringing-up must be neither to harm them nor suffer them to be harmed?"

"That's it! You must paint, 'Offend not'—'Despise not'—'Hinder not one of these little ones,' on a scroll for our room, that the words may be always before our eyes and in our hearts. Kept from the things we may not do, we shall fall unresistingly into the things we must do."

"Yes; thus far I see—that the three great educational precepts addressed to parents all tell us what we must not do, because the chief danger threatening our children is, that we, their parents, notwithstanding our great love, may do them irremediable harm! But I do not yet see that, in observing this rule of conduct, we have done all that is possible for the children."

"That will take much talking out; we shall have to consider each of the 'nots' by itself, and find out its full meaning. But this much I think we are ready for. Have you ever had an ignorant housemaid who did not know the nature of things, nor how to treat them? For instance (I know I shall flounder here!), one who would rub your piano with sand-paper to clean it?"

"That's too droll for the ingenuity of the rawest 'help.' But don't I know what you mean, and isn't it the aggravation and misery of all young housekeepers?' (And don't we talk about it *and* about it whenever we meet?) "Well, where is this amazing illustration of yours going to fit?"

"As the poor maid must know something of the nature of, and the difference between, mahogany and marble, silver and steel, before she can keep each at its best by using the right cleaning stuff" ("Cleaning stuff! oh, these men!"), "so we must know something about body and brain, soul and conscience, and whatever else there is in the child, before we can even get on the right tack for training him. Here's a wide field of real hard study opened out to us already: and 'tis my belief we shall not escape the sin of despising, offending, or hindering our children until we know what there is in human nature, and what may be

effected by Divine Grace. But I see you will soon be asleep, in spite of the best intentions. We'll talk out our three 'nots' at length on other Sunday evenings; and I think we agree so far."

"Yes, I follow you every step; but 'knots' they are, and I don't see my way to the undoing of them a bit further than you have taken me."

"We've got over the worst: the rest you will do as much as I towards thinking out, and very interesting we shall find it." CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

CHRISTIAN WORK AMONG THE ESKIMOS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JOHN HORDEN, D.D., BISHOP OF MOOSONEE.



ESKIMO FINISHING HIS SNOW HOUSE.
(*From a Drawing by* A. DICKSON PATTERSON, R.C.A.)

FIVE hundred miles north-east of Moose Factory, the London of Hudson's Bay, and which lies a few miles up the great Moose River, we first meet with the Eskimos, a deeply interesting people, and among whom I have a most excellent missionary labouring — the Rev. E. J. Peck, who has made himself thorough master of their difficult language, and who is devoted to them with an intense love. And much they needed a loving and energetic pastor, for they were steeped in wickedness of every kind; a gentleman who was long a resident trader among them told me that there was scarcely one among them whose hands had not been imbrued in a brother's blood.

In one of my northern journeys, being in a canoe with some Cree Indians, we came upon a blind Eskimo, who was in difficulty with his nets, which had become much disordered by a recent storm. We set them right for him, gave him a quantity of provisions, and then went on our way. In a subsequent journey I made inquiries respecting this man, and a terrible tale was told me. He and his wife were reduced almost to starvation, when they were taken under the protection of another Eskimo; they rewarded his kindness by murdering him, that they might become possessed of his few earthly goods. News of what they had done soon reached the ears of a relative of the murdered man, and he instantly vowed vengeance. He came to the station of Little Whale River, and told his tale, saying that he should have no rest until he had avenged his friend's death. The humane trader of the post strongly endeavoured to divert him from his purpose, and thought he had succeeded. The Eskimo left, and did not return to the station for about two months, and his first exclamation on seeing the trader was, "I have done it! I have done it!"—"What have you done?" asked the trader.—"I have killed both of them," replied he. "But I thought," said the trader, "you were going to leave the matter

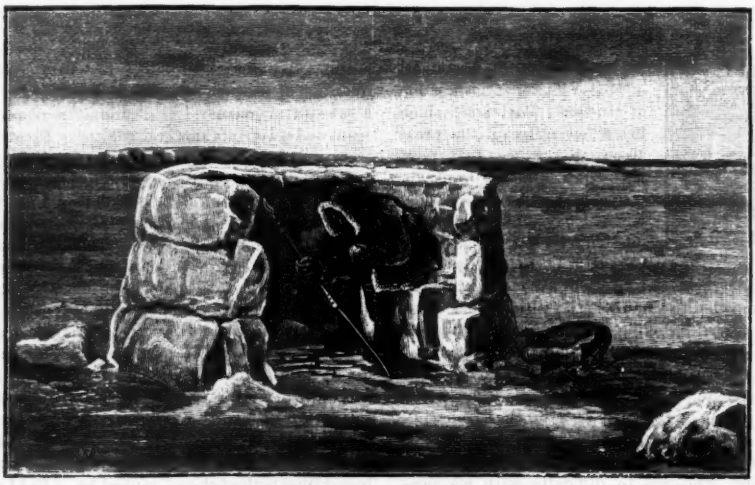


ESKIMO MOTHER AND CHILD.
(*From a Drawing by* A. DICKSON PATTERSON, R.C.A.)

in God's hands?" "And so I had intended," replied he: "but it could not be. I was haunted day and night, and I felt that I should get no rest until I had destroyed the murderers. I arose and went in search of them. I found them, and instantly speared the man. The woman ran off at her utmost speed. I soon overtook her, and raised my spear with the intention of despatching her. She begged piteously for her life, and for a moment I relented; but it was only for a moment; the thought of my comrade steeled my heart against her, and I thrust her through likewise. Now I have nothing to trouble me; appetite and sleep have returned, for my friend's blood has been avenged."

Mr. Peck has been among the Eskimos for many years; hardship daunts him not; danger is his frequent companion; and his superior is not to be found in the mission field. He is always at work, and is as content to sleep in the *igloe* or snow house, surrounded by his somewhat odoriferous flock, as in his own comfortable bed at Fort George, if by that means he can speak a word for his Master, or cause an extra ray of light to shine in the hearts of those committed to his care. He has translated several books, which are now in the hands of his people; and he has some young Eskimos under training who, I trust, will eventually become ministers to their brethren.

Among our Eskimo friends two have stood out very prominently, and my disappointment was great that they were not allowed to labour longer for the good of their fellow-countrymen. They were both baptised by me, one receiving my own name (John Horden), the other that of Timothy—his Eskimo name being Komuk (the Great Worm). The former was a young man of great promise, and was married to an equally good young woman. They lived at the Hudson's Bay Company's establishment at Little Whale River, where their means of usefulness were very extensive, as they saw and instructed every Eskimo who came to the place for the purpose of trade. The man was a great favourite among the Europeans of the post, who all respected him for the



WATCHING A SEAL HOLE.
(*From a Drawing by* A. DICKSON PATTERSON, R.C.A.)



AN ESKIMO WOMAN.
(*Drawn by* A. Dickson Patterson, R.C.A.)

amiability of his temper and the consistency of his life, but in one year both he and his wife died.

Timothy Komuk was the strongest Eskimo I have ever met. He was thoroughly good-tempered, and one day, being insulted by an Indian, he simply took him up and laid him gently on the ground, showing him what he might have done had he felt inclined to resent the injury. He received the Gospel readily, quickly acquired the power of reading and writing, and was indefatigable in committing his one book (consisting of a catechism of the Christian faith, a few hymns, prayers, and texts of Scripture) to memory. He was a hunter, and wandered far and wide in search of food and furs. On one occasion he was two months on one comparatively small field of ice, drifting hither and thither according to the direction of wind and tide. My readers might think that his destruction was inevitable; he, however, felt quite comfortable; he made his snow house, and then patiently awaited the arrival of seals. He secured sufficient for the support of his wife and family, until, carried by wind towards land, he was enabled once more to make his way to the trading-post, where he interested all by the narration of his adventures. He constantly visited all the *igloes* in his neighbourhood, and with book in hand exhorted their inmates to accept the religion he had found so profitable for himself. Many rejected his proposals, but not a few listened to his instructions. Sickness, I thought, would scarcely touch him; he would for years be able to carry on his useful work; but God had ordered otherwise. He was attacked by that great enemy of both Indian and Eskimo, consumption, and after lingering for a time he was called home. His faith never wavered, and he died in peace.

Neither should I forget to mention the aged Melukto. He received the Gospel on my very first visit to Little Whale River, now more than thirty years ago, and ever since he has been most untiring in his exertions for the good of his fellow-Eskimos. He must now be quite eighty years of age, lame, and almost blind; but he rejoices in believing that Christ is his Saviour, and will deem the day a happy one which terminates his earthly pilgrimage.

On the north-western side of the bay, at Fort Churchill, I have likewise an excellent labourer at work, the Rev. J. Lofthouse, who has also made himself familiar with the Eskimo language. The natives of this quarter are not so much addicted to murder as those on the north-east coast, but are some of the most arrant thieves in existence. In the beginning of 1880 I spent two months at Churchill, travelling there from York Fort by means of dogs and sledge. The arrival of a body of Eskimos was always announced by two or three runners who preceded their companions by about a day. As soon as they arrived, everyone belonging to the establishment was summoned to keep watch, lest anything should be stolen.

A large band came in one day, and it was not long before they were with me. They were loud in their protestations of honesty, declared they had never stolen anything, that the thievish Eskimos belonged to another tribe, and begged that they might not be kept shut up at night during their stay at the fort. Some of them showed a great desire to receive instruction, and during their short sojourn made considerable progress in learning to read, as well as in committing some texts of Scripture to memory. Well, one morning they were astir very early, their dogs were harnessed, the sledges were loaded, and the whole body set off. From the vigilant watch kept, it was thought nothing could have been taken; but by-and-by it was discovered that a few at least were both clever and dishonest, for they had during the night got upon the roof of the trading



AN ESKIMO.
(*Drawn by* A. Dickson Patterson, R.C.A.)

room, which was covered with lead, and had cut off a large piece of it, which they had carried away with them, intending therewith to make bullets for their guns. Let us hope that in a few years Christianity may be to these long, long neglected aborigines a living power, transforming them more and more into the image of Christ.

As soon as I have the means placed at my disposal (and for it I require about three thousand pounds), I intend to establish another mission among the Eskimo at Ungava Bay, at the entrance of the Hudson's Straits, where the poor creatures would hail with joy the residence of a man of God among them. The man is forthcoming, one suitable in every respect, who has already spent two years among Eskimo tribes in the Hudson's Straits in the service of the Canadian Government, and who longs to be once more doing his best to enlighten those children of the North who are yet lying in the region and shadow of death.

I may mention that "Eskimo" is not a name these people have given to themselves; it is a nickname from their formerly deadly enemies the Indians, and means a raw-flesh eater; their own name is "Innuit," "the people;" their idea being that God made the rest of the world by way of experiment, and then, as His work of perfection, He created "Innuit." It is just as well, perhaps, that we Englishmen should see that other peoples, as well as ourselves, claim to be the superior part of God's creation. It is, of course, very impertinent of them to indulge in such ideas, but so it is.

SOME EVERY-DAY THOUGHTS.

BY E. C. RICKARDS, AUTHOR OF "HERE AND HEREAFTER."

THE FIEND OF THE MAGNIFYING-GLASS.

AMONGST our tormentors is a teasing little fiend, who goes about with a magnifying-glass in his pocket. His great delight is to take it out—especially if he observes that we are at all out of sorts—and hold it between our eyes and some little sore spot in our minds. If it is no larger than a pin's prick, his glass will make it look big enough to cover the whole range of our vision. When he thinks he has teased us enough, he pockets his magnifying-glass again; leaving us to wonder, when next we look for the little spot, how our eyes could ever have been sharp enough to notice anything so small.

UNISON AND HARMONY.

To hear the members of a circle perpetually re-echo the same opinions is as wearisome as to listen to tunes always sung in unison. Variety is needed in thought, as in music, to give the charm of harmony.

OFFER OF APOLOGY.

To allow our pride to make the occasion of an apology the opportunity of a fresh offence, is to take away with the left hand what we give with the right.

LOVE OF COMBAT.

How fully and how wisely does Christianity respond to the combative instinct that is so strong in some people!

"Behold!" it exclaims, "the battle set in array against you—a combat worthy of your ambition! Here are the forces of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil! In the power of the Divine Majesty attack and conquer them."

THE WORD OF GOD.

What a simple thing, in the thought of a child, is a daisy!

To the mind of a thoughtful man what wonders are contained in that tiny plant! How delicate, how elaborate is its construction; how beautiful the harmony of the laws by which its existence is maintained; how inexplicable the mysterious principle of life, without which the laws would be useless!

So is it with the Word of God. How many of the truths it contains the simple mind of a child is able to receive!

Yet the mature and thoughtful man finds in it ever newer and profounder depths of truth, traces therein fresh proofs of the working of the Hand of God, new signs of that mystery of its Life, breathed into it by the Holy Spirit.

WASTE OF TIME.

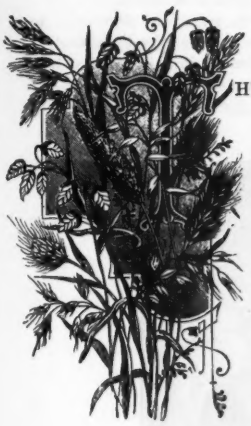
How many people would feel aggrieved if they were told that in future each day, for them, would be shortened by two or three hours. Yet how continually do they recklessly throw away as much and more time every day of their lives, as if for them it were without value!

STANDARD OF DEATH.

Grateful may we well be to Death, that at least for a time he forces upon our view the true standard by which to measure our earthly aims and ambitions. How incessantly have poets, philosophers, theologians, insisted upon their insignificance, and we could not realise it; but lo! Death enters, and compels us to see them in their littleness. Alas! that they should so soon again fill up the foreground as to conceal the larger distance; but at least Death forces their insignificance for a time upon our view.

A RESCUING HAND.

BY JESSIE MACLEOD, AUTHOR OF "A STRANGE COINCIDENCE," ETC.



CHAPTER III.

THE sun was sinking behind dark hills which formed the horizon, when along a road beside the Mississippi, between the plantations and the dyke formed to protect them from inundations, a young man was riding, evidently a traveller, judging by the knapsack between his shoulders and the valise strapped to the crupper of his mustang. He proceeded at a leisurely pace, surveying the scene around him, which, to an Englishman recently arrived in Louisiana, was novel and interesting: with the huge white herons sailing with flapping wings over the surface of the water, the mocking-birds in the tulip-trees, and flocks of arioles regaling themselves on the luscious berries of the quinquina.

Having crossed the ferry lower down the river, and passed three or four low-built shanties, he was looking out for a fork in the road, where, as a letter had informed him, a guide would join him from the plantation to which he was bound. Punctual to the appointment, a horseman appeared, advancing at a brisk trot: a lanky figure, clad in miscellaneous garments, with a large straw hat, from under which peered out eyes bright as a hawk's. His countenance was sallow, cheek-bones prominent, face long, with peaked nose and pointed beard. Instead of riding forward to meet the traveller, he reined up, waiting for him to approach.

"Hallo, stranger!" he called out when they were within speaking distance: "air you the Britisher hailing last from Jackson City?"

"Yes," replied the young man. "I am going to Magnolia Springs, Mr. Hope's plantation."

"All right, mister; I'm Jotham Binnie, which you've p'raps heerd tell on. Born and raised in Vermont State: mountaynious country, stiff sile. Deputy-bailiff on this here trac'. Blencoe sent me to guide you; but, lor! I say a guide's lumber; for this here road's as broad an' cl'ar as a turnpike in the Old Dominion—it runs chock up to the gate. How do 'ee like your bearings? I rayther calkilate you do, some."

"It is the people who make the place, Mr. Jotham," replied the young man rather sadly; for, a stranger and a wayfarer, he had left his kin and country to seek his fortune in America; and without capital this is a difficult undertaking in any quarter of the globe. As it was, he esteemed himself fortunate in obtaining a clerkship on the plantation of Mr. Hope, one of the richest proprietors in Louisiana.

"True for you," answered Jotham, nodding his head. "I some think you'll find us the right fixings; our boss is true grit; quite considerable smart; he's only been here fourteen year, an' made a fortin, all on his own hook—no pardeners."

"I should say that he has a good head on his shoulders. Has he a wife and family?"

"None on his 'n; he's a widdy—but owns a splendiferous step-darter—a desprit handsome gal. Everythink's a newity to you now, Britisher, but when you've been over our diggin's, and clapt eyes on Isabel, you'll never want to absquotulate."

During the next hour Mr. Binnie's untiring and almost unintelligible tongue never flagged, and by the time they reached the Magnolias, the new-comer was enlightened upon every possible subject connected with the plantation and its owner. He told all he knew—possibly a little more.

The moon had risen, when, entering a thicket of magnificent cotton-trees and hollies, they emerged at the large gates of the plantation. The dwelling-house lay long and white in the soft radiance of the moon, surrounded by a garden of the choicest flowers and fine magnolias, from which it derived its name. Beyond it was a group of houses, inhabited by the overseer, bailiffs, and helps; still farther apart was the negro settlement, working on the rice, cotton, and sugar plantations.

A most hospitable reception awaited the new-comer—who was much fatigued by his journey from New York—at the bailiff's dwelling, where his quarters were assigned.

On the following morning three persons were seated at breakfast at Mr. Hope's residence—the planter himself, a man of about forty years of age, with an intelligent, sunburnt countenance, active and well set-up in figure, dressed in a suit of white linen. A very lovely girl of eighteen, his step-daughter, an heiress in right of her parents: she was, indeed, a favourite of fortune, for she was bright and good, endowed with all these advantages combined. A graceful girl, she was attired in a soft white dress with delicate lace at the neck and wrists. The third person was an elderly *lady* of matronly appearance, who was engaged in pouring out the coffee: she was the *chaperon* of Isabel, and also took the direction of Mr. Hope's establishment.

In spite of great heat, the room was delightfully temperate, with its matted floor, many windows and *persiennes* opening on the verandah which encircled the house, muslin draperies, and profusion of flowers, the air redolent of their perfume. The breakfast-table was luxuriously spread, and perfectly furnished with choice porcelain, silver, and damask, proclaiming wealth and refinement.

"Massa Blencoe and anoder gentleman want to see you, sar," said a young mulatto servant, opening the door.

"Show them into my study; I will come to them," replied Mr. Hope. Then to his step-daughter: "It is

the new clerk; I have selected him from upwards of seventy applicants."

"Then I hope he will prove a success," said Isabel.

"And not a crooked stick," commented Madame Santos.

"I will return and finish my breakfast presently. I feel anxious to see him," said the planter, rising.

Upon entering the study, he found the sturdy figure of his overseer and the slight one of the newcomer. Both bowed respectfully. The young man, rested and refreshed after his journey, looked a handsome, fair-complexioned, blue-eyed youth of three-and-twenty, far more resembling the type of young men seen at a cricket-match at Lord's, or one of the crew in an Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, than clerk to a planter.

Mr. Hope's dark eyes looked at him with such intentness, that they brought a faint blush to his open countenance; he took his hand and shook it warmly.

"Welcome to Magnolia Springs," said he kindly. "I am glad to see a countryman here. I trust you will be happy, and find it a true home."

"It'll be his own fault, sir, if he doesn't. And now, p'raps you'd like to talk to him by himself. I only walked up with him to introjuice him, being strange like, so you'll excuse me."

And the overseer took his leave.



"'I have selected him from upwards of seventy applicants.'"

"Sit down," said the planter to the young Englishman, whose eyes glistened with pleasure and surprise at his friendly manner.

"And now, Mr. Breakspear, tell me how it is that the son of your father, who is one of the most respected merchants in the city of London, comes to take a clerkship to a planter in the United States. You have surely not offended him?"

"My father and I have never disagreed in our lives. He is one of the kindest—the best——" He stopped, for his voice grew husky. After a minute's pause he continued, "I came out not only with my

father's consent, but by his wish, sir. He thought it best for me to strike out in a new career."

Mr. Hope gazed at his young face with great interest. "You must not think me inquisitive," said he, "but once upon a time I myself was in a merchant's house at New York. One of their most esteemed correspondents was Mr. Breakspear, of Fenchurch Street—influential, wealthy. I own I am curious to hear why an only son (as your letter of application informed me) should descend to an inferior position."

The young man hesitated, then, with eyes cast down, he answered in a very low voice—

"It is because my father has failed."

"*What?* Failed!" cried the planter, springing to his feet. "I am sorry, very sorry, to hear it. When? How? Tell me."

"Thank you for your sympathy," said young Walter, much moved. "It is a sad story. The calamity has been hanging over us for some time: it began by the sudden collapsing of two banks, one directly following the other. Our trusted manager embezzled and decamped with considerable sums of money; in fact, losses and disasters came, as it seemed, in endless succession: it was blow upon blow. My father is a man who prefers poverty to dishonour; he has sold everything he possessed, and paid his debts—no one has lost by him. This happened recently. I came to America to try my fortune in a new sphere. I saw your advertisement for a clerk in a New York paper directly I landed—and, to my great surprise, I have been fortunate enough to obtain your appointment. How delighted my parents will be, not only at the very handsome salary you offer me, but with your kind, your extremely kind reception of a stranger!"

Gratitude was so plainly expressed on Walter Breakspear's face that the planter was visibly affected.

"And what are your father's intentions for the future?"

"He is retaining part of our London warehouses, and hopes to struggle on in a small way—to try and recover himself."

"Surely for so well-known a house there must be many persons willing to come forward and start it afresh?"

"That has been the case, sir, but my father objects to loans, neither will he sell his name. He wishes to try and re-establish the firm. Fortunately both my sisters are married."

"He *will* recover—the righteous will not be forsaken. Now, my young friend, we will enter upon your duties, and what I expect of you. Then one of my people shall take you for a ride over some of the plantations."

For two or three days afterwards Mr. Hope seemed much preoccupied, and busily engaged in arranging papers. One morning he sought Madame Santos.

"Madame," said he, "would you be surprised to hear that I find business matters will shortly take me to England?"

"I do not know that it ought to surprise me—but I trust you are going to take Isabel and me with you?"

"That is precisely what I am not going to do. I shall endeavour to transact my affairs as quickly as possible. Things here must go on exactly the same as usual. Not much company, remember; live very quietly. By-the-bye, if you can pay a little attention to young Breakspear, do so."

"He is an agreeable, handsome young man, monsieur," replied Madame Santos, "but allow me to say that the less he and Isabel see of one another, the better. They are both of an impressionable age—it would be neither prudent nor kind to throw them together."

"Act as you think proper, madame. I leave my step-daughter in your hands with the greatest confidence, but I do not think that Isabel has any ideas of what you suggest in her little head. On the whole, I think she rather dislikes the young men of these parts."

"Of these parts, yes; but this one is so different from any we have had visit here. He has fair hair and fine eyes—he is very dangerous. With her large fortune, Isabel must do better."

"Better than worth, good heart, excellent education, and honourable family? Money is not everything."

"It is three parts of everything," replied Madame sententiously.

Within a week of this conversation, having completed his arrangements, Mr. Hope was on his way to England.

(To be concluded.)

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

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SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.—MARCH 17 TO APRIL 14, 1889.

March 17th.—Christ's Love to the Young.

To read—St. Mark x. 13—22. *Golden Text—ver.* 14.

I. CHILDREN BLESSED. (13—16.) Christ came to bless all—old and young, rich and poor, sick and well, etc. Have had many lessons about His goodness to grown-up people—to-day's lesson tells of His love for children. Notice three classes of people—

1. *The parents.*—(*a*) They brought their children to Christ.

(*b*) Wished Him to touch them—*i.e.*, put His hands on their heads, saying words of prayer over them. (St. Matt. xix. 13.)

This mode of blessing common amongst Jews. Examples—

Isaac blessed Jacob. (Gen. xxviii. 1.)

Jacob blessed Joseph's sons. (Gen. xlviii. 14.)

So these parents wished Christ to bless their children.

2. *The disciples* wanted to keep the children away from Christ. Why?

The children might trouble Him.

He too great to care for little ones.

But how much they mistook the character of Christ! He born a babe to show His love for children.

3. *Jesus Christ*—How did He feel?—

(*a*) Much displeasure at disciples.

(*b*) Much goodwill to the parents.

(*c*) Much tender love to the children.

So He smiled, took the babes in His arms—spake kind words—put hands on them—blessed them.

How are we to be like children?

Full of faith and confidence, as a child to its parent. Gentleness, humility, patience, docility, all characteristics of childhood. These are requirements for Christ's children.

Lessons. 1. *Duty* to bring children to Christ by prayer and teaching.

2. *Danger* of keeping back from Christ by bad example, etc.

3. *Blessing* of coming to Christ.

II. Young Man Unblessed. (17—22.) What did this man show?

(*a*) *Eagerness*—by running to reach Christ.

(*b*) *Respect*—by kneeling before Him.

(*c*) *Anxiety* to be taught by His questions.

(*d*) *Ignorance* that Christ was God.

What did our Lord show him?—

(*a*) Must keep the commandments.

(*b*) Must live for others as well as self.

(*c*) Must forsake all at Christ's call.

He could not do this—loved his money too much.

Lesson. The love of money is the root of all evil.

March 24th.—Blind Bartimæus.

To read—St. Mark x. 46—52.

I. The Blind Man. (46—48.) Many people cured by Christ, very few whose name given—only Lazarus, specially loved; Mary Magdalene, specially cured; and Bartimæus (probably), specially known.

Christ did miracles for many reasons—*e.g.*—

(*a*) To show He was God—as turning water into wine. (St. John ii. 11.)

(*b*) To show His compassion—as feeding the multitudes. (St. Matt. xv. 32.)

(*c*) When specially implored, as in this case.

Blindness specially sad—shuts off from so much.

Bartimæus could not work—could only beg.

But keen sense of hearing—hears tramp of the crowd. What does it mean? Jesus, the wonderful Prophet, is passing. What does he do?

(*a*) Cries aloud—showing his sense of need.

(*b*) Cries eagerly and repeatedly—showing his earnestness.

(*c*) Cries to Christ to help—showing his faith.

Thus his prayer had in it all the elements of true prayer—sense of need, earnestness, faith.

Such a prayer never could be in vain.

II. The Cure. (49—52.) Christ cured people in many ways.

(*a*) By speaking at a distance—nobleman's son.

(*b*) By speaking to the person—the leper.

(*c*) By using means—anointing the eyes. (St. John ix. 6.)

Notice the steps in this case—

(*a*) He *called* the blind man to Him.

(*b*) He *questioned* him as to his want.

(*c*) He *healed* him with a word.

Can also notice the steps on the blind man's side—

(*a*) He called out *in hope* that Christ would hear.

(*b*) He cast off his outer robe *in eagerness* to get to Christ.

(*c*) He answered readily *in faith* in Christ's power.

(*d*) He followed Him *in gratitude* for his recovery of sight.

Let teacher point out the two persons together.

The blind man in his sad condition—object of pity.

Christ in His majestic greatness—able and willing to help.

What brought them together? The man's faith—Christ's word.

III. Lessons. Blindness a type of man's natural state.

(*a*) He cannot see the things of God. (1 Cor. ii. 14.) Like the Pharisees. (St. John ix. 41.)

(*b*) He cannot understand God's Word. (Ps. cxix. 18.)

(*c*) He cannot know the way to heaven.

What must he have to be saved?—

(*a*) *A sense of need*—to cry for mercy.

(*b*) *Strong faith*—to call upon God.

(*c*) *Perseverance*—not to be discouraged.

Christ waiting to be gracious. Therefore—

"Just as I am, poor, naked, blind—
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I want, in Thee to find
O Lamb of God, I come.

MARCH 31ST.—REVIEW OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS.

HAVE had twelve lessons from St. Mark's Gospel on the Life of Christ. What have they taught us? We have seen—

I. Christ as a Man—living on earth.

II. Christ as a King—conquering Satan.

III. Christ as a Teacher—teaching by parables, calling disciples.

IV. Christ with the sick and blind—leper, etc.

V. Christ with the young — blessing children, etc.

VI. Christ as Messiah, sent from God.

Notice three points in each—

I. CHRIST AS A MAN. Question on His life on earth.

1. Going about with disciples, mostly in fishing villages of Galilee—holy in life.

2. On Sabbaths always going to worship in synagogue—devout in conduct.

3. Always kind, gentle, sympathetic in manner.

II. CHRIST AS A KING. 1. Way prepared by John the Baptist.

2. Showed His power over all disease.

3. Conquered Satan in person of evil spirits.

III. CHRIST AS A TEACHER. 1. Explained Scripture in the synagogues.

2. Taught parables from nature—*e.g.*, the sower.

3. Called out and instructed twelve disciples.

IV. CHRIST WITH THE SICK. 1. Compassion to the lepers.

2. Encouragement to the timid woman.

3. Readiness to heal Bartimæus.

V. CHRIST WITH THE YOUNG. 1. Blessings to little children.

2. Encouragement to parents.

3. Caution against leading children to sin.

VI. CHRIST AS MESSIAH. 1. Claims homage from all.

2. Requires self-denial in His followers.

3. Promises future rewards.

Now see what are our duties in consequence—

I. *Christ as a Man.* We are to copy His example (1 Pet. ii. 21), keeping Sabbath-day holy—upright in life—gentle and courteous to all around.

II. *Christ as a King.* We must bow down to Him. Give up hearts, wills, lives to His service. Do nothing He would not approve.

III. *Christ as a Teacher.* Study His sayings—try to understand them—read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. His word is indeed a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path. (Ps. cxix. 105.)

IV. *Christ with the Sick.* Can we not try like Him always to be doing some good? Sympathy, friendly offices, etc. The poor are always with us. (St. Mark xiv. 7.)

V. *Christ with the Young.* Children can help one another by example, influence, little deeds of kindness, etc.

VI. *Christ as Messiah.* As God's Son — our Saviour—demands surrender of ourselves to Him—all the faith, love, devotion we can give Him. Must confess Him here if would reign with Him hereafter.

APRIL 7TH.—THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.

To read—St. Mark xi. 1—11. *Golden Text—Zech. ix.* 9.

I. PREPARATION. (1—6.) Christ now coming near to His death—going to pay His last visit to Jerusalem. Had been there often before.

Dedicated in the Temple when forty days old. (St. Luke ii. 22.)

Kept Passover there when twelve years old.

Cleansed Temple when began His ministry. (St. John ii. 15.)

Kept the various appointed feasts.

But the Jews there rejected Him—stoned Him. (St. John viii. 59.)

Therefore, most of His mighty works done in Galilee.

Still wished to visit the city once more—to come as King to His own people. So arranges a triumphal visit.

(*a*) Stops at Bethany, two miles off, on slope of Mount of Olives.

(*b*) Sends two disciples to the village.

(*c*) Tells them exactly where to find the ass.

(*d*) Prepares them for objections from the owner.

(*e*) Assures them of his willingness to let the ass go.

What did this show on Christ's part?—

Omniscience in knowing all that should happen.

Omnipotence in moving the owner's heart.

Therefore, He must indeed be God.

LESSONS. 1. *The Lord hath need*—because He chose to have need. He condescended to accept human help.

He still has need of all we can do for Him and His people.

2. *The blessing of a willing mind.* The owner's ass was used by Christ, and helped on His triumph. (Golden text.)

So all things done for Him are for His glory.

II. THE TRIUMPH. (7—11.) Picture the entry to Jerusalem—

Jesus rides in front on the colt—meek and lowly.

The people throw their garments on the ground.

Palm-branches strawed and waved in triumph.

Hosannas sung by all in praise.

What does all this show on their part?

(*a*) *Acknowledgment* of Christ as their King.

(*b*) *Welcome* to Him as the Messiah.

(*c*) *Praise* to God for sending His Son.

What does it show as regards Jerusalem?

(*a*) *Probation.* This was its day of grace.

(*b*) *Mercy.* Christ came to it as its Saviour.

(*c*) *Fickleness.* In four days the same people shouted, "Crucify!"

Remind of all that had been done for Jerusalem.

(*a*) *Chosen* by God as the favoured city (Ps. xlviii. 1, 2.)

(*b*) *Hallowed* by the Temple being built there.

(*c*) *Visited* thrice yearly by all pious Jews. (Deut. xvi. 16.)

(*d*) *Warned* by the prophet. (Isaiah i. 1.)

(*e*) *Wept over* by Christ. (St. Luke xix. 41.)

What more could God have done?

LESSONS. Let Jerusalem be a warning—

1. Great privileges involve great responsibilities.

2. Day of grace slighted will bring down vengeance.

3. Now is the accepted time.

XUM

APRIL 14TH.—THE REJECTED SON.

To read—St. Mark xii. 1—12. *Golden Text—St. John i.* 11.

I. THE PARABLE. (1—9.) This the last week of Christ's earthly life.

Spent part of this day teaching in the Temple.

Had ridden in triumph to the city.

Cleansed the Temple of those who profaned it.

Argued with the chief priests as to His authority (xi. 27).

Now speaks a parable against them. Why?—

(*a*) They despised and rejected Him.

(*b*) They stirred up the people against Him.

The parable founded on a story such as was not uncommon—

(*a*) The *vineyard* planted by the owner with great care.

(*b*) *Hedge* for protection, tower for watchman, wine-vat for pressing juice, all complete.

(*c*) *Leased* to others during the owner's absence.

(*d*) *Servant* sent for fruits—beaten and killed,

(*e*) *Son* sent at last—despised and rejected.

(*f*) *Punishment* to follow on these wicked men.

II. THE MEANING. So easy, seen by the people at once. Owner of the vineyard—God.

(*a*) The vineyard—the Jewish Church.

(*b*) The hedge—God's protection.

(*c*) The servants—the prophets.

(*d*) The Son—Jesus Christ. (Golden Text.)

(*e*) The rejection—Christ crucified.

(*f*) The punishment—Jerusalem destroyed, Jews scattered.

But the rejected stone became the head-stone.

Christ, once crucified, will put down all enemies. (1 Cor. xv. 25.)

Instances of prophets persecuted—

Prophets destroyed by Jezebel. (1 Kings xix. 1.)

Jeremiah imprisoned. (Jer. xxxiii. 1.)

Daniel put in lions' den, etc.

Instances of Christ being rejected—

At Nazareth, when taught in synagogue. (St. Luke iv. 29.)

At Jerusalem, for healing on the Sabbath. (St. John v. 16.)

And many other times.

LESSONS. 1. What think ye of Christ?

(*a*) Some *despise* Him—care not to follow in His ways.

(*b*) Some *reject* Him—openly sin against Him.

(*c*) Some *persecute* Him—mock at those who love Him.

But the same Saviour, despised of men, sits at God's right hand, and is coming to judge all. Therefore—

2. Kiss ye the Son, lest He be angry.

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

SEED-SOWING.

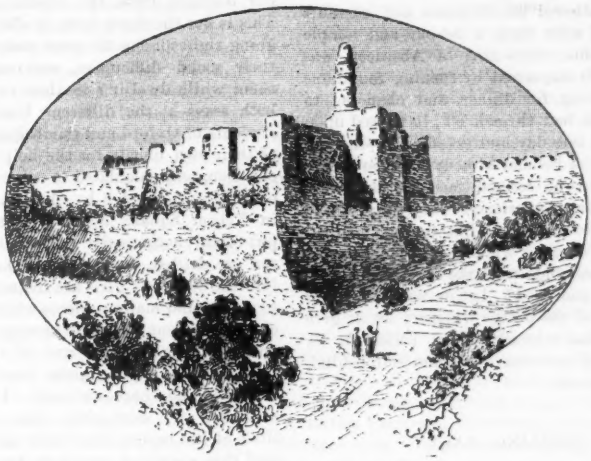
THE light is surely breaking across the vast land of India, since Christianity is breathing hope and liberty to women whose race has been oppressed for generations. "We have entrance to quite 1,000 houses in Calcutta," writes a lady worker connected with the Baptist Missionary Society, "and might open many more with added help." A constant correspondence is kept up with several women formerly visited, and tracts are sent them monthly. Children carry home sweet Christian hymns, pupils go forth from the Zenana Mission to take charge of village schools, and portions of Scripture are distributed broadcast at festivals and in quiet, lonely dwellings. All this does not go forward without opposition; we read of tracts flung in the ladies' faces, of abuse, and prejudice, and mud-throwing. Nevertheless, at one festival forty-two gospels and nearly 200 hymn-books were sold to the people. A girl of nineteen came to the missionaries, knowing of Christianity only through portions of Scripture that had come in her way. Being married, she was restored to her husband, who was most grateful for the protection the Mission had given her, and there are hopes that both husband and wife may profess Christianity. Speaking of the Bengali tendency to deceit, the missionary exclaims, "Oh, that I may live Christ *myself* before my pupils!" Is not this the yearning, too, of every teacher at home, dreading to put, by unconscious example, any hindrance in the way of those to whom we would fain show the Lord? If only Christians would *be* Christians, our sister cries yearningly, India would be won for Jesus; but there are some professing Christians who somehow look on missions with indifference if not with hostility. They are so accustomed to the natives as idolaters and Mohammedans that missionary zeal appears to them "much ado about nothing;" but in some sense every Christian ought to be a missionary, working out the fulfilment of the Lord's parting words, "Go ye out into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

THE VEIL OF MYSTERY.

Ministers are often disquieted by perplexing questions—there are certain hearers who do not seem quite happy unless engulfed in prophetical difficulties, and various problems are propounded for pastoral solution, patience and forbearance being thus called forth into valiant exercise. "But I have seldom," says a pastor, "felt so nonplussed as when a little child brought me

this question to answer—'Why does A come before B in the alphabet?'" The little brain was not content to be told, "Because it is in the spelling-book," or "Because it has always been so," or even "Because teacher says that is right." She took the problem to the minister, and he owns he felt at a loss. He did his best to satisfy the little inquirer, and, fortunately for their elders, children's questions can be diverted, frequently, by the "biscuit or confectionery plum;" but it occurred to him afterwards that many perplexities concerning which arguments go on from year to year are as difficult of settlement, and, after all, as immaterial as the child's mental difficulty. There are certain points that give rise to disputes wordy and literary; but God has cast across them a veil of mystery, through which His sun will shine at last. Had He meant those mysteries to be quite plain to our vision, He would have left no perplexity surrounding them. It is not of the first importance that we should understand all the Divine workings: the one thing needful is the surrender of our will to God's, and that we follow where the Master leads. And if our own life and circumstances be veiled with mystery now, let us not keep asking why and *wherefore*, but let us be still, our hearts fixed on Christ, our faith content to wait till we know fully as we are known.

"Till the word of God hath broken
All life's mysteries, good or ill,
Be thou still."



THE JAFFA GATE, JERUSALEM.

CHRISTIAN PROGRESS IN THE EAST.

Last November the Mission House in Jerusalem (connected with Mrs. Meredith's far-reaching enterprises) was opened by prayer and praise; the first hymn sung was, "O God of Bethel"—that familiar strain with which Livingstone was long since laid to rest in Westminster Abbey. One after another, God's servants go forth into the vineyard beneath His protecting care; into all parts of the world His truth is penetrating, and yearning hearts long to make Jerusalem again a praise and glory in the earth. "It is down-trodden and forsaken-looking," the deaconesses report; "how different this must be from the Jerusalem which our Lord wept over!" The Mission House is on the high road to Jerusalem, outside the Jaffa Gate. Beautiful texts adorn the walls, and friends have contributed a piano and an American organ—the deaconesses hope to be able to teach the children of missionaries and teachers, as well as preach the Gospel around, and nurse the sick.

LIFE'S TURNING-POINTS.

We all know those familiar words of Shakespeare concerning the "tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." Even in temporal affairs some small circumstance or opportunity has often changed the current of our career; and spiritual life also has its "turning-points"—those solemn moments when the soul stands face to face with Divine Truth, and reaches a never-to-be-forgotten crisis. We hold in our hands an interesting book on this subject by Mary E. Beck—"Turning-Points" (Hodder and Stoughton). Here we are shown some crises in the history of eminent Christians that turned their steps resolutely from darkness unto God. We read of Augustine of Hippo, seeking for truth, crying for deliverance, hearing a child's voice from a neighbouring house, *Tolle—lege*, "Take—read." The words were like a message to him; he opened the sacred page, and his eye lighted on these solemn words: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh." The wandering heart

cast itself upon Christ, and the fetters of sin were broken. We find mention, too, of Bunyan, strolling about Bedford, chancing to overhear the happy religious converse of three or four poor women, and being so much affected by their words, that the effect was as if a spark had fallen among tinder. Judson, the great missionary, was solemnised by the fact that in the next room to his own at a wayside inn a young student died one night, and Judson could not rid his mind of the questions, "Was he prepared?" and what would his own deistical companions say or do at such a crisis? Knill was converted through being present at family prayers in the house of a tradesman, who gathered his shopmen and servants together, and held with them a devout and simple service. Lord Haddo, fifth Earl of Aberdeen, was deeply and strangely impressed by turning round one evening after dressing for dinner, and chancing to notice the clothes he had thrown off; it flashed upon him that he would one day undress finally—that he would be unclothed of his mortal body—and so deeply was he moved that he seemed face to face with eternity. Our human experiences vary, our opportunities and impressions differ; but to each and all of us is there not an hour when God's Spirit strives with us mightily, and bids us make our solemn, life-long choice of God and good? Let us not harden our hearts at the hour of the Divine whisper; let us give thanks that God has remembered us, called to us, chosen and ordained us to leave sin and self behind, and to be His witnesses.

THE "SHILLING BABY."

"Can a mother forget her child?" asks the Word of God, and human experience shows us so much of neglect, hard-heartedness, desertion, that with wonderment we confess it *is* possible to come to the end of a mother's tenderness. "Yet will I not forget thee," says the Almighty. And to many—whom drink and crime have robbed of their natural protectors, their Father in heaven has raised up friends who have saved them from drifting to shipwreck. Dr. Barnardo, in his yearning to befriend the young, has *purchased* little waifs before now. He obtained a little boy and girl from their begging mother for seven shillings and sixpence once, and he tells a pathetic tale of his "shilling baby," a miserable little forsaken creature that crawled about a lodging-house near Ratcliff Highway. A woman, who was supposed to have charge of it, though it belonged to people who had wandered away, offered to sell it for ten shillings, and finally arrived, in a drunken condition, to say Dr. Barnardo could have it for a shilling. He secured the baby, and it was sent to Ilford, where there proved to be neither beginning nor end to its apparel; the clothes had all to be cut away, and it turned out that baby's plaything, sucked at intervals with gravity, was an old fishbone wrapped in rag. A more wretched child could scarcely be imagined; but some time after, Dr. Barnardo was at tea in one of the cottage homes at Ilford, and the cottage pet, a chubby, blue-eyed, curly-haired little girl, was installed in her high chair beside him. He could not quite recall the winsome baby's name, and asked the cottage mother whence she had come. "Why," she whispered, "do you not remember? She is the *shilling baby!*" "Then," says Dr. Barnardo, "from my soul I thanked God for enabling me to hold out to this forlorn child the golden sceptre of a mercy that would, by His grace, purify and bless its whole life."

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION.

A preacher once remarked that some people extend their charity as we hold out buns to a bear—keeping our distance from the objects of our benevolence. This is not the finest form of charity; and the idea of going right among the poor, seeing and understanding their social difficulties, and endeavouring to help them while dwelling in their midst, has occurred to both sexes at the different Universities. The lady-students of Oxford and Cambridge have now a society of their own, chiefly for the help of poor women and children, and calculated to solve the difficult problem of raising character by charity. Their residence is in Nelson Square, Southwark, and their efforts are put forth energetically in various directions. Children are drilled, taught, shown how to play, sent out into the country; girls are instructed as to sanitation, economy, and many subjects which will improve their condition—tennis and swimming are not forgotten; and the lady-residents are, of course, at liberty to take part in any religious work carried on by the churches and chapels around. Pupil-teachers, young servants, and work-girls, tired mothers who know little of life beyond their own sphere of work, should find this society a means of rest, uplifting, and recreation. There are wise words in the report of the treasurer of the Pupil Teachers' Association:—"This work is nothing if it is not a religious work; the games and concerts and classes are the means, and not the end." Hope and faith point to the time when the grimy babies of the present shall be good and industrious women, because those who strive to better their fate would fain teach their relatives to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to learn the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom.

"FORGIVENESS FULL AND FREE."

A minister told a little anecdote concerning his niece, that illustrates a child's strong faith in the efficacy of prayer, and her joy in the Divine forgiveness. A sudden coldness took possession of the child towards her uncle. He could not understand her changed aspect, nor her evident disapproval; sternness took the place of fun, and he could only wonder at the mystery. The little one's demeanour was not explained till she was kneeling at her evening prayer, when she was heard to plead, "Oh, God, forgive my uncle for taking that lump of sugar." He then recollected that, as he sat chatting at the tea-table, he had put a piece of loaf-sugar in his mouth, an act which his niece's quick eyes had observed, and which had troubled her heart ever since on his behalf. No sooner had she uttered this prayer, however, than she felt certain it had been answered—her uncle *was*

XUM

forgiven, and she gladly and freely made friends with him again as pardoned and reclaimed. Would that our own faith were more akin to the unquestioning trust of a little child! Let us in very truth believe the Lord hears and answers our supplications.

GOSPEL WORK IN PARIS.

One summer Sunday in 1857, a lady was resting in the Tuileries Gardens, waiting till some Protestant place of worship should open; a child on the same bench was playing with a book, and the lady gladly recognised it as a French New Testament. She entered into conversation with the child's father as to the preciousness of the Word of God, and he proved to be the colporteur of a Protestant mission, in connection with which a prayer-meeting was held that morning in a large upper room. She was so much interested in the evangelist of the little community, M. Vignal, that she has done her utmost to stir up Christian people to pray for his work and help it forward. Many encouraging testimonies show the work has not been in vain: we hear of earnest, impressive services held at the cemeteries, of house-to-house visitation, of infidels affected, converts continuing faithful, children asking for Bibles for their parents, and such cases as that of a Sunday-scholar who, when dying, was offered a medal of the Virgin, but replied, "No, M. le curé, this medal can do nothing for me; all I need is within this Word of God." At present—perhaps through the joyful fact that other agencies are now at work for the evangelisation of France—the brook of financial help seems drying up; but the good work is earnestly commended to the prayers of God's people, and contributions towards M. Vignal's support will be gladly received by Lady Congleton, 53, Great Cumberland Place, W., or by Miss E. W. Clift, 10, Trafalgar Terrace, St. Mary Church Road, Torquay.

IN OTHER LANDS.

The production of versions of the Bible in native languages grows apace. We have now before us an interesting work, by the Rev. A. W. Murray, upon "The Bible in the Pacific" (Nisbet), in which he tells the story of the difficulties which had to be overcome before the now numerous translations of God's Word into the languages of the Pacific Islands could be accomplished. Incidentally the work gives many interesting pictures of missionary life and labour in these far-away regions, and we can appraise at something like their real value the sacrificing, self-denying labours of those who have gone out, that a people who sat in darkness may see the Great Light. Naturally Bible translation is an invaluable aid to the missionaries, and one that they, as well as all Christians, are anxious to extend. One of the labourers in this distant mission-field, to whom Mr. Murray alludes in his book, was the Rev. J. G. Paton, whose work lay in the islands of Tanna and Niua, or, as it is sometimes called, Aniwa, islands in the New Hebrides group. An interesting autobiography of this heroic ambassador of the cross has just been published by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. The work is only carried down to the point at which he was obliged to forsake the island of Tanna, and is full of the details of the interesting though deadly warfare with circumstances that were, for a time, too strong for the missionary in this region, but which at last bore glorious fruit in the after success which attended missions on this very island, from which Mr. Paton was driven in 1862. Mr. Paton promises a second part of his autobiography, if the first is found useful and interesting by the public. We feel sure that his friends, and his Scotch friends especially, will demand the fulfilment of this purpose at his hands.—From a story of missionary struggle and enterprise in the far Pacific, to an account of a pilgrimage to the Christian Churches of Eastern Europe and Western Asia, is a wide leap. The Rev. T. G. Clark, of Graz, in Austria, has much to tell that is deeply interesting concerning the churches of Russia and Eastern Europe in his "Christianity East and West" (Hodder and Stoughton). The work strikes us as being a little lacking in order, but it gives some very valuable information, and is the work of one well able to deal with the subject.

JONAH AND HIS GOURD.

Dr. Hutchinson sends us the following communication on this subject:—"In reading the wondrous story of Jonah, we are apt to overlook the difficulties of the journey he was, for the second time, called upon to undertake. From the trans-Jordanic frontier of the kingdom of Israel, Nineveh was about 420 miles to the north-east, on the left bank of the Hiddekel, or Tigris, the Euphrates intervening about 170 miles to the south-west. Thus, a march of forty-two days, *at least*, not including halts, and crossing the two great rivers, lay before him, and each day, as he advanced, grew warmer and warmer. Crossing the Tigris and entering the suburbs of Nineveh, his message of impending woe is accepted by the king and his subjects, and a solemn fast, with mighty supplication to God, is ordered, and universally carried out. 'And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil. . . . and He did it not.' Jonah dares to remonstrate at this act of mercy, and, sullen and resentful, he makes himself a booth outside the city, and to its east, doubtless of the reeds growing on the river-side. In similar localities, such huts are common in India, and are quickly run up of two reed screens leaning against one another, a triangular one fixed at one end, and a similar movable one at the entrance. To protect him from the heat (for all such structures are more or less translucent), 'the Lord God prepared a gourd' to run up and over the reed hut, 'that it might be a shadow over his head.' Now, what was this 'gourd'? The Hebrew word is *kikaijon* (*j* pronounced as *y*), supposed by commentators to indicate the *Palma Christi*, the *Ricinus communis*, or castor-oil plant; now, considering the slow growth of this plant, so common in India, the non-umbrageousness of its foliage, as well as the acridity (common to all *Euphorbiaceæ*) of its juices, I don't think it can represent the 'gourd.' But let us deal literally with the great Natural Order of the gourds (*Cucurbitaceæ*), and in any one of them we can meet the requirements of

rapid and umbrageous growth, up and over the booth, a thorough protection from solar heat; and thus, in India, you see them growing over many a hut, thatched or tiled. Further, as we are in the hot season, the Tigris would be low, and its edges and sand-banks would be utilised, as in India, for the growth of pumpkins, melons, cucumbers, and numerous other members of the gourd family. Jonah's gourd may, I think, be identified with the Indian *kăkrī*, where the root, two *k*'s, may represent that of the similarly provided Hebrew *kĭkaijon*. While writing the above I am pleased to find the LXX. rendering 'gourd' by κολοκύνθη, *Cucumis colocynthis*, Nat. Order *Cucurbitaceæ*, or gourd family. When Jonah's gladness, on account of the shelter afforded by the gourd, was at its height, 'God prepared a worm when the morning rose next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered." Whatever the nature of this 'worm,' it is obvious that a castor-oil tree, six to eight feet high (as it would need to be to *overshadow* Jonah's booth), with its thick stem and large rootlets, would be more difficult to destroy than the slender half- to one-inch stem and tender rootlets of a gourd. Further, the castor-oil plant, in India, is notoriously free from attack, above or below ground; cattle won't touch its leaves, nor will white ants (the great underground destroyers of India) attack its roots or stem; but they think nothing of cutting the roots of all cucurbitaceous plants. I have seen a gourd climbing over a hut destroyed thus in one night by white ants, which are generically known as *kīra* (worm), and specifically as *dīmăk*, white ant. Was it the white ant which smote the gourd so that it perished in a night? I venture to think it was—that is, if white ants are as common in Asiatic Turkey as they are in India."



"The buds are blowing."

"OCCUPY TILL I COME."

Life has been compared to a leasehold possession, and eternity to a freehold; let us beware lest we reverse this truth in our own minds, and lay hold upon the things of this life as though absolutely and entirely our own. They are entrusted to us by our Master, to be used for Him and for those less privileged than ourselves. Money carries with it immense responsibility, for when the great day of reckoning shall come, we must give an account of our stewardship, and show if we laid out our gold to interest by lending to the poor and furthering the triumphs of the Gospel. For the richest among us an hour will come when our fingers can close around no shining coins, when only one Book—and that not our bank-book—will be of interest to us, and when we shall have no pockets to carry away our possessions to the Home where the rich and the poor meet together. Though the rich are surrounded by temptations, the fact remains, to God's glory, that very many among them are spending their money as His stewards; and it is unfair to cry down all capitalists, for, as a City Missionary explained to some socialists, Christian capitalists have raised and supported almshouses, asylums, schools, churches, and many invaluable agencies for good. May it be a matter for our personal consideration how we are expending the property we possess; the Master stands beside the treasury—may we all take to heart the good advice of Holmes: "Put not your trust in money, but *put your money in trust*."

THE TRIUMPH OF SPRING.

"Spring, who did scatter all her wealth last year,
Had gone to Heaven for more."

So sings the poet; and his words seem fulfilled as violets and primroses stir and wake, and the gold of crocus and daffodil shines out through mist and rain. Again the annual resurrection goes on in our midst, with its marvels of glory—"the great annual miracle of the blossoming of Aaron's rod." The flowers were late last year in bidding us good-bye; in our own garden, primroses and stocks smiled a welcome to Christmas, and from various parts of England we heard of rosebuds in the gardens even in December; but at last the brave blossoms died away one by one, and frost and cold held sovereign sway. So has it seemed to us in life sometimes; the leaf and flower have faded, darkness has settled down upon our spirits, death has taken away the lives that seemed dearer than our own, and Winter seems sovereign eternally. But our Lord, says Luther, has written "the promise of resurrection in every leaf of spring:" the buds are blowing in bright expansion now; very soon the south winds will breathe blessing to hill and vale, and the frozen brooklets will again make summer music; for there is a Love that conquers death, and the eternal life of Jesus is the assurance of comfort, joy, and light, that most surely will arise. Why should we sorrow for our lost as those that have no hope, when even now fresh, innocent daisies are beginning to awaken in God's-acre, and the dews of spring are baptising anew the grasses on the graves? Nature's text is Immortality—



THE TRIUMPH OF SPRING.

life beautiful and strong, with powers renewed, life bright with new-born hopes, and tender with sweet memories, because hill and valley and every human heart are in the keeping of the Lord of love. Our thoughts go back to our happy childhood; our visions go forward by faith to that nearing land of everlasting spring, now that the winter is past, the flowers appear, and the time of the singing of birds is come.

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

Dr. Plummer's able work on the "Pastoral Epistles" (Hodder and Stoughton) is less an exposition of the sacred text than a collection of essays on the principal topics of the apostolic letters. In the course of these essays Dr. Plummer deals with many questions which have formed the subject of more or less heated controversy amongst theologians, and has dealt with one or two of those subjects in a somewhat partisan spirit. The writer's wide and ripe scholarship is manifest throughout a volume which it is impossible not to read with keen and unflagging interest; but we doubt whether it would not have been more profitable to the ordinary reader to have been presented with a more general and less controversial volume, in which should be presented the more practical teachings of this portion of the apostolic writings.

LODGING-HOUSES FOR WANDERING CHILDREN.

As a friendly trap for many little feet, Dr. Barnardo has undertaken a much-needed scheme of lodging-houses for wandering boys and girls, so as to save them from contaminating associations. His two "common lodging-houses" offer shelter to homeless waifs at the nominal charge of a penny; this includes a good meal, and we fancy, should the penny be absent, there is not much chance that the little "pilgrim of the night" will be turned away while there is room. Amid Dr. Barnardo's numerous philanthropic efforts, none seems more pressing and important than this plan for the saving of children from the surroundings of common lodging-houses. And this nightly shelter may be the means by which many more destitute waifs shall come within the influence of the Doctor's Homes, so that a few years hence the wandering match- or flower-seller may be the healthy, happy emigrant perhaps to Canada. Many know the history of the boy-waif who heard of Dr. Barnardo, and walked up to Stepney from the Midlands, to be received beneath his sheltering care. Not very long ago this lad went out to Canada, and to a lady who bade him good-bye he said, confidentially, "I am the boy who walked up from the Midlands. I am the boy mentioned in the paper; it says Dr. Barnardo put his hand on my shoulder at Exeter Hall, and I looked up into his face with a pleasing smile." The press report had made a deep impression upon John; instead of "nobody's child" he found himself a hero, and as heroes are made out of honest work and Christian purpose and goodwill, it cannot be doubted that Stepney Causeway has made many a hero out of the rough, neglected, friendless material of the streets.

THE MASTER'S CARE.

"I feel such a nuisance to other people," said one, in half-fretful allusion to his many infirmities; and this is a great trial to those who are weak—the sense oppresses them at times that they may be tiring out the patience of their friends. The idea is frequently a grievous mistake, for they do not realise how their very weakness endears them to those who minister to their needs. Still less do we comprehend how very close and precious to His heart are the feeble sheep of the Master's flock, how His care enwraps them, how He understands their deepest need and thinks upon them constantly. The Rev. Mark Guy Pearse relates that he was walking once beside some cliffs, when he saw a father draw near with his children—the two boys were running on in front, and every now and then the father called to them to be careful, and gave them various directions for their safety. But he was leading the little girl slowly and gently, for she was blind. Presently he sat down beside her, and told her all the beauties of the vision, cheering her by many a tender thought. He never let his healthy boys go beyond his sight, his care, but the blind child he held continually by the hand. So let the weak ones be cheered and

encouraged by the thought that for them there are special promises, special assurances of care; thank God, none of us can drift beyond the reach of His love, but His feeble, helpless children He is holding by the hand.

THE EAST LONDON EVANGELISATION SOCIETY.

This association exists to hold Gospel services in the kitchens of common lodging-houses, to supply Evangelical preachers, to provide shelter and food for the homeless and destitute, and to distribute helpful literature. "Our primary object," say our friends of the mission, "is to point men and women to a personal and living Christ." A lodging-house congregation includes those who were once respectable—thieves, beggars, and "all sorts and conditions of men;" it is often a saddening spectacle for those on their way to places of worship, when they see by the wayside tramps and vagrants who seem to have no part in the Sabbath benediction, except the whisper of the flowers and the calm shining of God's sunlight—it is to such as these that the Gospel is carried in their humble haunts, and poor vagrants hear through the Lodging-House Mission of Him who came down from heaven to call sinners to repentance. A tract fell into the hands of a trainer of young thieves; he was startled by its title, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life," and he gave up his evil calling, and prayed for pardon and salvation. The Society aims at bringing every lodging-house in London under religious influences. The office is at 29, Senrab Street, Stepney, and we may add that every officer connected with it is working without pecuniary compensation.

FOR PULPIT AND PEW.

We have spoken before of the previous volumes of the "Biblical Illustrator" as they were published, and have commended them to the attention of preachers. The volume on the Epistle to the Galatians is now issued by Messrs. Nisbet, and in it the editor, the Rev. J. S. Exell, has gathered a most useful collection of anecdotes and illustrations bearing upon the chapters and verses in their own order. The illustrations are gathered from widely different sources, but are well adapted to form an eminently useful and handy commentary on the Bible text.—The same publishers have added to their "Men of the Bible" series a volume on Daniel, by the Rev. H. Deane, B.D., which is likely to prove useful to teachers as well as to preachers. The volume is a worthy addition to an excellent series.—Mrs. Bayly's "Life and Letters of Mrs. Sewell" (same publishers) is a record of the life and work of that devoted member of the Society of Friends, which may be read with much interest by many who did not know her or her work during her lifetime. The autobiographical chapters with which the work opens are especially interesting.—A series of sermons to young men upon "David, the Man after God's own Heart," has been published for the Rev. H. E. Stone by Messrs. Nisbet. The addresses were productive of much good at the time of their delivery, and we trust that they will be found more widely useful in their present form.—In the series of little volumes entitled "Heart Chords," Messrs. Cassell have issued new editions of several of the works which have been unusually popular. No word from us is needed to direct our readers' attention to works by writers so well known to them as Dean Chadwick, Professor Blaikie, the Bishop of Ripon, the Rev. P. B. Power, and Bishop Oxenden. The present edition of "My Bible," which is the Bishop of Ripon's contribution to the series, is the third, and the works by the other four writers whom we have mentioned are all in their second edition, as are the remaining works in the series, with the exception of Archdeacon Farrar's "My Object in Life," which has reached a sixth edition. Dealing, as these handy little manuals do, with distinct departments of Christian life and experience they are specially suitable for reading by those who are new to the Christian life, and so would form acceptable presents for young people, to whom they are likely to prove very helpful.—We do not quite see why "The City of Faith," by Mr. S. R. Bleau, M.A. (Elliot Stock), has been issued. Professedly it is made up to a large extent of quotations from "able and well-known writers," and we cannot see any useful purpose to be served by their republication in their present form.—"The Circle of Seasons" (same publisher) is a collection of hymns and verses by R. E. V., some of which are very musical, though as a whole the work is unequal.—Messrs. C. Burnet and Co. have just published, under the title "Every Morning," a series of "First Thoughts for First Hours," by the Rev. Joseph Parker, D.D. In his preface, which he quaintly calls "Fore-words," Dr. Parker explains that the work is intended to act as a disciplinary spur, calling upon his readers to wait every morning upon God in prayer.—"The Story of Genesis," by Frances Younghusband (Longmans), is a recapitulation, safe and simple in form, of the story of the first book of the Bible, admirably adapted for children's reading. In a little volume entitled "Newly-Enlisted," Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler has published (through Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton) a series of talks with young converts, which all who remember our paper upon its author will be prepared to welcome as a valuable addition to the library of preacher and teacher, and it might well serve as a timely gift to those who have but recently "named the name of Christ."

A FAR-AWAY HOME FOR FAR-AWAY WANDERERS.

In one of the main streets of the much-frequented port Yokohama, stands a Sailors' Institute, erected in 1881, chiefly by means of contributions from ships' officers and men. It consists of a dining-room, a reading-room furnished with five hundred volumes, many good papers, and writing materials, and an up-stairs dormitory containing eighteen beds; also a hall, lately added, for Gospel, temperance, and other meetings, where a daily religious service is held. The Christian English couple in charge of the work visit ships in port, supply them with bags of books and tracts, look after sailors in hospital and in the

Consulate gaol ; while at their home, adjoining the Institute, there is ever a welcome for Jack, and a ready personal sympathy. A few weeks ago an English seaman, tempted to excess by the vile Chinese spirit, Sam-shu, was left behind, discharged, when his ship sailed from Yokohama. His own destitution caused him less distress than an order sent home stopping the half-pay given to wife and children during his absence. Humbled and broken-hearted, he came to the manager of the Institute, and they two, with a Christian visitor, held a little prayer-meeting in the dormitory, pleading that, unlikely as it seemed, some new employment might be found for him. A few days later his ex-captain unexpectedly returned, and was found willing to give him another trial, and at once to reverse the aforesaid directions sent to head-quarters.



THE CRIPPLES' NURSERY.

THE CRIPPLES' NURSERY.

It is not possible for hospitals, as a rule, to take in cases which will evidently require years of care and nursing ; all the more reason, therefore, for institutions like the Cripples' Nursery, Park Place, Clarence Gate, Regent's Park. Many cases stand a good chance of cure if treated wisely in infancy and early childhood. Nature is a splendid doctor, and increasing years, if they bring with them the advantages of warmth and food and prudent attention, may be far brighter than the weakness of babyhood seemed to foretell. Through the Christian thought of two ladies the Cripples' Nursery was founded some years ago. Here the elder children may be seen in the schoolroom, taking a few proud steps to show increasing strength, learning to knit and mend, and storing their minds with religious and useful knowledge. In the room above, other children are resting or playing with their toys ; and in a sheltered garden, those who cannot be taken out in perambulators lie playing on their mattresses. There is a Seaside Home at Margate, the balcony of which almost overhangs the sea, and to this breezy Home the children are sent in rotation, deriving much benefit from their stay beside old Ocean. We read that they have several kind juvenile benefactors, whose portraits are their pride and delight. One boy chooses for his birthday present "cake for the cripples ;" and another, with his little sister, puts by a store of pocket-money for the Home. If the parents who measure their bonnie growing bairns so gladly, and boast of "baby's weight," will send a thank-offering to the Home at Clarence Gate, then more efficiently than ever the hands which hang down will be lifted up, and the feeble knees will be strengthened.

"DUST-AND-ASHES CHRISTIANS."

Religion has been likened to a knife that cuts away cancers of sin, and carves out monuments of beauty ; but there are worthy religious people to be found here and there who are consistent, resigned, eminent as to goodness, but whom nobody would associate with beauty, and no little child would run after them shouting and plucking them by the garments. "Dust-and-ashes Christians," we heard a preacher call them once ; it would be well for us to examine ourselves, and ask if *we* come within this category—for this class of Christians will never recommend religion to the outside world, or show its hopefulness, its peace, its victory over gloom. The preacher referred to prescribed some cures for unholy despondency : "Keep an open road between the soul and Heaven," he said ; "let prayers ascend and God's blessings come down ; let there be real communion with the Lord—look away from self to Him." And *make use* of the gifts that prayer brings down ; what large things are besought of God, and how bountifully His grace and strength are given ! Let us realise and use His bestowments, doing some honest, hearty work for Him and for our neighbours ; Prayer and work will lift us out of the Slough of Despond.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE READING SOCIETY.

DAILY READINGS BEARING ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

MARCH 11—APRIL 14.

MARCH.	MORNING.	EVENING.
11.	St. Matthew xix. 13—15; St. Luke xviii. 10—17.	Psalm viii.
12.	1 Samuel iii., to ver. 10; 2 Timothy i., to ver. 5; iii., from ver. 14.	St. John xxi., to ver. 15.
13.	St. Matthew xi., from ver. 20.	St. Matthew xxi., to ver. 16.
14.	1 Kings iii. 5–14.	1 John iii., from ver. 18; chap. iv., to ver. 8.
15.	1 John ii., to ver. 13.	Psalm lxxviii., to ver. 15.
16.	1 Peter ii., to ver. 10.	St. Luke ii., from ver. 40.
17.	St. Mark x. 13—22.	St. Mark x. 46—52.
18.	St. Matthew xx., from ver. 29; St. Luke xviii., from ver. 35.	Jeremiah xxix. 11—14; St. Luke xviii., to ver. 8.
19.	Romans i., to ver. 12.	Isaiah xi., to ver. 10.
20.	St. Matthew ix., from ver. 27.	St. Mark viii. 15—25.
21.	St. Luke vii. 16–23; Isaiah lx. 1—4, 18—22.	St. John ix., to ver. 7, and from ver. 35.
22.	Isaiah xlii., to ver. x.	Isaiah xlii., from ver. 16.
23.	Psalm xxxiv.	Psalm lxii.
24.	St. Mark x., 46–52.	Acts x., 34—43.
25.	St. Mark i. 1—11.	St. Mark i. 21—34.
26.	St. Mark i. 35—45.	St. Mark ii. 1—17.
27.	St. Mark iv. 1—20.	St. Mark v. 1—20.
28.	St. Mark v. 25—34.	St. Mark vi. 1—13.
29.	St. Mark viii. 27, to chap. ix. ver. 1.	St. Mark ix. 33—45.
30.	St. Mark x. 13—22.	St. Mark x. 46—52.
31.	Isaiah lxi. (*Review Sunday.*)	St. Mark xi. 1—11.
APRIL.		
1.	St. Matthew xxi. 1—11, 13—17.	St. Luke xix. 29–44.
2.	St. John xii. 10—19.	Psalm cxviii., from ver. 19.
3.	Isaiah ix., to ver. 7; Jeremiah xxxiii. 14–18.	Psalm xxiv.
4.	Revelation xix. 6–16.	Revelation vii., from ver. 9.
5.	St. Luke x., from ver. 38; xxiv., from ver. 48; St. John xi., to ver. 5.	Isaiah lii.
6.	Ezekiel viii., to ver. 12.	Malachi iii.
7.	St. Mark xi. 1—11.	St Mark xii. 1—12.
8.	St. Matthew xxi., from ver. 33.	St. Luke xx., 9—19.
9.	Jeremiah vii. 17—28.	Nehemiah ix., from ver. 26.
10.	Isaiah v., to ver. 12.	Proverbs i., from ver. 23.
11.	St. John vii. 25–37.	Daniel ii. 31—45.
12.	Hebrews i.	St. John xv., to ver. 10.
13.	Hebrews iii.	1 John iv. 9–15; St. John iii. 16–21.
14.	St. Mark xii. 1—12.	St. Mark xii. 28—37.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

49. What passages in the Bible tell us of Christ's special care for little children?

50. In what miracle did Christ manifest His presence to the disciples on the coast of the Lake of Galilee after His resurrection?

51. What question arose between St. John's disciples and the Jews touching the ceremonial law?

52. What was the choice of Solomon when offered riches and honour, or wisdom?

53. Why did our Lord go up to Jerusalem when He was twelve years old, and what occurred?

54. What was necessary on the part of afflicted ones before they could be healed by Christ?

55. What was the answer given by our Lord to the question of St. John the Baptist, "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?"

56. What answer did Christ make when the scribes accused Him of speaking blasphemy on the occasion of healing the palsied man?

57. Why did David say we should put no trust in worldly things?

58. What answer did Peter give when Christ asked the disciples who they thought He was?

59. What did blind Bartimæus cry out when he heard that Jesus of Nazareth passed by?

60. What was the song of the children at Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 308.

37. Ps. lxii. 8.

38. A woman brought an alabaster box of ointment, with which she anointed the feet of our blessed Lord. (St. Luke vii. 36—50.)

39. When Jesus sent His disciples forth to preach, He commanded them to take nothing with them, neither scrip, bread, nor money. (St. Luke ix. 3.)

40. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (St. Matt. xvi. 16.)

41. God commanded them to make fringes upon the bottom of their garments, and edge them with a blue riband, to help them in remembering God's commands, and so to live a holy life. (Num. xv. 38, 39.)

42. Rom. x. 9.

43. 2 Cor. iv. 10.

44. After Jesus had walked on the sea and had stilled the tempest. (St. Matt. xiv. 33.)

45. In Nazareth, because of the want of faith of the people. (St. Mark vi. 3—6.)

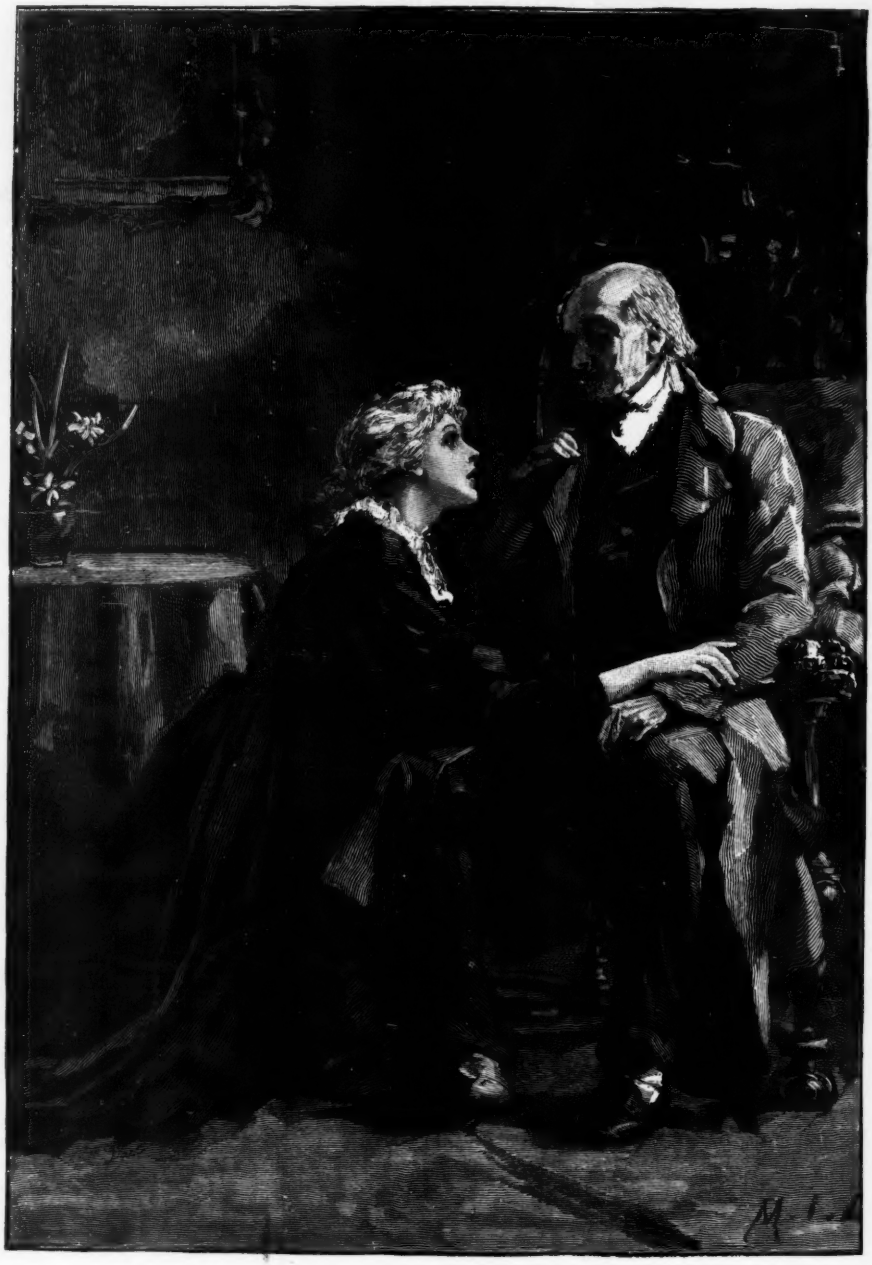
46. "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." (St. Matt. x. 30.)

47. When Satan desired to overcome St. Peter, our blessed Lord showed His care of the disciple by saying "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." (St. Luke xxii. 32.)

48. Acts iii. 1—8.

XUM





THE DEAR OLD FACE.

See p. 463.

CROSSING THE RUBICON.

BY THE REV. HUGH MACMILLAN, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E., ETC.

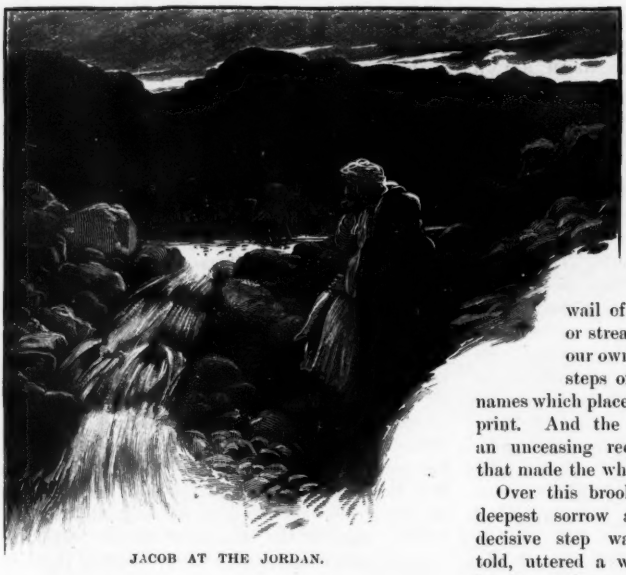
"And he passed over before them."—GEN. xxxiii. 3.
'The king himself also passed over the brook Kidron."—2 SAM. xv. 23.
"Jesus went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron."—ST. JOHN xviii. 1.

ON the eastern side of Italy, near the town of Rimini, there is a petty stream, falling, after a short course of twenty-five miles, into the Adriatic. This insignificant river has acquired a famous name in history and a prominent place among the popular proverbs of mankind. Its modern name is the Uso, but the peasants in the neighbourhood, who have no antiquarian theories to uphold, give it the name of "Il Rubicone." In spite of the contested claims of other streams in this part, there can be almost no doubt that this is the celebrated Rubicon which formed the boundary between ancient Italy and Cisalpine Gaul. Its geographical position between the true peninsula of Italy and the alluvial basin of the Po, as well as its short, straight course directly from the rocky buttresses of the Apennines to the sea, marked it out as a most distinct and appropriate political boundary. Besides its importance as a frontier-line, it had a sacred significance attached to it as one of the streams that were haunted by the river-gods, and were in consequence worshipped. The crossing of it with a legion, army, or cohort, was therefore deemed not only a political but also a sacrilegious offence. What has immortalised it is the well-known incident in the civil war between Cæsar and the Roman Senate supported by Pompey. When Cæsar came with his army to the bank of this river, he hesitated for a long time as to what he should do. He said to his officers: "We can even yet draw back, but, if we cross that little stream, all must be decided by the sword." The night passed in anxious deliberation, and at daybreak, the legend says, a majestic form appeared to him, seated on the bank, playing on a flute. As the soldiers drew near to listen, the angel snatched from one of them a trumpet, blew the signal of advance, and then plunged into the river and disappeared. "Let us go," said Cæsar, "whither the portents of Heaven and the injustice of the enemy call us. The die is cast." And with that exclamation he boldly passed over the stream, followed by his army. That was the decisive act which led to victory and to the dictatorship of the Roman Empire.

Long ages before this memorable event, we read of an older Rubicon, the crossing of which led to results even more momentous. Returning from the country of Laban, where he had been many years an exile, Jacob came to the banks of the Jordan, where the Jabbok, wrestling through its rocky defiles, falls into the sacred stream. Hearing that his brother Esau, with a large force, was on his way from the fastnesses of Edom to seek revenge for the wrong done to him, he took all the precautions against the threatened danger which his prudent nature suggested. Under covert of the dark night, he sent across the stream the helpless train of women and children and the vast flocks and herds with which he was encumbered. And then, alone, in the awful solitude, full of gloomy



CÆSAR AT THE RUBICON.



JACOB AT THE JORDAN.

forebodings regarding the morrow, he realised that this situation of peril was the punishment of his sin, and—in the first recorded words of human prayer—poured out to God his trouble and perplexity.

Gradually, as in the case of the Philippian jailer afterwards, his prayer was purified from its selfishness, and slavish terror passed into repentance, and the longing for deliverance from man into the longing for the favour of God. His faith laid hold upon the Invisible, and an unknown superhuman Visitant gave Himself into his grasp, with Whom he struggled earnestly, his strength and tenacity of hold increasing with the strain, till the morning reddened in the sky over the eastern hills. He prevailed in the end, and won the blessing, but not without sore wounds which maimed him all the rest of his days. He passed over the Jordan a changed man; and when Esau saw him, with the hallowed effulgence of that interview with God shining upon his face, he forgot his deadly purpose, and, remembering only the innocent days of childhood, when they played together in their father's tent, he rushed forward, and fell on his neck and wept. That crossing of the Jordan was the great crisis in Jacob's life. Esau left him henceforth in the undisturbed possession of the land of his inheritance; and in his own inner nature the spiritual element obtained the final victory over the carnal, and Jacob indeed became Israel—the crafty schemer the prince of God.

In later ages there was another crossing of the Rubicon hardly less inferior in interest and results. No incident in Jewish history is described with such fulness of detail as the flight of David when his son Absalom rose up in rebellion and seized the kingdom. He left Jerusalem on foot, accompanied by his courtiers, on the morning of the day that he received the fatal news, and passed over the brook Kidron. Kidron means blackness or sadness. Why it received this ominous name we do not know. Some human tragedy must have left its trace upon it, as it left its wail of anguish in the name of the Cona, or stream of wailing, which flows through our own Glencoe. We can trace the footsteps of Sorrow over all the earth by the names which places have received from her deeper imprint. And the waters of the Kidron murmured an unceasing requiem over some terrible secret, that made the whole scene blasted for its sake.

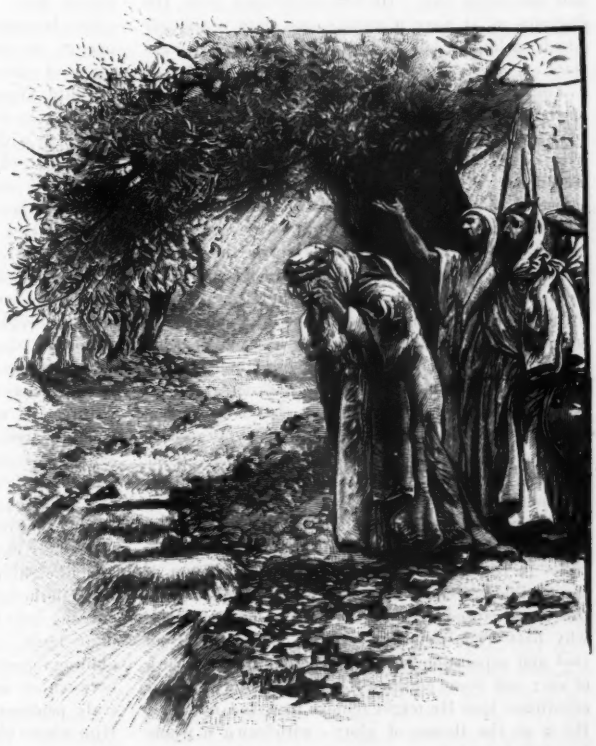
Over this brook of sadness the king passed in deepest sorrow and humiliation; and when this decisive step was taken, the procession, we are told, uttered a wail of anguish which was echoed by the rocks around, until it seemed as if "the whole land wept with a loud voice." The king had resolved to abandon his royal home and accept the doom of the exile. With chastened soul he would not allow the ark to accompany him in his flight and share his personal peril. With unselfish consideration for others, he urged Ittai and his warriors, and their wives and children, not to endanger their lives in the cause of a fallen Sovereign. But with unshaken fidelity the brave body-guard adhered to him. And covering their heads with their cloaks, and rending the air with their wild laments, they crossed over the Mount of Olives, and descended into one of the deep ravines leading from the plateau of Jerusalem to the fords of the Jordan.

This dreadful march, which was rendered still more dreadful by the curses of Shimei, the fierce Benjamite, which followed him all the way, was never effaced from the memory of David. In the twenty-third Psalm, which we have every reason to believe was composed on this occasion, he called the deep, desolate ravine through which he passed, with its ghastly gloom, and the agony of his own heart, the valley of the shadow of death. He indeed tasted the bitterness of death. Over the Jordan he passed till he came to the pastoral uplands of Mahanaim, and there, amid the very scenes where Jacob centuries before spent his unforgotten hours of agony and prayer, he wrestled, we know not how long, with the fears and sorrows of a broken heart. What Peniel was to Jacob that sore experience was to David. When he crossed the brook Kidron he became a different man. It marked the crisis of his life. He bade adieu for ever to all his former light-heartedness and bright enthusiasm. A vulture pain was ever gnawing at

his heart on account of the dark sins which he had committed, and the terrible punishments with which they were visited, and wrung from him the bitterest cry of a sinner's anguish to be found in the annals of the human race. The shadow of that anguish was never lifted off his life. A careworn, sorrow-stricken man he went down to the grave. But while his outer life was thus darkened and blasted, his inner life became tenderer and more beautiful. He grew daily in grace and humility, in spiritual insight and sympathy. In that hour of agony when he crossed the Kidron his sorrow had made him a little child again. He forgot all about the weary years of vain pomp and glory which he spent upon the throne of Israel, and went back in spirit to the bright days of his youth, when he watched his father's flocks on the hills of Bethlehem, and knew neither ambition nor care. And with the tried faith of the experienced man combined with the simplicity of the little child, he poured forth the fulness of his unquestioning trust in the God of his salvation.

And what happened to David happened to David's Son and David's Lord more than a thousand years afterwards. It is strange how their experiences coincided, how the same thing happened to them both. We are told that, after the passover, "Jesus went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron." As David passed over the brook to suffer the greatest trial of his life, so did Jesus. That brook marked, as it were, the dividing line between the period of His comparative success, and the period of His uttermost sorrow. With Christ Himself, as with most Christ-like lives, the easiest part came first; it was at the last that the cross was brought to Him. It is recorded of His early years that He grew in favour with God and man as He grew in stature. In His obscurity at Nazareth He suffered no persecution. The world tolerated Him, for His hour was not yet come. And even when He entered upon His public ministry, the common people heard Him gladly, and admiring crowds followed wherever He went. His influence as a teacher and miracle-worker radiated light all around Him. But now the decisive moment had come. He had a baptism to be baptised with, and He was straitened until it should be accomplished. The thought of the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem exclusively occupied His mind. When He crossed the Cedron, therefore, it was no longer as the great Teacher, but as the great Sacrifice. He entered upon the final path towards which all the steps of His life conducted; the path which led to the hall of judgment, to the cross of Calvary, and to the glory beyond, into which He should enter through all that suffering. He passed across the Cedron to the Garden of Gethsemane to face the hour and power of darkness alone. There He endured the crucifixion before the crucifixion; there He manifested the sublimest triumph of self-sacrifice and submission to the will of God; there the bitterness of death was past, and the real victory over it secured; for the cross was merely the open display to the world of the death which He had already died.

David's sorrow as he passed over the brook Kidron was great; but what was it compared with that of the Man of Sorrows in the same storied spot? Jacob's wrestling was sore; but what was it compared with the wrestling of Christ when, for one awful moment, He would have put the flaming cup from Him, and prayed that He might not drink it; and the Father still pressed it to the Sufferer's lips, and in His agony His sweat was as it were great drops



DAVID AT THE BROOK KIDRON.

of blood falling down to the ground, and He needed an angel to strengthen Him. A sympathising crowd followed David with wild lamentations; but their touching sympathy could not reach the desolation of his soul. The disciples followed their Lord as He walked before them to His willing doom, and a weight of mysterious awe fell upon them as they saw the shadow of inward anguish gathering over His face; but they were like little children who gaze silent and wonder-stricken upon their parents while enduring some terrible trial to them unknown. He was not above the need of human sympathy. We know what a help it was to Him to have His disciples with Him—that those were nearest who loved Him most. Touched with a fellow-feeling of our infirmities, He could not bear to be suffering while His disciples were sleeping. He said to them, with reproachful tenderness, "Could ye not watch with Me one hour?" He was always alone, the loneliest of all beings. "His soul was like a star, and dwelt apart." He acted as the solitary representative of Heaven in a world of sin and woe. But when He crossed the Cedron, and passed into the deepest shadows of the olives of Gethsemane, the loneliness of His life came to a head—as the loneliness of a mountain reaches its climax at its summit, where there is nothing but the lifeless snow and the silent sky. He was withdrawn from His disciples, as it were a stone's cast, into a solitude which no human fellowship or sympathy could penetrate.

And that solitude was the expressive symbol of the isolation of sin. Sin broke up Eden, and separated man from man; and exiled man into the wilderness. Sin divides all human interests, breaks all human ties, destroys all human harmonies. It creates a waste, a solitude wherever it works. And our Saviour, coming into the world as the Sin-bearer, experienced this dreadful effect of sin to the utmost. It separated Him in the wilderness of temptation from all human beings, and brought Him into the dreadful communion of devils and lost spirits. It separated Him in the Garden of Gethsemane from the friends that were dearest, and brought Him into awful contact with the powers of darkness. It was because He was made sin for us that He was cast out—like David—by His own people, who rose in rebellion against Him, and cried, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" and Shimei's curse in sevenfold bitterness pursued Him all the way. And this separation from man was but the prelude to the more awful separation from God. The withdrawal of the disciples in the garden was but the commencement of the terrible process of desertion, whose completion on the cross caused Him to cry, "My God, My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Separation from God and separation from man is the dreadful work of sin; and Jesus endured it to the uttermost as our substitute, that He might remove it. And now that He is on the throne of glory—withdrawn a whole heaven's height from us—what separated Him most widely from human beings while He was on earth unites Him more closely with them. He stood apart from man because sin had banished Him from them; because He had to drink a cup which they could not drink, and to be baptised with a baptism which they could not share. But now, sin atoned for, the baptism of suffering endured, the grounds of alienation removed, He draws more closely to those for whom He was made sin. He brings them nigh by His blood; He draws them by the cords of His love. He uses the love that for their sakes endured the cross, despising the shame, as a magnet to attract them more powerfully to Himself. Having passed through such a terrible experience, He must needs be touched with a fellow-feeling of our infirmities, in a way in which He could not otherwise have been.

In every human life there is a Rubicon to cross. A critical moment comes, sooner or later, in which we have to pass from the old life to the new by an act which decides our fate, and determines the whole nature of our future. There is no career so quiet and uneventful but this fateful moment occurs in it. It will come in the shape of temptation, or sorrow, or change; and the way in which this crowning trial will be met will be determined by the training that has been received from the previous routine of ordinary life. We learn in little things the lesson which becomes of powerful use in great events; and acquire in resistance to daily petty temptations the force of character which is to be called out into resolute vigour in critical experiences. The best preparation for the crossing of any Rubicon is wrestling with God beforehand in prayer, like Jacob. If we succeed in getting the blessing of the Lord we know that our path will be a victorious one, that our foes will become our friends, and the things that were adverse, favourable. We shall pass over into the new circumstances, knowing, it may be, but dimly what shall befall us, but having already in possession, wrought out in the very texture of our soul, through the trial in which we have been victorious, that faith in God which is the ground of our most absolute confidence and our largest hope.

But it may be that our Rubicon is of a different nature. It may be like David's, a flight from the consequences of our sin. We cross the brook of sadness because we have planted in our life some seed of evil, and are now reaping its bitter fruit. We have found that sin breaks the ties and sweet associations of life, and drives the soul into a dreary and lonely desert. The curse rises from the ground, and, like Shimei's, becomes articulate to us. We pass through the valley of the shadow of death. But such a crossing over the Kidron of the soul will be blessed if it leads, as in David's case, to heartfelt and abiding repentance; for the sin that creates a breach between us and others, will only create, if we are truly penitent, a deeper friendship between us and Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin, and whose love makes the sinner's sorrow—which would have

been unavailing if it were only the sorrow of the world that worketh death—the strait and narrow way to higher holiness and purer happiness. If the crossing of the stream has been to us, as to Jacob and David, a decisive change of character and purpose, the waters will be a very baptism of purification, in which our old life will be carried from us down into the Dead Sea, and our flesh will come again like unto the flesh of a little child. We shall pass over to a Mahanaim, the Lord's Host, from the valley of the shadow of death, led across the dark waters of Sorrow to God's heart and to God's throne; and shall acquire, in the wrestling of the Jabbok, the earnest of the inheritance of the saints in light.

The passing through any trial that is sanctified to us is a crossing of the brook Kidron to the Gethsemane of the soul with Christ. Why is all sorrow so lonely? Why does it make a solitude around us and within us? Why does it withdraw us from our fellow-creatures, and lead us into the desolate wilderness, where common experience and ordinary sympathy are unavailing? Is it not that we may be brought into nearer and tenderer relationship with Him Who has felt the awful burden of human woe as no human being has realised it, and in all our afflictions is still afflicted? We are made capable of feelings which we cannot utter, and of pains and sorrows which we cannot share with others, because Jesus is the interpreter of our feelings and the sharer of our sorrows. The cloud that shuts us out from the world shuts us in more closely with Him; and in the very core of the cloud's darkness and loneliness we behold the transfiguration of sorrow—a beauty and a glory such as we see not in all the fairest and brightest hours of life. The wilderness, where human help is farthest off, is the place where Heavenly help is nearest, where the ladder is set up that reaches from earth to heaven, and the angel appears in the bush and ministers tenderly to our necessities, under the shadow of the juniper where we have lain down to die.

Life knows not such peculiar and gracious revelations of Divine love as the solitude of suffering into which we are withdrawn from our fellow-creatures, to be more entirely alone with Himself. We have not to say to Him, "Couldst Thou not watch with me one hour?" He is with us—a very present help in our time of need. It is no angel that strengthens us, but the Lord Jesus Himself. The sorrow with which no stranger can intermeddle, may weep itself out on the bosom of the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. For us there is no lonely, forsaken place in God's universe. We can say, "Alone, yet not alone, for the Saviour is with me," as we pass over the brook Kidron to share in the Gethsemane of the soul, the fellowship of His sufferings, as He shares the fellowship of ours. Our own pain and sorrow will give us a fuller understanding of the sufferings of the Man of Sorrows, and bind us more closely to Him; for nothing brings two beings nearer than a shared sorrow. And having thus drunk of the brook of sadness with Him by the way, we shall yet lift up our head with Him in bliss. We shall be with Him when "the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

MISS HILARY'S SUITORS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WILFUL YOUNG WOMAN," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW the sister of Hilary's quondam lover and the rich curate of Netley happened to be there together may be more naturally explained to the reader than to the surprised girl.

When that terrible *fiasco* at Abbotswick dashed the hopes of the Cavenhams as to securing a young and wealthy bride for their spendthrift George, and so importing into the family a standing ease from long-standing worries, the second daughter had ingeniously projected out of their shattered plan another, superior in her own opinion to the one just broken up.

For the curate, of course, would in time settle into his squirearchy, though he was very judicious—Gertrude thoroughly approved of that: it lengthened the hour of her opportunities—and made no effort to push his immediate entrance into county society. He could easily have done it had he so chosen, for when a man is known master of five thousand a year, people in general care very little how he comes by it. The curate got now and then a rap over the knuckles on the subject from someone unconventionally or spitefully free-spoken, but it was not the business of his neighbours to inquire closely as to whether he had secured his prize by bringing an undue amount of clerical influence to bear on that eccentric Miss Humphreys. No one a few miles off knew personally much of that child the old lady had adopted. The arrangement sounded rather hard on her at first, but she was provided for, was she not? Here and there someone had met Mr. St. John, a pompous, obtrusive sort of person, no real relation to the Humphreys, and no acquisition to any circle. And this Mr. Stafford was a clever man—a preacher whom people had even run after when he was poor—good-looking,

and not at all plebeian; someone ferreted out that his mother had been a Cumberland Colville, and his father once foremost among the oldest established cotton aristocracy. A little clique, to be sure, spoke regretfully and pityingly of the disinherited girl—the Milroys, for instance, and their immediate set—but for the rest the young heiress was soon forgotten, and county courtesy was ready to open its arms to the man who stood in her place.

But Mr. Stafford was in no hurry to use his promotion. When invitations to manors and halls came thick upon him, and he was bidden to drop in when he liked at some of the most exclusive houses within range, he shelved all alike with the plea of being busy over parish alterations, and plunged into these so as truly to leave himself but little leisure. The tumbledown old church, as Joyce had said, was being well-nigh rebuilt; rows of two-roomed dens, miscalled homes, were being replaced by dwellings where comfort was encouraged and decency made possible. The long stretch of parish running out to the marshes was no longer left to send its half-dozen representatives up to church on Sabbath days while the odd three or four hundred lounged and slept and drank their hours of rest away. What Mr. Leigh had vainly longed, his curate vainly striven for, and Miss Humphreys never could be brought to consider needful, was at length accomplished. St. Michael of Netley ere long had its daughter church down at Netley-by-the-Sea, and its rough, amphibious population had a parson to themselves—a friend of Norris Stafford's, one who, "encumbered," as worldly prudence would call it, with wife and bairns, jumped at the big stipend offered, and willingly came to work hand and glove with his old college chum. Meantime the deviser and controller of all these changes had hardly an hour in which to rejoice or repent over his ownership, and, far from seeking new acquaintances, seemed shy of letting old ones develop into intimacy.

Very satisfactory was this to one who had made up her mind to nurse her little more than introduction to Mr. Stafford into the closest of relationships. Though Abbotswick had been snatched from her brother, Miss Gertrude Cavenham saw no reason why it should not be left for her. Indeed, this arrangement would be preferable, perhaps for the property, certainly for herself. So, being rather a clever woman, with a cool head, plenty of determination, and more sense than sensitiveness, she laid down her lines of campaign, and set about them promptly.

Netley was not the directest way from Steeple Forncett to Brainford, but she discovered it to be the quickest—"not so many ups and downs for her poor pony." Further, she began the exemplary duty of a bi-weekly visit to the hospital of the town. A Netley man chanced to be there for weeks. Miss Cavenham was benevolent to him to the last degree, and naturally, when she met the curate of the poor fellow's parish, she stopped to leave with him the latest bulletins for anxious friends. She would stoop graciously from her saddle to deliver long wordy messages from the patient. She would ride back to repeat, smiling, some inconsequential phrase she had forgotten, knowing perfectly well she never looked better than when on horseback, and determined to pose at her best as long and as often as possible before this desirable clergyman's eyes.

That hospital parishioner was answerable for Miss Cavenham's appearance at Netley Church on three successive Sundays. "The poor grateful creature told me so much of your preaching, I felt forced to come," she half-apologised to Mr. Stafford, strolling after service near the vestry door, as she waited for her pony carriage. "And oh, I don't seem ever to have heard a sermon till to-day! How you make one *think!*"

This was after the third Sunday—an unpropitious drizzling afternoon in January—and the enterprising lady felt as if the delicate flattery of her attendance hardly got its due reward when Mr. Stafford, totally ignoring her compliment, answered—

"It will scarcely be wise for you to venture here again till our building is done. I think we must work on half the church at a time, and the other half will be so filled with our own people, there will hardly be accommodation for others."

This was not encouraging; in fact, it was all but rude. But a lady of thirty bent on propitiating a rich bachelor is not easily put down.

"Rebuilding," she cried; "oh, how interesting! I do so love to see arches—and, and gurgoyles—and things of that kind growing, as it were. How I shall watch it as I pass!"

And she did, unquestionably, getting up a manual of Gothic architecture to meet the occasion, and discoursing of splays and corbels to the curate whenever she could entrap him, and she even got her father, who knew as much of the Decorative style as he did of Sanscrit, to drive over and inspect the restoration, when the old general insisted on taking the curate back to dine with him.

"Don't make a monk of yourself, man," he said, "though you've got *Abbots*wick; we've done with those rules nowadays, and you fellows can have your wives and chicks about you as you ought. 'Don't think you can come?' Fudge! My girls will be disappointed if you don't. They all took to you when they used to meet you there at Miss Humphreys'. Eh? what? 'Only once!' Well, that seems to have been enough. Soon know if you like anybody—I do; 't isn't many I press a dinner on, but there! I'm not going to have you say no."

So Mr. Stafford, seeing the gouty old gentleman was ready to fly into a passion if refused, and not at all considering himself worth a contest, submitted to be carried off and entertained. And Miss Gertrude Cavenham sang some sacred songs to him after dinner, and stitched round a little print pinafore while she asked was there anyone at Netley who could attend to mothers' meetings, and so on, for him. "Oh, if she were not thought intrusive, how she should like to help in that way! She did so delight in that sort of labour!"

Mr. Stafford, as we have said before, was not conceited. He quite missed the source of the lady's amiability. Philip Conway's wife, with her three-months-old baby, might be glad of this assistance. Miss Cavenham, exultant, got her foot well planted in



"'Miss St. John, actually!'"—*p.* 410.

his parish. With time and no rivals he would certainly succumb to her attentions. Her sense of security grew apace all the spring through, and when he returned from an absence abroad, and she, having learned the hour when he was expected, chanced to be sketching in the churchyard as he drove up, her greeting was most touchingly effusive.

"Ah, dear Mr. Stafford! Now Netley will seem itself again! Is it too bold to say the place was almost empty without you? Mr. Conway is very nice, but oh, everyone wanted *you;* and I—I——"

"They seem to have been getting on uncommonly well, though," Mr. Stafford prosaically interrupted, as he politely shook hands, and with a pleasant nod to his servants at the gate, walked straight off to the church. —"Down, Tip! down!" to a yapping little terrier of uncertain breed but devotedly affectionate disposition, whom he had saved from a brick round its neck and the village pond years before, who now hailed his appearance with barks of joy and futile jumps to lick his hand—"Down, you noisy rascal! I promise you I'm not going away again.—Why, yes, Grimes has done well; I hardly hoped to see this south wall so forward. Now I hope all will be done by autumn."

"And you will remain to enjoy it, then? You will keep your promise?" said Miss Cavenham, sentimentally.

"Keep what?" said the curate, halting and looking puzzled.

"The promise you made to—oh, only your dog, not me!—that you won't go away again for ever so long."

"I assure you I'm not likely for some time, at any rate," said the curate, rather absently.

"Oh, I'm so, so glad, for the sake of—of the parish," said Miss Cavenham, looking up fervently and then looking down modestly; and just that moment they turned an angle of the building and came upon Hilary St. John.

For a few seconds they were all taken aback; the encounter was so palpably awkward. At sight of the pair the colour, which, unluckily, she could not command, fled fast from Hilary's cheeks. The elder lady reddened unbecomingly, wrathful at her *tête-à-tête* being interrupted, confused at thus meeting the girl she had loaded with caresses when last they parted. It is the trick of common or mean natures to dislike those they have treated ill. Miss Gertrude was very nigh hating Hilary at that moment, but never lacking outward composure, she now veiled her chagrin with an air of society politeness, advancing calmly as she said—

"Miss St. John, actually!" (It was "her own sweet Hilary" at Steeple Forncett.) "How odd for us to meet here! Were you coming to look for—either of us? And are you quite well?"

"Quite, I thank you," said Hilary, all the courage in her composition called quickly to the fore. The Cavenhams, with their little farce of mock love, had insulted her girlhood, but—*noblesse oblige!*—she was not going to lower herself by a sign of retaliation. "I was looking for no one. I should not have come to the church if—if I had not thought I should be alone—if I had known whom I should meet."

That much she simply could not help saying. It was a protest she owed herself. Norris Stafford had avoided her at Brainford; he must not suppose she was now seeking him at Netley.

Miss Cavenham shrewdly read emotion behind this restraint of manner, and was not disinclined to aim a random dart or two at it.

"Oh," she said, with the utmost affability, "please don't mind us ever. No one can help the past, can they? We should be so sorry if you did not meet us as you used; should we not, Mr. Stafford?"

He had gone back a pace when they met. Miss Cavenham did not see the wonderful change that came over him—the interest, the life, the love that shot into his grave eyes and softened his now almost always stern-set lips. And Hilary saw none of this, for she would not let one single glance rest on him. But when he spoke, it was in a voice so different from the ring of his ordinary speech that keen-witted Miss Cavenham almost started, swiftly added two and two together, and trembled for her cherished scheme.

"I wish," said Mr. Stafford, putting his arms behind him, and leaning back on the railings of a tomb, "with all my heart that I had not been here just now, Miss Hilary. You would have liked to be alone; you ought to have been so. How did you come? Who takes you back to Brainford?"

"I walked over. And I'm just going back," said Hilary briefly. He—this old friend—would not even offer to touch her hand; his companion's "us" and "we" somehow gave her a miserable chill. She would get away from them as fast as she could, and turned abruptly, as if to leave that very moment.

"Oh, pray don't let us hurry you," said Miss Cavenham, "for I really must be going, as my pony is a little fresh, so Mr. Stafford will perhaps kindly see me off; then you can be alone if you positively wish to, if you really don't want Mr. Stafford for anything."

"I am at your service, Miss Cavenham," said the gentleman quickly. Her assumption of familiar ease with him was irritating. He was obtuse, as all men are more or less, but nevertheless discerned that her words to Hilary were less kind than they would seem. Himself, he dared say nothing, or he would have said too much. The girl with that sweet, wistful pride on her young face, that indescribable something that bespeaks suffering well borne, was infinitely dearer to him than in her happy days of gay good luck. It was hard indeed to keep from bidding her stop and hearken soon to words of tenderness that were welling up from his inmost soul. But that was denied him. Safety lay only in deserting her.

He lifted his hat; Hilary bowed silently. "So sorry I don't go your way, or I could have given you a lift," said Miss Cavenham, stepping away with stereotyped smiles; and close to Mr. Stafford's shoulder, vivaciously smiling up at him, she carried him off, Tip following with a dissatisfied whine, for the sensible little beast was fond of Hilary, and his canine intelligence rebelled at thus deserting an old playfellow.

Quick and quicker Hilary went along the Brainford road, aching! aching! aching! No one wanted her at home, her place was fast filling up at Netley. Joyce wanted her just a little, perhaps, and Joyce, she thought contritely, she had never been so very kind to. Oh, what a world of opportunities she had missed in her young years! It had become natural to her to buy everything—respect, and liking, and—— Ah! she shook herself, as if to be quit of that memory. All might have gone perhaps from bad to worse if her life had been paved with gold. And Aunt Phil had been angry: that sting was very sharp. She would smart under it to the end of time. Ah! she had done no good to anyone; made nothing but miserable blunders. It was best that—that someone wise and clever should rule in her stead. And how well he was doing it, this someone! And yet, he might have spared her just a little of his abundant strength and usefulness—she did want it so! But he had hardly spoken to her; he had gone away—with Gertrude Cavenham.

Hilary looked out wearily along the straight road, far on to the dark, dense clouds that hid the dying sun. No one, then, cared for her now, when she had no money.

No one?

A figure was advancing up the white footpath as she hurried on deep in thought; she would have passed on, but the new-comer stopped. It was her step-brother's friend, Mr. Bevis.

"Miss St. John, will you allow me the honour of returning with you into the town? It is too late for you to be out alone"

"Is it?" said Hilary, startled out of her troubled self-communings; "I had not thought of that. But," not in the very least wishing for this companion,

"there's nothing for me to be afraid of. Please don't let me stop you in your walk."

"I only took it on your account," answered the young man, assuming her consent and pacing respectfully beside her. "I happened to see you go by our office this afternooon, and—forgive my doing so—ventured to ask your brother where you were bound for. I knew you could not be back till late; I heard you were to be alone. That distressed me, and I took the liberty of watching for you, of meeting you, as no one else intended to do so. I do trust you won't think me officious."

"N-o," said Hilary, colouring deeply as she saw how this stranger realised how she was of no consequence to anyone; "I can only think you kind, and thank you very much."

Her voice, sad and sweet, sounded propitious. "Now 's my time," thought the young man.

"Dear Miss St. John," he said almost deferentially, "pray don't thank me for doing what is my greatest pleasure. Don't be too astonished"—she was looking at him with evident surprise—"but let me just say that every time I have met you for weeks and months has deepened my esteem and—something more. At one time I dared not have dreamed of saying this: I should have carried my love for you a secret to my grave—I should indeed. I have tried to stifle it. I have said to myself, 'Miss St. John's earlier friends will never part from her in this way; though no longer the heiress, they will keep her among them. She will live, she will marry in a circle far above me. But," carefully watching in the girl's speaking countenance the effect of his well-chosen words—"I was mistaken. I see the world—your world—is less wise, less generous, less liberal, than I fancied it, and now I ask if you will look—down to me. I feel it is down, but, Miss St. John, the greatest gap can be bridged by affection, and affection that would never have aspired to you wealthy, dares now to offer everything its owner has in the world when you are no longer rich. Will you accept it? May I hope?"

It was getting dusk. They were nearing the town. A group of noisy soldiers returning to their quarters blocked the footpath. Hilary shrank aside, tremulous and mute in her amazement.

"Take my arm a moment," begged Mr. Bevis, "till we have passed this tipsy gang." She did as he asked half-unconsciously; he ventured ever so lightly to press her hand to his side.

"Oh, that this may be an omen," he said, "of a future right to shield you always! I ask no better lot in the world."

So, as he had frankly put it, she was poor, and all her friends had fallen from her; yet here was actually someone who cared for her just for herself, without money, without position. Dizzy with strange emotions, something—she scarce knew what—something akin to despair lowering all her forces, Hilary hardly knew what she wanted to say, nor how to say it. How could she, who had been nigh starving for lack of love, reject it now, so true as it must be, and yet—oh, it must be wicked of her not to want it! Should she not be the most thankless creature upon earth to put it from her? How could she bring herself to tell this man she had not one spark of feeling for him such as he desired? How could she wound the one person on earth who sought her out just to be kind, and generous, and tender?

Deeply moved and confused, the girl tried brokenly to thank her suitor, saying with down-bent averted face she had never once thought of this.

"But not that you never will think of it," he interrupted eagerly; "for such a—for you I can wait and wait, a month, a year, as long as you will, only, dear Miss St. John, don't dismiss me like a cur. When a man offers his very all, he deserves something better than that—he really does."

He put his appeal admirably. He spoke with earnestness absolutely unfeigned. Hilary faltered over the positive refusal her lips inclined to. Mr. Bevis pressed the slight advantage.

"Hard as it is to do it," he said magnanimously, "I leave the question entirely in your hands, and myself at your mercy. Only don't refuse me the delight of seeing you often at Park Villa. Let it rest so for a time, and I will school myself to be content."

They had reached her home by now; he skilfully retired without at least having received a rebuff direct; bade her good-night, just lingeringly enough to mark his new position towards her, and went his way warm with self-satisfaction.

And Hilary, hardly knowing to what her silence had committed her, went in, and up-stairs—shivering!

CHAPTER XVII.

When Miss Cavenham piloted Mr. Stafford away from that embarrassing interview in the churchyard, although she felt mistress of the hour with the man of her designs securely by her elbow, yet a certain uneasiness rankled within her. Hilary's agitation might be accounted for in fifty ways—that she set aside as of no immediate consequence. But Mr. Stafford's odd manner made her more anxious, and she set about investigating it with the promptitude of a woman who feels she has no time to squander in uncertainties. So, while the Rectory lad went round for her Norfolk cart, and she stood waiting, sketching apparatus in hand, Miss Cavenham cast out long lines with which to hook forth the information she desired.

Gazing from the Rectory at one end of the thick budding avenue, to Abbotswick at the other: "So you have not brought Mrs. Stafford back with you from abroad?" she said. "We mean to have the pleasure of seeing your mother here!"

"Heidelberg suits her," he answered quietly, "and my sisters, you know, have just married near her, so she agrees with me it would be a pity to quit her home there. She will not join me—at present."

"Ah! perhaps the Rectory would be small, and it would be hardly worth her while coming there," agreed Miss Cavenham, "but when you move into that dear old house yonder, then you must have—a Mrs. Stafford with you. Abbotswick would be a desert without a lady in it."

"It would," he assented briefly.

"And you would feel—well, quite puzzled to manage the establishment you would require there?"

"Yes, indeed I should."

"So you see, Mr. Stafford, the house will positively require a mistress."

"It positively will."

"So we shall hope to have your mother here, then?"

"But I assure you she's not likely to come."

Miss Cavenham grew impatient. This talking in a circle was unsatisfying. She could hear wheels approaching, and made a bold dash at the central point of her anxiety. Clapping her hands with quite a youthful gush of excitement—

"Ah! Mr. Stafford," she cried, "I have found you out! Somebody must go to Abbotswick with you, as you say" (he had said nothing of the sort, but, much bored with this gossip, let the assertion pass), "and you're going to bring a lady there. A—a wife! Don't contradict me, but let me guess who it is. Oh, would it not be charming—just like a fairy tale, you know, where everything always ends happily—if you presented us all to a Mrs. Norris Stafford, and it turned out to be yonder young lady whom I've cruelly dragged you from!"

The thrust was so totally unexpected, the curate had no weapon to meet it with but the truth.

"Miss Cavenham," he said, "I must entreat you never to mention such a thing even by way of joke—never. I can hardly conceive a greater impossibility than for me to ask Miss Hilary St. John to be my wife."

He spoke with downright sternness, anger perhaps. Miss Cavenham was delighted beyond expression, and cheerfully apologised for her somewhat impertinent curiosity.

"I was always such a dreadful baby, Mr. Stafford, over anything romantic, and so rashly frank over anything that interests me. Do forgive me! I'll never say another word to you about it. But I'm quite aware, poor child—for I had her stay with us, you know—that she's not the least little bit fitted—oh, there!"—the curate was knitting his brows ominously—"how naughty I am! Good-bye, Mr. Stafford! I'll make no more guesses about the new mistress of Abbotswick till," very sweetly, as he placed the reins in her hands, "till you come and tell me of her your own self."

Then she drove away. The curate went very soberly indoors. Tip smelt superciliously at the tracks of the Steeple Forncett cart, and presently discussed with him a mixed after-journey meal.

This four-footed little friend of Mr. Stafford's had had his afternoon's excitement. An inborn detestation of pussy-cats made him such a terror to cottage pets, and such a nuisance to his master on that score, that Tip's perambulations were generally confined to the Rectory grounds. But this very day a bold bad Tom had even ventured there, had been promptly chased from end to end of the Rectory garden till the rampant monster had taken refuge up a tree, where Tip had barked at him till he was hoarse, and had only left off because, to his joyful surprise, his master had come home. Perhaps this excessive activity had sharpened the canine appetite. At any rate, Tip proved so much the better trencherman at that dinner—though the curate had last eaten under sound of the carillons of Notre Dame at Antwerp—that he licked his hairy little jaws over the greater part of the housekeeper's carefully prepared viands, while his master seemed to dine mainly off thought, and, to judge by his jaded aspect, the fare agreed with him very poorly indeed.

Tip knew enough of household habits to discern something amiss when an hour had passed and the table was still uncleared, so he took upon himself to approach his master with first a tremendous yawn and stretch, and then a waiting attitude on three legs, his head on one side, one ear up and the other down, which said so very plainly, "What on earth are we sitting here for, doing nothing? Is anything particular the matter?" that Norris Stafford got up rebuked, pulled himself together, and prepared to take a tonic in a late round among his people. "For," said he, with a sigh, patting his adviser's sleek little ginger head, and looking into his sharp, intelligent eyes with a steady, courageous smile, "we must bear it and make the best of it, Tip. Make the best of it! Mustn't we?"

Perhaps this labour might not have been lightened could the curate have followed Hilary homeward, and could he have known the entanglements that would be the issue of that walk.

Entanglements fine as cobwebs, but strong as iron bonds, they truly seemed to her, and they gathered about her thick and fast after that fatal evening. Mr. Bevis lost no time in confiding the step he had taken to Mr. St. John. That gentleman solemnly intimated to his daughter his approval of her suitor.

"Fortunate you should consider yourself, Hilary, in having the power once more put into your hands of establishing yourself well without hanging on your family. Of course it does not retrieve the past, but it ameliorates it; with his professional prospects, Mr. Bevis could easily have commanded a better match, but he prefers to ally himself with—a-a-h'm—my family, and the woman of his choice. Be thankful that it is so; I trust you may be happy."

That was the evening after the proposal. The whole day long Hilary, in utter unrest, had been struggling between dread of what fate seemed forcing on her and fear of casting away a good greater than she deserved. Now if her father would but guide her through her difficulty! She looked at him with appeal almost piteous, but he chose not to observe it. Then out of her own confusion of ideas she tried to be explicit.

"Papa, it was all so strange. I do assure you I said nothing positive to Mr. Bevis. And I don't think I can—yet, or," stammering under her father's fixed stare of disapproval, "not what he wishes exactly. So—so"—blushing scarlet—"please do not speak of my—of anything being fixed."

Mr. St. John thought it as well, perhaps, to meet her thus far, so he made an affable gesture.

"I will leave things to arrange themselves, my dear. I have constitutionally a dislike to meddling with affairs of this nature. The St. Johns have plenty of

sense. I confidently trust to yours on this occasion. With respect to saying anything about it, I will meet your wishes. Good-night, child, good-night."

So, wanting bread of him, she had only got a stone —scarcely concealed reproaches, hints to remove the encumbrance of her presence from the household. The one bit of consolation extracted from her father she partly owed to Mr. Bevis. The young suitor represented himself to his future relative as rather more secure of Miss St. John's hand than perhaps he really felt. The wish being undoubtedly father to the thought, he professed to treat the engagement as fully determined on. "But," he said, "every wish of your charming daughter is law to me. I see she dislikes the fashion of publishing such strictly private matters. I wouldn't have her vexed for the world, so will you keep this change in—may I say—*our* home circle private for the present? Meanwhile, though, command me, my dear sir, as though I were your own son."

So Mr. Bevis came and went about Park Villa much as he chose, pushing his suit along lines where it was difficult to repel or deny him: catching at any hint of Hilary's tastes, then gratifying them; bringing the children a succession of small presents, which delighted them and kept his praises ever flowing; loading Mrs. St. John's drawing-room table with flowers which the lady, who never could arrange half a dozen roses in her life, passed on with significant smiles to her step-daughter; and having nice confidential chats with Mr. St. John up and down the back garden, which made them faster friends than ever; superintending lazy Bertie through his evening studies —though not to very much purpose, it struck even Hilary, this last attention. She was generally present through these evenings. An hour, or even a minute, alone with Mr. Bevis she avoided, and the gentleman pressed for nothing she disliked, only asking and seeming satisfied to see her sitting by, while Bertie ground at his history and Latin so reluctantly that his master had to expostulate.

"If you don't do better than now, my good fellow," he said one night when Bertie had just presented him with a hopelessly muddled *précis* on feudal laws under the Plantagenets, "you'll be plucked to a dead certainty. Just look at this writing: there are not two legible words in a line. See here; it ought to be as plain as this: '*In the fourth year of his reign the Barons*'"—rapidly executing a clear, upright piece of penmanship; "and instead of that, here's your elegant style"—as quickly running off the very facsimile of Bertie's untidy scrawl.

"Oh, I say, Mr. Bevis! isn't that clever!" cried the boy, quite ready to be amused at anything rather than his work.—"Do look here, Hilary; you couldn't tell that writing from mine, could you? How awfully nice! Can you imitate anyone, Mr. Bevis?"

"Why, ye——" began Mr. Bevis, then suddenly came to a stop. Hilary was looking full at him for once, just a little amused at his accomplishment. Her clear gaze seemed to embarrass him. "Imitate anyone! Certainly not," he said sharply; "I did it on the spur of the moment, but it's a thing I've never attempted before," and he was so much annoyed at the lad's foolish question, that the colour mounted to the roots of his sandy hair, all round even the edge of his white collar, as he stooped over the table and went on with Bertie's paper.

It was the most trivial incident, yet somehow it lodged in Hilary's recollection. Her young sisters had just fathomed the cause of Mr. Bevis' frequent presence at Park Villa, and, following in the wake of their elders, had been making it clear that they relished the coming alliance. "Wasn't Hilary going to have a house of her own?" they had asked her that same day; "and should they come and stay with her? and would she give them pretty things? And wouldn't it be nice!"

And she was severely catechising herself that very evening as to the worth of her own doubting judgment: and, indeed, as to the possibility of her ever making one in the children's agreeable forecast of the family future.

Now, somehow, Mr. Bevis's trick of imitation displeased her. His petulant disclaimer, the angry sparkle in his light eyes, gave her a faint qualm of aversion. She returned to her book, wishing the evening well over, though she felt that wish ungracious when Mr. Bevis next spoke.

"I have taken the liberty of sending to Norwich for some of those little blue flowers which I heard you telling Mr. St. John you admired, Miss Hilary." He had not advanced yet to freer form of address. She looked up pleased, if not as promptly grateful as she ought to have been. "The scilla? Ah, I do love them! Ours at Abbotswick were brought from abroad by——"

"Yes," said Mr. Bevis; "by Daniels, or King, or some of those seed people, I suppose?"

"N—o—o," said Hilary. "By Mr. Stafford."

There was just the shade of a different inflection in her voice—so slight, only her acute suitor perceived it. But precisely as something similar had alarmed Miss Cavenham, so this faint signal now alarmed him. As he frequently reminded himself, he was travelling on very thin ice in the matter of Miss St. John's affections. Was there anything antagonistic to his prospects connected with that parson? The mere suspicion darkened his horizon; like Miss Cavenham, again, he could not rest until he had sifted it. He went home very thoughtfully that evening, and a few days later, when Mr. Stafford was at the office, seized the opportunity of politely inviting the clergyman into his room till the head of the firm was disengaged. With much civility he expressed his hope that the church building was getting on well at Netley. He thought he had heard the whole of the old edifice was being restored.

Mr. Stafford thanked him, the work was nearly done —would be complete in the next month, October.

Then Mr. Bevis would take the liberty of naming this to Miss St. John. Of course, she would like to hear of Netley, "notwithstanding—er—everything."

No remark whatever from the client upon this, but such a firm closing of the determined mouth, and such a steady gazing through the office window at nothing at all, that Mr. Bevis sniffed danger. He went cautiously a little farther.

"I suppose I might suggest Miss St. John looking over all these changes at her old place? Unless, that is, you wish or intend to draw her attention to them yourself."

Mr. Stafford rose abruptly.

"Pray do as you wish, Mr. Bevis. I'm not the least likely to have any communication with Miss St. John. I believe that is Mr. Milroy's door? Good-morning."

Mr. Bevis, left to himself, sat down musing, one knee over the other, with a broad, growing grin of satisfaction.

"So ho! my honourable friend," quoth he to himself, "you won't enter the lists. We-ll," slowly recording every shade of expression on Norris Stafford's features, and matching it with Hilary's changed tones, "so much the better for me. But, ye stars! how opportunities are thrown away upon some people!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

IT is to be feared that at this point of Hilary's history she may not stand very high in the eyes of some readers, young ones particularly, who have followed her fortunes thus far.

To glide voluntarily into an engagement that in itself offered not one single attraction to her may seem a piece of folly unwarrantable, unpardonable, in any girl of spirit or sense; and natural judgment enough this is for happy hearts that have never been tossed about on troubled seas, but that have sailed into calm wedded havens under the safe convoy of kind domestic care. But Hilary, her faith in well-nigh everything she had ever leaned on shaken to its foundations in the last sad year, grew, all that summer and autumn through, more irresolute, more fearful of meddling with her own destiny, and those who have known great perplexities themselves may possibly pity and pardon her.

If Mr. Bevis had overpressed his slumbering claim or impatiently demanded the charming little ceremonies of betrothal, Hilary might have broken through her meshes in sheer affright. But Mr. Bevis was prudence personified. He never let his emotions run away with him. He was not going to scare away his fair lady's lukewarm liking, and thanks to this discretion, and something else almost to be called accident, the success of his suit seemed strengthened as winter approached.

Since housemaid Jane's outspoken lecture, Hilary's eyes had been opening to various avenues of household helpfulness down which she had ventured, at first with the shyness of excessive ignorance, more boldly as practice gave her confidence, and soon the whole house looked better for her labour, which she herself grew to like, if only because it was her refuge from thinking.

Mrs. St. John's drawing-room, a very emporium of tasteless furniture and ornaments hideous to behold, had by degrees its worst monstrosities conjured into obscurity, their places filled from Hilary's own store of Aunt Phil's countless costly gifts. Dust no longer took up weekly residence on every article. The mistress's favourite couch, where she read, and took naps, and ate little niceties between meals, was restored once in the day at least to seemly tidiness. (Three crumpled handkerchiefs, two pink-paper-covered novelettes, a bag of chocolate, a *mêlée* of nuts and broken shells, three pears, and a long list on a torn envelope of what mending Jane had to do before Saturday night!—that was one of Hilary's finds behind her stepmother's sofa-cushion!) As they cost nothing, and were not even set down to that terrible Nemesis "Credit," Mrs. St. John kindly permitted these little changes, and even suggested more. "Had not Hilary any little pictures of Abbotswick? It would be so nice for people to see what might have belonged to—them!"

Yes, Hilary had them truly, but had never taken them forth to foster sadness by their constant sight. Now she hesitated, and her stepmother misinterpreted the sign.

"Don't get them out unless you like," she said good-humouredly; "perhaps you would rather save them for your own nice little house. Mr. Bevis was——"

But Hilary fled; she never could endure hints on that subject. To evade them she would parade every treasure she possessed of her old home. Foraging now for these, she came unexpectedly upon something that sent her back with eyes glowing, lips in soft, uncertain curves.

"Mamma, I have unpacked a box that was set away when I first came, and found a letter in it from Mrs. Dasent of Mosswick. She must have written it the very day I left, when they too were all starting for America, and I had been fancying she had gone away and thought no more about me. Oh, if she's home I want to answer her directly!"

The Dasents were home, so Bertie told his step-sister, and Hilary eagerly wrote her long-deferred reply, feeling, after those kind, tender lines, as if she were once more in communion with some true, tried friend. And the outcome of this was a call from the mistress of Mosswick the very next afternoon, and the carrying away with her of Hilary for a three days' visit.

For three whole days she was whirled off into the delicious open country, that, for all it was November, had golden leaves left yet on great, broad oaks, and robins singing every-day psalms in hedgerows still brilliant with scarlet hips and haws! For three whole days she was with someone she dared speak freely to, someone for whom she even lifted the veil that hid her deepest wound, and told how "Aunt Phil must have been angry with her at the last, and that was worst of all!"

"She is as loyal a girl as ever breathed," said Sylvia to her husband, when he came to her dressing-room before dinner. "I feel as though I could almost hate the man that's got her money, even though it's Norris Stafford."

"Don't do that," said her husband; "he doesn't deserve it. He's fagging over the property till he looks ten years older than when we went away. I was with him this morning, and thought naturally he would talk his queer legacy over with me, but he

didn't seem inclined to. I confess to trying to lead up to it, but all I got for my pains was, 'Don't judge me, old fellow, just yet.' So we won't, little wife, nor hate him either."

"I'm sure I don't wish to," protested Sylvia, "though I think Hilary——"

"*Must*, as a matter of course!" exclaimed her husband. "Why, that's true; and yet, most unfortunately, I made Stafford promise to come round here to-night, and stay till the end of the week. What's to be done?"

For a moment Mrs. Dasent was dismayed; then, by some curious turn of thought, she grew excited, said that perhaps it might not matter after all, and went off to break the awkward news to her girl guest, who, though she would willingly have renounced her dream of pleasure to escape the threatened meeting, would yet have suffered anything rather than let such weakness be known.

"You need not be afraid; we shall not fight," she said. And very erect and bright-eyed, blushing under her friend's praise—"Brave child, how long have you learned to make the best of everything?"—and looking altogether very lovely and lovable, she presently entered the drawing-room, and was greeted by Mr. Dasent and the curate-squire of Netley.

But that instant cruelly chilled the incipient romance Sylvia Dasent was secretly weaving. Norris Stafford, well on his guard, forewarned by Hugh Dasent's announcement of his fellow-guest, was simply coldly courteous to Hilary, and nothing more. Vainly did Mrs. Dasent watch for one gleam of the emotion she had fancied he betrayed when they were all at Abbotswick together. None such escaped him. Of interest and attention he had plenty for the Dasents and their travels, but for Hilary not a syllable, not a word, except what politeness towards a stranger might demand. With his hostess he was, as naturally with womankind, gentle and genial. To Hilary, stiff, restrained, frigid. With the children after dinner, when running in they rapturously claimed him, he was nearest at perfect ease. Small Sylvia, perched upon his knee, ate all his grapes, and Carr, the boy, half throttled him in warm embraces. Under their caresses the deep lines on his face vanished, and smiles reigned instead. But he had no smiles for Hilary, either then or the next day, or the next, and when the little ones would fain have enticed "pwetty Hilawy" into the circle of their frolics, their other playmate would quietly desert them, refusing all but ceremonious contact with Miss St. John. So poor Sylvia Dasent was worried and perplexed over her two ill-met visitors; and noting Hilary's growing consciousness of the chill her presence put on Mr. Stafford, could only try to mend matters by privately singing the virtues of each of her guests to the other, thus tormenting and working upon both in a way she little imagined. But the crowning disaster of this visit was on the third day, when, just as the gentlemen had been beguiled from the master's den, where they were working at plans of a cottage-hospital for Netley, into the cosy little drawing-room for four-o'clock tea, Miss Gertrude Cavenham was announced. Then did Mrs. Dasent feel herself unlucky indeed. George Cavenham's desertion of Hilary had filled her with shame; his speedy marriage with another with disgust. Nothing could have been less acceptable than Gertrude's call was to the mistress of Mosswick at this moment.

But the lady was irrepressibly amiable. She had heard of Mrs. Dasent's return when at Netley that afternoon (where also she had heard in what direction the curate was straying!), and had come directly to welcome her back; she was suggestively playful and easy with Mr. Stafford; very respectful to Mr. Dasent, who disliked her vastly, and remarkably condescending to Hilary. But, charming as she endeavoured to make herself, Miss Cavenham was an added weight upon the already ill-assorted party. When Mr. Dasent, after only one cup, said he must go back to his plans, Norris Stafford also rose with relief upon his face.

"What, only ten minutes' talk after you have been away twelve months! Oh, fie, Mr. Dasent," said Miss Cavenham. But the gentlemen protesting, jokingly, it was their duty to finish something for that night's post—"Oh, if it's *duty*," she emphasised, "we can't stop Mr. Stafford. We all know duty is his lodestar!"

The unlucky man thus belauded felt a fierce inclination to gag the speaker. The absurdity with which this praise must strike one hearer smote him with mortification, and threw him off his balance. Stooping to Hilary, he said in a low voice—

"If that sounds preposterous, don't set it down as altogether false," and then followed Mr. Dasent from the room.

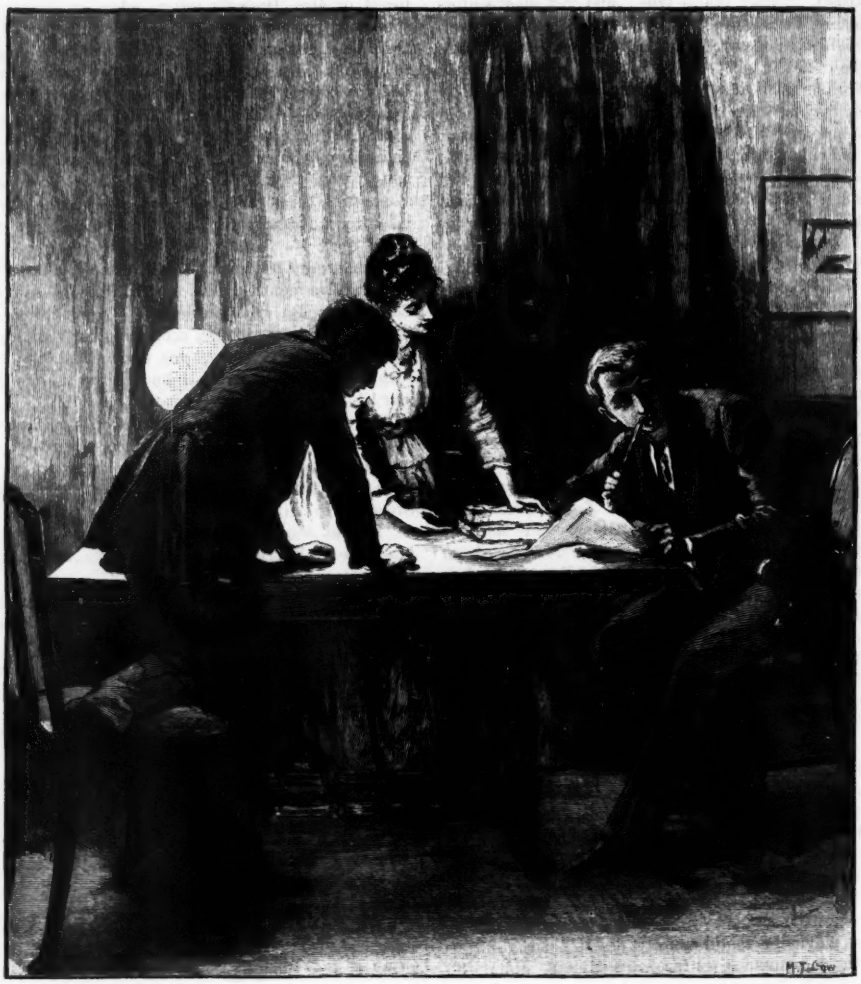
Not once since they had been together at Mosswick had he spoken to her, looked at her as now. Hilary's pulses started wildly throbbing. Her colour rose, and deepened as Miss Cavenham stared at her ill pleased. That lady had not been making way with the curate as she could wish; her smouldering jealousy was ready to blaze up at any trifle. This offensively good-looking girl might be trying to entrap Mr. Stafford, assisted by Sylvia Dasent, who was weak enough for any folly. She would promptly put out the spark of that experiment. Mrs. Dasent going to the nursery at this moment to fetch her children, Miss Cavenham, with an agreeable smile, expressed her pleasure at finding Miss St. John so soon among old friends.

"And with Mr. Stafford it must seem quite like old times," she said, planting her stabs with skilful spite. "Oh! as I've thought scores of times, what a pity it is this fracture in your life can't be mended up as royal people mend feuds—by matrimonial links, you know! It would be so nice! I actually said so once to Mr. Stafford, but the rude man told me flatly it was absolutely impossible he should ever marry you. Was not it too bad of him, dear?"

The children came racing in, and Hilary was spared reply. She was particularly self-possessed, and gayer than her wont that evening, but when, as they bade her good-night, Mrs. Dasent made light of her departing next day, and pleaded imperatively for a longer visit, the girl was immovable as a rock. She must be

back very early: nothing must detain her; and distressed though she was by it, Mrs. Dasent had to give in to the girl's determination, which took her to Brainford on a chill November morning burning with intensest, bitterest shame.

in her proud passion of humiliation. Henceforth she would stop at Park Villa, tie herself to it by habits, fashion herself by all her tastes to that home, or—or to one like it. Aye, even—forcing herself to look forward with almost despair gnawing at her spirit—



"Certainly not,' he said sharply; 'I did it on the spur of the moment.'"—*p.* 413.

She had been offered to Mr. Stafford and rejected by him! Other people might know this and be scoffing, jesting at her. Oh! it was horrible—something she had surely not deserved. Why had she gone into the Eden of Sylvia Dasent's beautiful home, only to hear this? Never would she venture there again while Norris Stafford was within miles of Mosswick. Better still, never again at all. Never! she was ready to vow even bind herself out of reach of such gross indignity as Gertrude Cavenham had dragged her through by something she could hardly think of without a shudder!

And so the strange outcome of that visit was the progress of Mr. Bevis' wooing, though not exactly upon lover-like lines.

(To be continued.)

THE SEVEN LEAVES OF THE VINE.

THOUGHTS UPON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF OUR LORD UPON THE CROSS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. WILLIAM ALEXANDER, D.D., D.C.L., LORD BISHOP OF DERRY AND RAPHOE.

THE FOURTH WORD FROM THE CROSS.

"And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—ST. MARK xv. 33, 34.

THE fourth word from the cross is probably given by St. Mark in its exact original form.* Let us (1) assure ourselves that the sentence was actually spoken by Jesus; and (2) address ourselves to its interpretation.

I.

This word was spoken by our Lord. And this in itself is an absolutely tremendous fact. More tremendous, more incalculable, more soul-subduing, when we reflect that this is the *one only* last word recorded by the two first Evangelists. Let us conceive the case of a modern missionary martyr, who lays down his life for the testimony of Jesus. Some of his companions escape, and return to England. A vast assemblage gather to hear of the sufferings whereby the athlete of the faith has won his crown. They seek to know from ear-witnesses how the Son of God sustained His faithful servant, what message came back from those dying lips, with what last word he has enriched the treasury of the Church. And those who heard the martyr can only give for answer—"The man of God bore himself with a glorious patience, but all he had to say was just this, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?'"

It need scarcely be said that this fearless candour of the Evangelist has been cruelly travestied and heartlessly misunderstood. The bolder and coarser schools of unbelief have said out that it was the cry of cowardice. The sentimental school has used it as a *motif* round which they have embroidered their poor romance. The most popular and most voluble of the literary artists who have thus dared to play with Calvary is the author of the fascinatingly written book, so profanely and so fancifully called the "Vie de Jésus"—the work of the theologian who has confessed that his ambition is to have his pages "turned by daintily gloved fingers." "Perhaps" comes in here with a frequency unusual even in that book of guesses. "Perhaps" in that supreme moment He repented giving a life so precious for a race so vile. "Perhaps," as has so often been the case with martyrs and others who sacrifice all they have for an idea, the moment came to Him also, the first of the idealists of humanity, when Death, with the irresistible terror of his icy sarcasm, whispered—"*In vain.*" "Perhaps" He thought of the fountains of Galilee, or of its moonlit waters, of its wild flowers, and the golden joy of its sunny days, and regretted that He had not remained a workman of Nazareth, with a peasant's home and simple pleasures.

But, at all events, it remains *certain* that the fourth word from the cross and the agony in Gethsemane are *historical.*

Legends, it will be said, falsify. No doubt; but they surround their heroes with splendid exaggerations. Such forms look larger than human on the frozen hills of death. "Being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."* A demigod, covered with a sweat of blood, writhing on the ground like a crushed worm! No legend ever decked out its subject in a drapery so strange, or invested him with a beauty so uninviting in the eyes of man. We are reminded that the last words of men who lay hold upon the popular imagination are sometimes invented, sometimes self-moulded. An instance of this occurs almost as these lines are being written. Who has forgotten the most pathetic sentences in all romance? "Just at last bell the Colonel said, 'Adsum.' It was the word at school when names were called; and he, whose heart was as a little child's, answered, and stood in the presence of the Master." This sentence is placed in a Scottish parish over the remains of the brave officer who was the original from which the great writer drew Colonel Newcome. It is fast becoming a local tradition that the words were really spoken by the fine old soldier in his last moments—which assuredly they never were. But the case is different here. *Who* is represented as falling upon the earth with a sweat of agony, or crying from a cross, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" The paradox of the fervent African becomes applicable here—"I believe it, because it is impossible."

II.

LET us now place ourselves at the point of view which alone can render this word intelligible, coherent with the character of Christ, almost (one ventures to say) conceivable.

Let us remember, then, to ask ourselves, "Who is He, what is He, who so speaks in His dying hour?" Let us remember, at the same time, that the

* Cf. *Talitha*, St. Mark v. 41; *Ephphatha*, vii. 34; *Abba*, xiv. 42.

* St. Luke xxii. 44.

Evangelists have this peculiarity—that they often lay open to us in a single sentence a whole series of precedent conditions. Who is this? we ask. We believe that it is the only Son of God, God from God, Light from Light, Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was crucified under Pontius Pilate. And this word, apparently so hopeless and helpless, is really the word which opens up to every believer in the Atonement the whole series of precedent conditions from which that Atonement flows.

If Christ were short of that which we have just declared Him to be—if He were a transcendent moral teacher, a genius in the spiritual sphere, a man of saintly excellence, and nothing more—then logic would drive us to some such conclusion as this:—

Christ clung to the illusions of His opening career almost to the last. Possibly, He carried them with Him up to and upon the cross. They were with Him up to midday on the fatal Friday. But as the moments passed, and His weakness increased; as the darkness deepened over Calvary, as the lurid sky was inexorably still, and no angel's wing cleft the air, no smile of pity visibly fell upon Him from the Father's face; as He was left to go down to the dust of Golgotha by an ignominious death, crucified with thieves—the very name of one of whom was the caricature of fate upon His career—His courage failed, and he gave Himself up to despair. And however piteous the story, however cruel and unjust the punishment, it was but another instance of the cynicism of our human history; but another example of the lively or splendid enthusiasm of youth mocked, corroded, ruined, by the failure of manhood.

Thus the Christ who is not the Christ of faith is discrowned by His own utterance upon the cross. And of all the seven last utterances, this is the one which is the most utterly certain. For who that loved Him, or believed in Him, would have invented it under any circumstances, or would have recorded it—unless indeed he held the view which we are about to develope?

Take the Christian view of the suffering Son of Man; look and listen to St. Matthew and St. Mark as they chronicle the fourth word, and think what we must conclude.

"It was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the land until the ninth hour, and the sun was darkened."* The darkness was not that of an eclipse, but the precursor of seismic disturbance. It was within three hours of the moment when "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent."† That darkness, by some preordained harmony, was in sympathy with the inward darkness of the dying Lord of heaven and earth. The fierce, prolonged pain of crucifixion, the torn and tormented brow, the anguish, to a nature so exquisite, of human hatred—of being taken for a sanguinary fanatic and associated with crime—tortured that gentle heart, that susceptible organisation. Three hours ebbed away as He hung silent in the lurid gloom. Death was fast approaching.

"But why should not the Elect of humanity, the acknowledged King of the spiritual world, have faced that moment with a sweet, untroubled calmness, with a smile of hope and love? Why should He not have been as unbent in manhood as the one Kaiser on his white bed, as the other with his superb self-control?"

There is but one answer, and that is perfectly conclusive.

For one like Jesus death had two conditions:—

1. It was a death which (if we believe prophets and apostles) was constructed, so to speak, to bear the punishment of human sin. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him." "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." "God made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin."‡

The peculiar punishment of sin is nothing outward so much as being abandoned by God. "Ye shall know My alienation," said God to sinners of old.† What must the feeling of that have been to Him Who declares to us the inner secret of His life, when He says, "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father!"‡

This fourth word from the Cross, then, speaks to us of man's sin endured in man's Representative.

2. Once more, that death was a death on behalf of every man.§

His consciousness was fused into and made identical with ours. Our misery was felt by Him, so far as it could be without contamination. The sinking which is the prelude of the last moment; the falling and fainting away into the deeps: all this was gathered into one focus. The Prince of Life felt death as the death of humanity. There was no dissolution of the hypostatic union, as if He were altogether abandoned by the Person of the Word. But the heart of God felt death in the dying heart of the Son of Man, Who is the centre of our humanity.

* St. Luke xxiii. 44, 45.

† St. Matthew xxvii. 51. "Under the reign of Tiberius, the whole earth, or at least a celebrated province of the Roman Empire, was involved in a preternatural darkness for three hours. Even this miraculous event, which ought to have excited the wonder, the curiosity, and the devotion of mankind, passed without notice in an age of science and history." ("The Decline and Fall," chap. xv.) A distinct chapter of Pliny is devoted to *eclipses* of an extraordinary character and unusual duration. But St. Luke's phrase (xxiii. 45) is the same as that in Apoc. ix. 2—ἐσκοτίσθη ὁ ἥλιος, "the sun was darkened"—*i. e.*, obscured and partially concealed by smoke and dust. Modern observation makes us familiar with the fact that a darkening of the sky very frequently precedes earthquakes. (See Dean Milman's note to his edition of Gibbon, vol. i., 525, 526.)

‡ Isaiah liii. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 2 Cor. v. 21.

† Numbers xiv. 34, R.V., not (as A.V.) "breach of promise," but *alienation* or *withdrawal*.

‡ St. John vi. 57. § Heb. ii. 9.

Now this was over. Then death died in the heart of God. The dereliction melted away in depths of unclouded light. "My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Unbelief, as we have seen, cries, "Despair, impatience, ignorance, cowardice." Rather, it is not only the necessary utterance of the atoning death of the Incarnate Lord; it is a proof of the reality of the suffering of His soul. It is a sweet protestation. It points, of course, to past hours of darkness unspeakable. But it leaps to His lips as if with a burst of music, with some far-off accompaniment of triumph. He cried "with a great voice," and it was the cry, the word, which supremely impressed the earliest Evangelists. But now it is over, past and gone, lying in the distance—"Why *didst* Thou?"*

III.

THE writer of this paper will suggest but one practical thought bearing upon the awful mystery of death. He will suppose himself, on this occasion, to be writing especially for the young—and for young people of the better classes in London, where the circumstances of their lives bring them into contact with what is so well known as the "London Season."

Some may say that this is a peculiarly unsuitable kind of lesson.

Those who are old, or growing old, who know little of fashion but its exterior, have no right to speak bitterly of that with which they are but imperfectly acquainted. It is, of course, no heavy task to aim facile shafts at balls, dinner-parties, receptions, concerts, drawing-rooms, dances, for which the June nights are all too short. Worldliness is a word with flexible and wavering outlines when we come to define it. Its line of demarcation is never local, or made of material stuff. It is inside the Church in mist, as well as outside in pomp. The duties which devolve upon the much-abused "designing mothers" are like other duties: they only become mean when they are meanly done. For those among the elder to whom the season is supposed to be a period of delightful excitement, it is, sometimes at least, a protracted self-sacrifice, a weary fast of much more than forty days.

But for the young, "Rejoice in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."†

This is not, if we understand it rightly, the utterance of an elderly *roué* become a Trappist, or a sickly valetudinarian with an unwholesome religionism, thinking fiercely upon youth, and hissing out, with a bitter laugh or sneer, "Go on! enjoy yourselves if you like, but take the consequences!"—a warning which differs from an anathema chiefly in its form. The sentence is most truly understood by taking it literally. The best rule for its interpretation is to suppose that a sweet and kindly smile looked down upon the page whereon it was first inscribed.

The writer who addresses the young of whom we have spoken should surely in substance speak to this effect—

We are, in fact, in different lights: you in the dawn, I in the sunset. I cannot see things in your light, still less can you see them in mine. As I look backward with you, the radiance of my past is dimmed with a mist of tears; as you look forward with me, the light is too severe, too pathetic, lingering as it does high up on cliffs whose bases are becoming darkened with gathering shadows. Yet at least keep your hearts pure, remembering that "He who was begotten of God keepeth you, and that wicked one toucheth you not." Every season the dawn fades, and the darkness comes for young souls. Perhaps grief, perhaps change of circumstances, perhaps disappointment, perhaps sickness, perhaps the death that comes with a foot of velvet and strikes with a hand of steel.

In a great spiritual manual there is a solemn chapter "On the Withdrawal of all Consolation." It must have been written under the shadow of the fourth word from the cross by one whom its echoes haunted, whose spirit re-translated it into language more easily understood by sinful man. "He rideth easily whom grace carrieth joyously." "Do I love Jesus?" is often asked. At times it is answered in the affirmative, with a facile joy which is superficial. The great picture in *Lear* is full of instruction. The old man asks his daughters, "How much do you love me?" Two of them heap hyperbole on hyperbole, and make professions, extravagant no doubt, yet possibly not intentionally quite false. One only says little, almost nothing, knowing that "her heart is richer than her tongue." But which really loved most? Bear witness the scene where the storm rolls over the old discrowned king's white hair upon the heath. Not strength of profession, but tenacity of grasp, will avail you in such hours as we speak of. Above all, strengthen yourselves by contemplating One Who (as the fourth word from the cross testifies) knew the trials of feeling as well as the touch of pain. Hold fast by the hand of Him Who suffered darkness and death, that He might turn death into life, and darkness into light. Pray ever—

> "Abide with me from morn till eve,
> For without Thee I cannot live:
> Abide with me when night is nigh,
> For without Thee I dare not die."

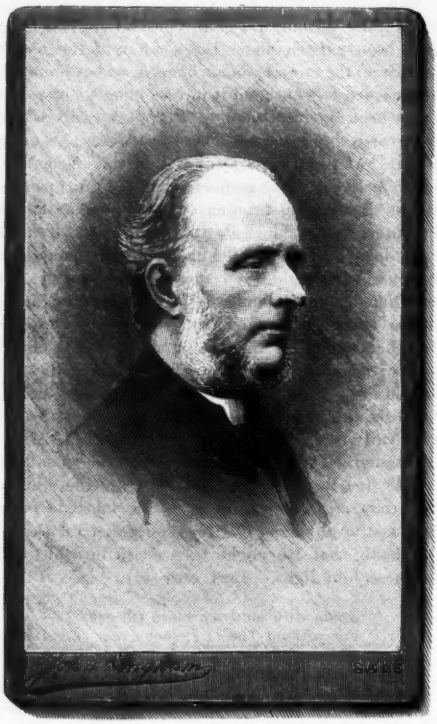
* ἐγκατέλιπες, ver. 34. † Eccles. xi. 9.

THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE.

BY THE REV. JOHN TELFORD, B.A.

THERE is an old print, of some interest though of little or no historic value, which represents the first Methodist Conference in Session. The scene is a small room of Wesley's first preaching-house, the Foundry, in Little Moorfields. Wesley himself is on his feet, his brother Charles seems to be installed as secretary, whilst four other clergymen occupy the front seats. Behind them stand the coming men, four representatives of that noble band of itinerants who became Wesley's sons in the Gospel, and spread the influence of the Evangelical Revival throughout England and America. Behind Wesley is the President's chair, which seems to show us "many more" who are to fill that seat of honour after the Founder's death.

It was on Monday, June 25, 1744, that those ten men met together. Two years earlier Wesley's visit to Newcastle had extended the boundaries of his vast circuit to the extreme north of England. Methodism had become one of the chief religious forces of the time. Step by step God had led the Oxford graduates to their life-work by a way they knew not. So rapidly was Methodism growing that Wesley felt he must take counsel with men of kindred spirit lest the vast opportunity should not be fully improved. He therefore sent invitations to a few of his friends and helpers asking "their advice respecting the best method of carrying on the work of God."



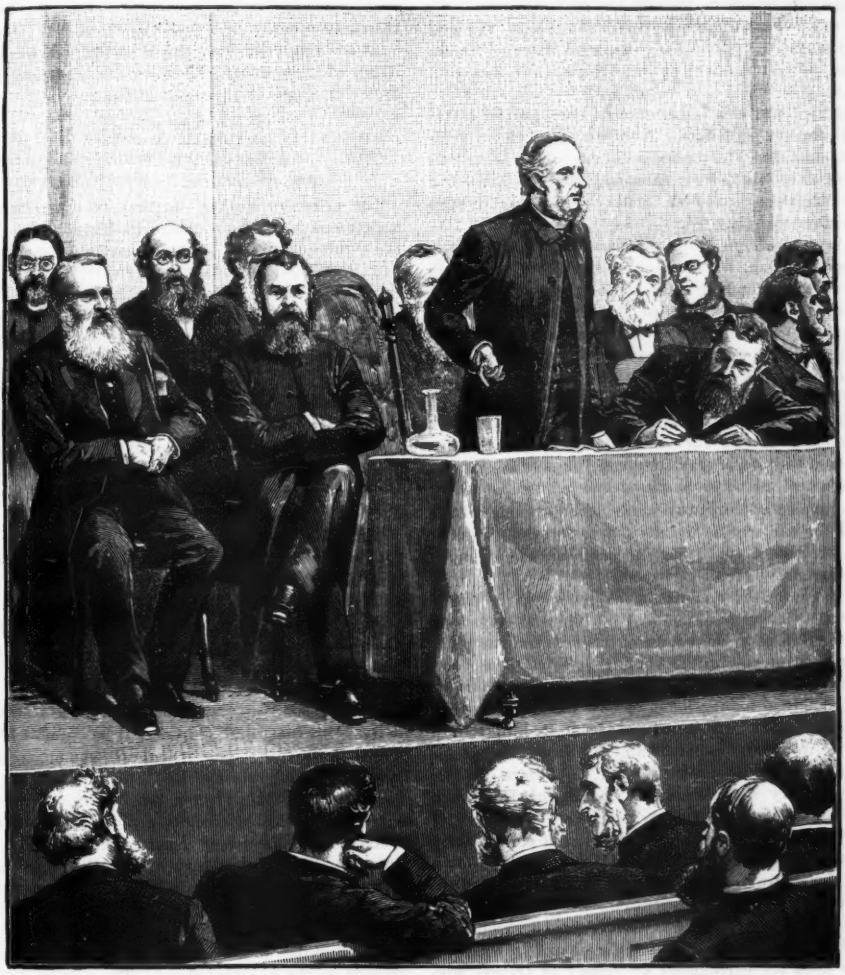
THE REV. JOSEPH BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE.

The progress already made was evident in the Sacramental service held the day before the Conference. The London Society, numbering between two and three thousand, received the Communion from the hands of five clergymen. The whole town had indeed been stirred by the revival. Next morning Charles Wesley opened the session with one of his mighty sermons and baptised "Samuel Holloway, who in that moment felt the great burden taken off." The week was spent in prayerful conversations on the doctrine, discipline, and mission of Methodism. Before it closed all perceived that this assembly for consultation and prayer must become a permanent feature. The workers had been brought face to face, to their unspeakable comfort and to the priceless advantage of their work. Henceforth the gathering became the Annual Conference. By this assembly the doctrines of Methodism were discussed, and its growing organisation was adapted to the heavy demands made upon it. Above all, the bonds of friendship and sympathy were knit more closely between scattered workers who could have known little of each other had they not thus met occasionally at Conference.

But though the Conference took root thus early, it was not till February 28, 1784, that Wesley executed his Deed of Declaration, which finally fixed its legal basis after the death of himself and his brother. That deed contained the names of one hundred "Preachers" who were to form the Conference. They were empowered to meet once a year, to fill up vacancies in their number, elect a president and secretary, appoint ministers to the various circuits, admit suitable men to the ranks of the itinerancy, and exercise general control over the United Societies.

Their annual assembly was to sit not less than five nor more than twenty-one days. It was not legal unless forty of its members were present. If anyone was absent for two years in succession without a dispensation, he ceased to be a member unless he was present on the first day of the next Conference.

When Wesley executed this deed there were one hundred and seventy Methodist preachers. His selection of names gave considerable offence to some who found themselves passed over. In the following year, however, he wrote a letter, in which he besought those whose names were on the deed never to avail themselves of that instrument to assume any authority over their brethren, but to let all things go on as when he was with them, so far as circumstances would permit.



THE CONFERENCE IN SESSION.

This letter was entrusted to Joseph Bradford—Wesley's travelling companion—to be read to the preachers after the Founder's death. Wesley's injunction has been faithfully obeyed. The British Conference now represents more than 2,500 ministers and supernumeraries at home and abroad, but "the hundred" is still the "Legal Conference," which must confirm all decisions of the General Conference in matters provided for by the Deed of Declaration. This is generally done as a matter of course, though in case of hasty or unconstitutional legislation the veto of the hundred would secure time for further deliberation. A place in the "hundred" has now become one of the coveted distinctions of Methodism—conferred for administrative ability, pulpit power, scholarship, or special work of any kind. It is hard to say what gifts or services qualify a man for election, but a glance at the roll will show how various are the excellences which have been thus recognised. It must be borne in mind that the president and secretary can only be chosen out of this inner circle, so that it forms the way to the highest honours of Methodism.

The time and place of each Conference are fixed in the previous year's assembly. There are thirteen "Conference towns" which bear this burdensome but much-prized honour:—London, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, Birmingham, Newcastle, Hull, Bradford, Camborne, Burslem, Nottingham. The Minutes of Conference, which form the official year-book, always contain a statement of the number of ministers and laymen to be chosen by each of the thirty-five districts at their May Session. Since 1878,

laymen have taken their place with the ministers in the "Representative Session" which is held in the third week. The "Pastoral Session," composed of ministers only, sits during the two first weeks.

At the Camborne Conference of 1888, provision was made for 400 ministers. Members of the legal hundred, candidates for ordination, and others, were estimated at 121; 279 were chosen by the districts. For the Conference of 1887, held in Manchester, 450 ministers were invited.

"Who shall go to Conference this year?" is a question which, with commendable discretion, is left almost to the end of the agenda in the May district committees. The names of the ministers are called over, and each man states whether he wishes to attend. Then comes the process of sifting, which is often somewhat severe before the list is reduced to the allotted number.

Meanwhile, the Conference town is preparing for its guests. Homes have to be found for four or five hundred visitors, a plan of preaching services drawn up for two or three Sundays, and elaborate postal, telegraphic, and railway arrangements made. It is hard for one who is uninitiated to form any idea of the tax which such matters make on the strength and ingenuity of all concerned.

Going to Conference is a happy event. Friends generally travel together and beguile the way with speculations as to the course of business and the chief points of interest in the coming session. The Camborne Conference added a new delight to the journey. By the skilful management of two London ministers, a special train was chartered from Paddington, in which circuit and departmental ministers set out for Cornwall with their wives and daughters. "The west country was all astir as the Flying Dutchman steamed in with its precious freight." The variety of provisions suggested a picnic, the buzz of conversation savoured of a debating club. It was evident that a new departure had been made which was destined to become a popular institution.

It is necessary to be astir early on the first morning of Conference. The doors of the chapel in which it is to meet are surrounded by groups of friends who have, perhaps, not met for many a year. Looking inside the place, a platform may be seen stretching across the end of the building. Gradually this is filled with Conference officials. In the centre is the outgoing President, whose year of honour is almost over. On his left is the Secretary with his three assistants, behind whom are the "official letter-writers;" on his right sits the Ex-President, beyond whom are those who have "passed the chair," arranged in order of seniority. Seats are also reserved for representatives from affiliated Conferences. The seats nearest the platform are reserved for the legal hundred, officers of departments—such as the Home and Foreign Missionary Societies—and chairmen of districts. The rank and file of the pastorate fill up the unoccupied seats down-stairs, and overflow into the gallery. Many ministers who find homes for themselves swell the numbers. About five hundred men in all gathered at Camborne on July 24th, 1888, but the great distance generally makes a Cornish Conference smaller than any other.

At the appointed hour the President gives out that hymn which awakens a host of reminiscences in the breast of every Conference veteran:—

> "And are we yet alive,
> And see each other's face?
> Glory and praise to Jesus give,
> Who saves us by His grace!

The precentor strikes the first note—an organ is undreamed of—and the whole building vibrates with the volume of praise. After devotional exercises are over, the Secretary calls out the roll of the legal hundred. The vacancies caused by death are then filled up, nominations being made in brief speeches which state, with varying degrees of effectiveness, the special claims of various brethren to election. Every man thus chosen must have been at least fourteen years in the ministry. The elections are made alternately on the ground of seniority, and in recognition of any kind of special work. When the vacancies caused by death or absence without a dispensation have been filled up, those due to superannuation are left over till the President and Secretary have been chosen.

This is the event of the day. The result of the vote for President has generally been foreshadowed by the previous year's election. The name which then stood second now generally takes the first place. When the voting is declared his deposed predecessor quits the chair of office, and in a brief congratulatory speech hands over the official seal and John Wesley's Bible which he used in his field-preaching. The new President then requests his brethren to be seated, and delivers his inaugural address. It has almost become a custom for this speech to suggest some motto for the year. At Camborne, the Rev. Joseph Bush, who was called to the chair after a long course of honoured service in Methodist circuits, gave as the watchword, "Conversions in every congregation." The Rev. David J. Waller, Secretary of the Wesleyan Education Department, was again elected Secretary of the Conference by a virtually unanimous vote.

The Conference prayer-meeting held at one o'clock on the first day of the session is much appreciated by friends in the neighbourhood. The "Open Session" is even more largely attended. At Camborne it was held at a quarter to three on the second afternoon. Addresses were read from seven affiliated conferences, and speeches delivered by their representatives. Such a gathering serves to show how cosmopolitan Methodism has become. The Rev. Charles H. Kelly, who had just returned from an official visit to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, delighted the Conference and its friends in Cornwall by his humorous and suggestive descriptions of Methodist life across the Atlantic. Anyone who will glance at that speech as given in the Methodist papers of the time will see how valuable an instrument of education the "Open Session" may thus be made. Whilst we are speaking of the gatherings to which the public are invited we may refer to the Ordination Service, at which the young ministers who have successfully passed through their three years' training at college and their four years' probation are set apart by

XUM

imposition of hands. The Ex-President delivers the charge. The official sermons, the public examination of candidates for ordination, the Conference love-feast, the recognition of returned missionaries, the temperance and holiness meetings, are all eagerly appreciated.

We must return to the Conference itself. Some of its most solemn hours are spent every year in answering the question, "Who have died this year?" Charles Wesley's funeral hymn is sung—

> "Come, let us join our friends above
> That have obtained the prize."

Then follow tributes to honoured friends from those who have known and worked with them in former days. Each man seems conscious that his own turn will come by-and-by. The "Conversation on the Work of God" gives any minister who has been blessed with marked success an opportunity to cheer and rouse his brethren. Suggestions as to the best means for reaching the masses, building up the Church, or shepherding the young, are also welcomed.

Ministerial character and orthodoxy are watched over with special jealousy. The Conference is the final court for the trial of all cases of discipline. Charges are generally referred to a committee of appeal, which brings in its report to the Conference. Candidates for the ministry, after passing through a searching and prolonged series of tests, are finally accepted or rejected by the Conference. Students who have completed their term at the Connexional colleges are appointed to circuits, and reports of their reading and examinations are annually made until the four years of probation are over.

The great event of the pastoral session for a large proportion of the men is the discussion and confirmation of "stations," as the appointments for the year are called. The system of itinerancy allows no minister in the ordinary work to remain more than three years in a circuit. Each May District Committee chooses a representative to whom ministers and circuits make known the invitations given and accepted, or the arrangements which they wish to be made. When the Stationing Committee meets, the representative does his best for his own circuits and men. A "first draft" is issued before the Conference meets, but many changes have to be made before the "third draft" is read and confirmed. When six hundred men and six hundred circuits have to be considered and consulted, it is naturally a hard task to suit every individual case. It is surprising how well both men and places are satisfied with the result.

All matters affecting ministerial work come before the Conference in its pastoral session. Notices of motion, or reports brought in by committees appointed the previous year, sometimes give rise to great debates. Such was the debate at Camborne on the class-meeting, on the order of sessions, and on foreign missionary affairs. New men come to the front in these debates, but the fathers of the Conference are always looked up to for guidance. If opinion is seriously divided, or further consideration is deemed expedient, questions are referred to committees, or even submitted to the judgment of the district meetings. When all the work is finished, friends and hosts are admitted, and the Conference journal is signed by the President and Secretary.

Up to 1878, as we have said, there was only one session of Conference. In that year, laymen first took their place in the assembly for the transaction of the financial business of Methodism. The "Representative Session," as it is called, meets in the third week—on the August Bank Holiday. It is composed of 240 ministers, with an equal number of laymen. At Camborne twelve laymen sat as treasurers of connexional funds, eighteen were chosen by the previous Conference, 210 were elected by the laymen in the various districts; 141 ministers were also selected by the ministers; the rest of the 240 were what one may call ex-officio members. A "Laymen's Special" ran from Paddington to Camborne. It is said that the Great Western never issued so many first-class tickets by a single train. Saturday was pleasantly spent among the beauties of the county. On Sunday the President preached his official sermon, and on Monday evening the annual Fernley Lecture was given. Business began on Monday morning with an inaugural address from the President, in which special reference was made to the lamented deaths of Alderman Sir William McArthur and Mr. Alderman Barlow, who were both honoured members of the previous Conference. Each financial department has to present its report to the Representative Session, and important discussions often arise, such as the debates on Foreign Missions and on the Order of Sessions at Camborne. The "Conversation on the Work of God" bears witness to the self-sacrificing zeal and happy success of the laymen of Methodism in spiritual work. When all business is transacted the journal is signed, and the representatives hasten back to their circuits. The Minutes of Conference published each year at the end of August bear witness how vast and varied is the business transacted by the Annual Conference of the people called Methodists, in its pastoral and representative sessions.



SOME BIBLE PLANTS.

HYSSOP.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM SPIERS,
M.A., F.G.S., F.R.M.S.

THE inquiry as to what plant corresponds to the Biblical "hyssop" is of special interest to the Christian, for it was used as the medium by which the sponge filled with vinegar was given to the Redeemer upon the cross. (John xix. 29.)

There are many other references to hyssop in the Scriptures. In the Levitical ritual the blood of animals offered as sacrifices was sprinkled on the transgressor, or on the sacred utensils, as the case might be, by means of a bunch of hyssop, a custom that seems to have originated from the fact that at the Exodus it was used by the Israelites, in accordance with God's command, for the purpose of sprinkling the blood of the lamb on the lintels of the houses. (Exod. xii. 22.) It was put to similar uses in various kinds of ceremonial purification. (Lev. xiv. 4—7, 48; Num. xix.) These associations of the plant with expiation and cleansing give a beautiful significance

to David's petition in the hour of his deep and sincere penitence: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." (Psalm li. 7.) In the Epistle to the Hebrews we find these Jewish customs thus referred to and interpreted: "When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the Tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. ix. 19—22.)

There is another reference to hyssop in the passage which sets forth the wide knowledge of plants which Solomon possessed. "He spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." (1 Kings iv. 33.)

We are able to gather, then, from these various Scriptural expressions, that hyssop was plentiful in Egypt and in Palestine, that it was found in the wilderness, that it grew also on the thick earthy mortar or cement that was used in ancient masonry, and that it was a somewhat small herbaceous plant, which could easily be arranged in a bunch and utilised as a sort of rude brush.

The difficulties connected with the identification of hyssop have arisen mainly from the uncertainty as to what plant was intended by the original words of Scripture that denote it, and also from the undue straining of some expressions that occur in the Bible concerning it. The Hebrew word (*ēzōb*) is rendered in the Septuagint by the Greek ὕσσωπος (hyssopus), for which there was probably no better reason than a similarity of sound between the two words. It is not at all clear what the Greek hyssop was, though most botanists regard it as being a species of *Saturcia*, a labiate plant something like mint, while others favour the marjoram (*Origanum*).

The language of David, already quoted, has led some to imagine that the plant was possessed of purifying properties; but the conditions of the case are fully satisfied by the supposition that he merely had in mind the ceremonial uses of hyssop (*ēzōb*).

In the accounts of our Lord's crucifixion given by St. Matthew and St. Mark, there is no mention of hyssop, but it is stated that the sponge was raised to the Redeemer's lips by means of a reed. But as St. John distinctly asserts that hyssop was used, we must suppose that the sponge and hyssop were fastened to the reed. The suggestion has been made that the hyssop had a stem strong enough to warrant its being described as a reed; but this is not the most natural interpretation of the passage.

Linnæus adopted the notion of Hasselquist, that hyssop was a moss growing out of the wall at Solomon's Well. This moss was named by Linnæus *Bryum truncatulum*, and is now called *Pottia truncatula*. This is a very small plant, being less than an inch in height; so that we may unhesitatingly dismiss its claims to be regarded as the hyssop with which the Jewish priests sprinkled the sacrificial blood. The plant now known as hyssop cannot be meant, for it only received its name in modern times; while it is a native of Europe, and is never found in Palestine, nor in the district of Sinai.

The prevailing opinion amongst botanists of our time is that the Biblical hyssop is the plant called by Linnæus *Capparis spinosa*, the most familiar member of the caper family. Sprengel was the first to advance this opinion, his *Capparis Ægyptiaca* being practically identical with *Capparis spinosa*. After a thorough examination of the question, Dr. Forbes Royle adopted this view; and he has been followed by Tristram, Stanley, and other travellers in the Holy Land.

The caper plant is shrubby, and has several slender stems, from which spring many broad, smooth, and toughish leaves. The flowers are white, and fruit nearly an inch in length grows at the end of a long stalk. It is not the seed, but the unopened flower-bud, that is pickled and used as a condiment. Canon Tristram records that he saw this plant hanging from the walls of Jerusalem, and growing round about the site of the ancient Temple; while it abounds in the vicinity of the Dead Sea and the plains of Shittim. Dr. Royle pointed out that the Arabic name for the caper, which is *azuf*, or *asaf*, is very similar to *ēzōb*, the Old Testament word which is rendered hyssop; that it grows on rocks and walls, that it is capable of being used as a reed, and that it was always regarded as possessing cleansing properties. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that its woody stem, its prickles and its smooth leaves, would rather militate against its being used as a sprinkler. Moreover, the Gospel narratives of the crucifixion do not necessarily imply that the hyssop and the reed were the same plant, but seem to indicate that they were not. Dean Stanley observes: "The *asaf*, or caper plant, the bright green creeper which climbs out of the fissures of the rocks in the Sinaitic valleys, has been identified on grounds of great probability with the hyssop or *ēzōb* of Scripture, and thus explains whence came the green branches used for sprinkling the water over the tents of the Israelites."

Whatever, therefore, may have been the plant signified by the Greek hyssop, it appears to be the general opinion that the Old Testament *ēzōb* was neither mint nor marjoram, but the caper. Mr. Carruthers is almost the only authority who appears inclined to hold to the ancient tradition that the marjoram or *Origanum* was intended. Dr. Kitto hints at the possibility that a kind of soap-plant found in Mexico was the Biblical hyssop; while others have thought that, as such great quantities would be required at the Passover of the Exodus, it may have been the common sorghum or millet that was used, a plant widely utilised for making brooms. Mr. Grindon thinks the Mosaic *ēzōb* was the marjoram, while the hyssop of Solomon was the caper plant; and he believes the former, not the latter, to have been the hyssop of the crucifixion.
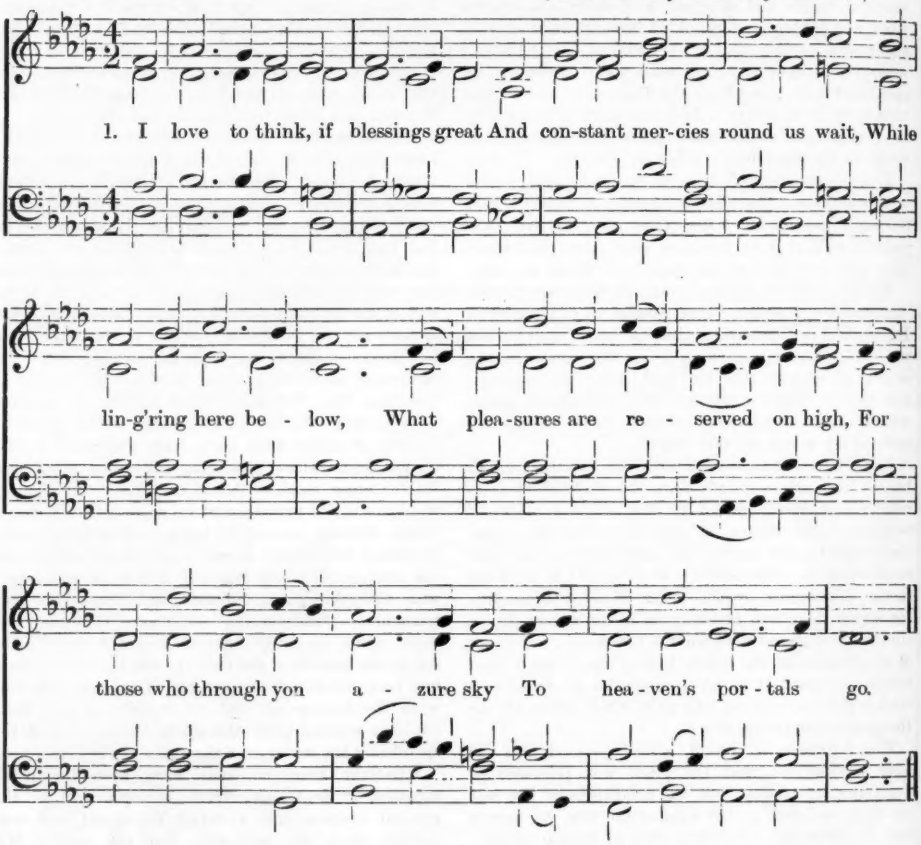
The question is evidently surrounded with uncertainty, and if we learn no other lesson from its consideration we shall be reminded of the value of patient research, and of the wisdom of avoiding dogmatic assertion in cases where there is legitimate room for differences of opinion.

XUM

"I love to think, if blessings great."

Words (from the German) by
MRS. PAYNE SMITH.

Music by the REV. W. J. FOXELL, B.A., B.Mus.
(Minor Canon of Canterbury Cathedral.)



2.

There, in Christ's garden, blissful joy
And peace are felt, without alloy;
And how must there resound
The voices of the Seraphim,
Who, with untirèd voices, hymn
Their hallelujahs round!

3.

If I were there, if I might stand,
Almighty God, at Thy right hand,
And wave on high my palm;
I'd imitate the angels' lays,
Exalt Thy name with songs of praise
In many a joyful psalm!

4.

But why, while earth is my abode
Beneath this body's mortal load,
Should I withhold my praise?
My heart shall one unceasing song,
While I through life my course prolong,
For all Thy mercies raise!

A RESCUING HAND.

BY JESSIE MACLEOD, AUTHOR OF "A STRANGE COINCIDENCE," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.



AT the corner of a lane leading out of Fenchurch Street stood the extensive premises once in the occupation of Mr. Breakspear; all its windows and doors were closed, and the placards affixed to them, of "This Spacious Warehouse to Let," gave the building a dreary, melancholy aspect.

One day late in autumn, a gentleman of foreign appearance, dark and sunburnt, was standing in the busy thoroughfare, surveying it. His difficulty was to find an entrance. At last he saw a gateway leading to an inner yard, at the back of which were outbuildings, and a ladder-like flight of steps leading up to a half-glass door. Ascending them, he pulled a bell-handle; the peal sounded loud and melancholy, as bells always do in empty houses. He had to repeat the summons, and was about to think the place uninhabited, when heavy footsteps were heard descending from the upper storeys, and the door was unbolted by an old man with round-eyed horn spectacles on his nose, his face furrowed with wrinkles, a paper cap upon his head, a canvas apron, shirt-sleeves rolled up to the shoulder, and hands hard and horny—brave old hands, denoting a long, industrious life.

"What may be your pleasure, sir?" asked he, peering at the new-comer attentively.

"Is Mr. Breakspear here? I wish to see him."

"On business, sir?"

"Yes, on business."

The old fellow hesitated. "I know it's a liberty, sir, and a question such as I ought not to ask, and I hope you'll excuse it—but you see, my master has been much harassed lately: he's not the man he used to was: is the business anything about back debts—anything unpleasant?"

"I have nothing to say that will annoy your master; quite the reverse."

Upon this, with a relieved expression, he held open the door, admitting the visitor to a roughly boarded passage, dusty and cobwebbed, from which a narrow stair ascended.

"Mr. Breakspear is here to-day, sir. I'll go up and tell him you want to see him. What name shall I say?"

"Mr. Ashworth, from New York."

The honest old warehouseman plodded up to the top storey of the outbuilding, which, on account of a good light, had been temporarily converted into Mr. Breakspear's office, where he could sit and write undisturbed. The heavy footfalls of age soon redescended, and presently old Gregory, leaning over the hand-rail, called out, "Will you please to come up, sir?"

Whereupon the gentleman mounted to the loft, for it was little better.

As he entered, the merchant rose to receive him. The twenty years which had passed since Mr. Breakspear was first introduced to the reader had left their mark upon him. The happy, prosperous, fresh-complexioned, robust man of forty was now sixty years of age; his colour had fled, his brown hair was grey; anxiety and care had lined his brow; the full bright eye had paled, and sight was failing; yet, in spite of these changes, he still bore the stamp of what he was: an honourable, upright man. Almost overwhelming misfortunes had overtaken him, which some persons would have tided over with an unscrupulous high hand. Not so Mr. Breakspear; he was struggling on, trying to keep together the fragments of his once prosperous business.

Mr. Ashworth gazed at the merchant earnestly; he spoke first. "I trust you will excuse me intruding upon you without an introduction from one of your personal acquaintance, but I bring testimonials from houses of repute in America. If you will kindly read some of them, they will explain the business I come upon."

"Certainly," replied Mr. Breakspear, a little at a loss to understand the drift of his words, for his visitor bore the appearance of prosperity in manner and tone of address; "though I fear I can be of little use to you at present." He adjusted his eyeglasses with a hand that had recently begun to tremble (for he had become nervous of late; sensitive people cannot help being shaken by their trials), and read one of his visitor's letters.

"Messrs. Maxey and Vanderlinden, of New York and Boston, most highly recommend Mr. Ashworth as manager or junior partner in a merchant's house. He possesses great experience, has superior business abilities, is of strict integrity, with a large capital to invest in any concern wishing to extend its connection."

"This is very good. Am I to understand that you come to me as being likely to forward your views? If so, I fear you are mistaken," said Mr. Breakspear, with a sigh.

"I have only just arrived from America. It was there that I heard of an opening being possible in your well-known house."

"Alas! I must not deceive you; no manager is required where there is so little to be managed. The aspect of my affairs has quite changed. As to partnership, the idea is impossible."

"Pardon me if I think differently. Your name stands high. Dishonour only means ruin."

"You are very good," replied the merchant, visibly

touched. "I am doing my best to keep affairs together, retaining this outbuilding in the rear of my former warehouses for the sake of being on the spot. That old man you saw, who is fidelity personified, and one clerk, more faithful still, are my only assistants. Will you excuse me for a few minutes while I consult this friend?"

Mr. Ashworth bowed, and the merchant disappeared through a door communicating with another room. The visitor looked around at the bare appearance of the office, shaking his head pityingly. "Sad, sad!" he murmured to himself. "How he has changed, poor man! I have not come a moment too soon."

Presently Mr. Breakspear reopened the door.

"Will you come in, Mr. Ashworth? There is a fire, and we can, if you please, talk over affairs more comfortably."

The visitor entered; to his surprise, a lady was seated at the table, writing.

"My wife—and only clerk," said the merchant. "There are few women who would have risen to the occasion as she has done. It is her high courage which has sustained me, and kept my spirit from being crushed."

"No, no, Philip," said Mrs. Breakspear, smiling; "you will give Mr. Ashworth too high an opinion of me.—You see, sir, I am quick with my pen, and have always been fond of figures; my father is a clergyman, and when I was a girl, drilled me well in algebra." She was a small, plump little woman, who had been pretty in her youth, not looking in the least the heroine she was: who had resigned her happy home, her carriages, her plate, and all her jewellery, save her watch and wedding-ring, without a murmur, working at the books as no paid accountant would have done so unremittingly, night and day.

"My opinion is," began Mr. Breakspear, "that you might invest your capital better than in joining a shipwrecked man, but my wife thinks differently."

"Yes, Philip, I do. If a friend comes forward holding out his hand to you in good faith, why not take it in all honesty of purpose?"

"You are right, madam," said Mr. Ashworth, with a little bow, looking with pleasure at eyes sparkling with renewed hope, and the delicate flush of pleasure on her cheek. "Besides, this is not a shipwreck; the barque has got 'snagged,' as we say in the States; who knows but that a high tide will disentangle and float her?"

"If we are to think seriously of a partnership, we must fix a time for going through the affairs," said the merchant.

"There is no time like the present," replied the visitor, drawing his chair close to the fire. "If it is convenient to you, we will begin *now*."

Much talking and serious business can be got through in two hours, when people are in earnest. In that space of time the two gentlemen had come to a good understanding, and most of the preliminaries of the intended partnership had been arranged, although there was much more to be done on another day. Mr. Ashworth took his leave, well pleased with the result of his interview.

Hailing a hansom, he drove direct to St. Osyth's Vicarage at Brompton; for that very morning he had looked at a newspaper, the first he had seen since arriving in England; it was the copy of a previous day, and almost the first thing that caught his eye was his own name—being, in fact, the advertisement inserted by Mr. Heritage, addressed to Francis Ashworth, who was earnestly entreated to communicate with the Rev. Mark Heritage, St. Osyth's Vicarage, Old Brompton. His astonishment, it is needless to say, was boundless. The vicar was at home, and would see him. The visitor did not send in his name; but at the first glance Mr. Heritage knew who he was.

"I come in answer to your advertisement; I am——"

"Francis Ashworth himself," interrupted Mr. Heritage. "You so strongly resemble your father that I need not ask your name. How thankful the old gentleman will be at this immediate and fortunate result to the advertisement!"

"Then he lives. I feared he was dead."

"Yes, he lives, but, sad to say, he is blind. The past is a bitter grief to him—he has longed for reconciliation many years."

"I have written to him repeatedly, and all my letters have remained unanswered. Strange! I even came to England, not so very long ago, expressly to ask for his forgiveness, and was spurned from the house by the cruel message that 'He forgot he ever had a son.'"

"May I ask who gave you the message?"

"My cousin, Miss Siddall—it was she whom I saw. Two days ago I arrived from America. Imagine my great surprise when I read your advertisement in the very first newspaper I took up."

"Your father told me he had repeatedly advertised for you. It is my firm belief there has been some chicanery, and the advertisements were never sent out of the house. It is providential that he should have placed the matter in my hands."

"My poor father! I will go to him at once," cried Ashworth, springing from his seat.

"Gently. Remember he is old and feeble: this great joy might prove too much for him. I will accompany you, and break the news gradually."

The two gentlemen then walked together to old Mr. Ashworth's residence, comparing notes on their way, and quite convinced there had been foul play. Mr. Heritage was now admitted without difficulty. He found the old gentleman in his chair at the fireside, more cheerful than usual; he greeted the clergyman cordially.

"I have wonderfully good news for you, Mr. Ashworth—our advertisement is answered. Your son lives."

"Lives! Heaven be praised!" he bowed his venerable white head, clasping his hands in mental prayer. "Is he in England," he asked, after a pause.

"He is."

"In London, perhaps?" (anxiously).

"Indeed he is, Mr. Ashworth."

"He is *here!* I feel it," cried the father, as if by inspiration. "Bring him to me. May Heaven's blessing rest on you, Mr. Heritage."

Miss Siddall was up-stairs, dressing for her morning

walk. Hearing unaccustomed sounds in the house, she descended, and found the vicar walking up and down in the hall, like a sentinel, before her uncle's door.

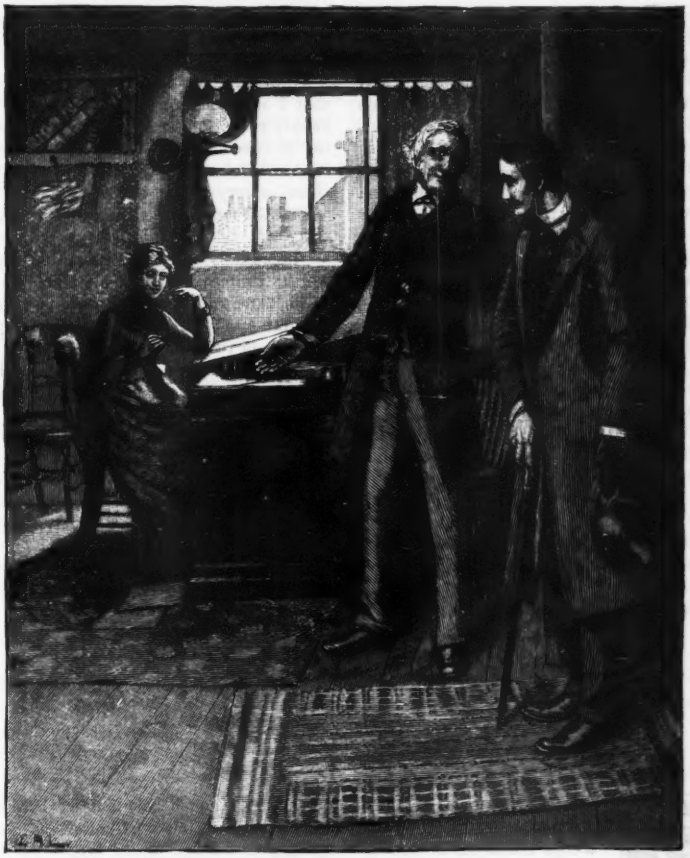
"Good-morning, Mr. Heritage," said she. "May I ask why you are waiting here?"

"Because Mr. Ashworth is engaged with a visitor."

"A visitor!" she exclaimed, opening her eyes with surprise. "Who is it?"

"Let me go!" she cried, gasping for breath.

"Harriet Siddall," said the old gentleman, turning towards her his sightless eyes, from which tears still flowed. "False woman! Traitress! At last I learn your true character. For years you have lived under my roof, eating my bread; hearing my laments for my lost son day after day unmoved. One word from you would have renewed my peace of mind. Heart



"To his surprise, a lady was seated at the table writing."—*p.* 428.

"A visitor from abroad—America."

She made a dart at the door.

"Stop," he said, placing his hand on the handle. "You must not go in yet."

"And pray, sir, why am I to be prevented from entering my uncle's room?" she exclaimed, indignantly.

At this moment Francis Ashworth opened the door; she recognised him, and started back in astonishment and dismay. He grasped her firmly by the shoulder, and, in spite of her struggles, forced her towards his father.

of stone! base, designing woman! Begone from my house!"

The wretched woman crimsoned and paled alternately with shame and anger; her scheming to be his heiress had failed.

"But, uncle, I cannot be turned away like this. When I came to live with you, did you not promise to provide for me? I——"

"A clever manœuvrer such as you have proved yourself has, I feel sure, not neglected the many opportunities there are in my house for making a private purse. Besides, I have paid you a regular

salary. Begone, unnatural woman!" exclaimed the indignant old man, holding up his hands in abhorrence.

She fled from the room—but not from the dwelling, until after she had packed her many belongings, her sordid nature valuing nothing but this world's gear.

From that moment the restored son never again quitted his father, whose few remaining years he soothed with filial affection, trying to atone for the past.

One fine morning, six months after these events, he visited Mr. Breakspear, who had just become repossessed of the old mansion at Hampstead. For since his partnership, prosperity had returned with surprising rapidity. The warehouses in Fenchurch Street were again in full working order, the counting-house was occupied by busy clerks. Old Gregory was promoted to the post of office-keeper—a happy, important person, wearing a new suit of clothes, and a pair of silver spectacles, the gift of the junior partner.

The house of Breakspear flourished once more.

Francis Ashworth found the merchant arranging volumes on the shelves in the library, a room in the rear of the house, opening upon the garden. He grasped his hand. "I have come," he said, "to congratulate you upon your return to your old quarters; I trust you will enjoy many years of happiness here."

"I AM happy—and, under Providence, thankful to you. Your energy and pecuniary resources have effected the change as if by magic. All is sunshine. My boy, too, is prospering in Louisiana; I had a letter from him this morning; he writes in high spirits, but wishes for the return of his employer, who is making a long stay in England. It seems that he and Mr. Hope's step-daughter have fallen in love with each other. A few months ago I should have felt bound to forbid him aspiring to the hand of an heiress, but, under my present brightening circumstances, if all goes on well, the match may not prove so unequal. I must try and see Mr. Hope myself."

"You see him now," said his junior partner, smiling.

"*What!*" ejaculated Mr. Breakspear. "I do not understand."

"I have been wishing to tell you for some time that I and the Louisianian planter are one and the same person. Hope is my business name in America. Hearing from Walter of your undeserved troubles, I felt it my imperative duty to come to the rescue."

"Your duty!" cried the bewildered merchant.

"Clearly, since it was through your benevolence that I made my fortune. Carry your memory back twenty years. A stormy night, and thieves endeavouring to effect an entrance by that very window. You fired a revolver from your bedroom, wounding one of them—a very young man."

"Yes—I remember, I did so—but how do you know this?"

"Because—*I* was that miserable culprit," said Ashworth, turning down his collar and showing the scar on his throat. "By that capture you arrested a career of infamy. Your subsequent goodness started me on the path of rectitude. I found my way to the United States, I exerted my energies, and prospered. Imagine my surprise when, on advertising for a clerk, your son applied for the situation. I engaged him at once, wondering what chance had sent him to America. It was no chance—it was Providence. Walter shall take my place on the plantation for the present, and if the young people are really attached to each other, I see no reason to prevent them marrying whenever they wish. All I possess will be ultimately theirs."

Mr. Breakspear was utterly overcome.

"You are good!" he said—"you are grateful!"

"Can I be too grateful to you who rescued me?"

A WRITING LESSON.

BY THE REV. MICHAEL T. EASTWOOD.

"An example."—1 PETER ii. 21.

THE word "example" means a writing model; and literally a copy traced for a child to write over (*ὑπογραμμός*).* The thought suggested then by this literal rendering is—Christ's hand sets the copy for us to write upon.

Nor is this all. A kind parent or teacher does more than that. He guides the little hand—so weak, uncertain, and bewildered. Our theme then becomes—Christ sets our copy; Christ's strong saving hand holds ours as we write. It is with a smile of relief we think of the words "writing made easy," and henceforth we invest that phrase with a meaning more hallowed and tender. For, as we talk of writing, let us understand that we mean *living*—our life.

We all know that the reputation of a school depends very largely on the writing of its pupils. Ordinary folks are puzzled by the various "'ologies" and glib references thereto, and at once turn to the young people and say—"Show me your copy-book." Thus also the Christian school is most recommended by the writing—the life—the common every-day life—of its scholars. People can judge of that. Its value, its meaning, its beauty, its simplicity: these are more easily gauged than subtle theories. A simple, beautiful *hand* makes people covet the same for themselves and their children.

So we call to mind that we ought to be epistles—

* The writer's attention was first called to this word by a footnote in Farrar's "Early Days of Christianity," p. 91, Popular Edition.

"known and read of all men." With fear and trembling we perceive how much depends upon us, and how we are unconsciously recommending—or perhaps discrediting—the school of Christ. One thinks too of the future, when our life (like a piece of writing) shall be held up before heaven and earth. Who is sufficient for these things? "Ye" are: "Ye are My witnesses." Then we proceed, it may be with fear and trembling, but with joy, as we remember it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Once more we repeat—Christ's hand traces the writing; Christ's hand will hold ours as we follow the copy.

The picture before us is explained by the one word —*surrender*. And our Lord Himself accomplished His great work not by the stretching forth of His hand in its power, but by surrendering it to be nailed down to the cross—helpless, but victorious. He calls us to crucifixion too—but it turns out to be the surrender of our hand to His strong, saving clasp. This complete surrender is the only condition that can give peace to ourselves and satisfaction to God. Like the little child, it is absolutely impossible for us to fill a page with writing that shall be worth looking at, unless the copy is set and our hand supported. A child two or three years old might as well try to imagine the alphabet, and make intelligent use of it in writing, as we—children of riper years—to live the Christian life on our own resources.

But you will easily perceive that the Divine method *does not suppress individuality:* no more than the process of engrafting suppresses the individuality of a tree; on the contrary, it enhances and sweetens it. We have no need to fear surrender to Christ. We shall not lose but find ourselves in Him. Those who have made the most complete surrender to Him have ever been conspicuous for their individuality, originality, and power. Keeping to the illustration before us—the writing model—have we not often noticed how a copy so written touchingly exhibits both child and teacher? The same truth is pathetically and beautifully illustrated in the epistle from which our text is taken: it is all Peter; it is all Christ. And another apostle, who, weak as he was, left the mark of his personality graven deep on the tablets of history, was ever showing and telling how Christ had "laid hold" of him. It is only when He so lays hold of us, and we humbly submit, that our true individuality comes out. It is only then that our writing can live. And what Peter did—what Paul did—we can do in our own sphere. Our Master has no favourites; His "ye" meant the apostles; and it meant every one of the hundred and twenty scholars in His school. It meant all who would accept the condition. So but a few days later Peter stood up and said—"The promise is unto you and your children . . . and to all."

In Christ's hands we may write our name.

But Christ must be all and in all. He must be *Master* in every sense of the word. His rule must be absolute. He will have no compromise. We cannot bring our own copy-books to His school. He will set His own copies, and they must be written according to His will.

But He is *gracious*. See how patient and long-suffering with Peter. Never was a worse scholar than Peter; never was a better. How tender the Master to His bungling disciple; He never despised him—any more than you despise that tearful little boy who brings up a disgraceful copy. You can see the little fellow wants to do well, and therefore you guide him with patience and long-suffering. So Peter at the worst was willing to be right, willing to be put right; and the worst page he ever wrote—when the Master looked upon it, Peter covered it with tears—tears from the heart, every one a prayer to be put right.

This doctrine—this fact, indeed—is clearly enunciated in the New Testament—that he *who is willing* to be put right, shall be. "He that is of the truth, heareth My voice." "If any man will do [wills to do] His will, he shall know of the doctrine"—"shall receive the full saving benefit of My school."

True, there is some *sternness* about our Master, but the sternness of love. No error escapes His eye, or the touch of His inexorable pencil. Our attitude is noted; our mistakes are indicated. Nothing is passed over. Sometimes our book is taken from us, our opportunities are withheld; just as if, at school, our copy-book might be taken from us for a time as we were left to make fugitive impressions on a hard, dull slate. These are dreary times. But the chastening is never prolonged further than need be. He doth not willingly afflict. His actions, His words, are never capricious.

With what a glow of thankfulness should we remember that our religion has *a Person* behind it: a Person—not a mere doctrine; a Person—not a tradition; a Person—not a system. We have more indeed than the Bible itself, good as it is: we have living contact with a living Person, His hand ever upon ours.

To Him let us bring the old copy-book—*the old unassisted writing* that has shamed us so long. Look at it. How soiled and woe-begone! What mistakes! yet we were to be pitied if these were no more than mistakes. Sin is more than error—more than weakness—more than ignorance; at bottom of it are pride and rebellion. This spirit is embodied in the old writing. It is rude and harsh, breathing defiance to man and rebellion against God. Its whole cast plainly declares that we meant to write our own way, like that foolish boy who despises lawful authority, and thinks it a fine thing to scribble after his own conceited fashion. And then the blots—whole series of them—like diagrams to illustrate some grim experiment—bespeak our wanton heedlessness rather than the trembling hand of mere weakness. And those pitiful erasures do but aggravate the evil, telling, moreover, that we would deceive if we could; telling too of the vanity of our own methods—clumsy devices,

that eat into the fibre of our life without doing any good.

But enough. As we sorrowfully gaze upon the past, and look up into our Master's face, what has happened? *The old book has gone*—as far as the east is from the west. A new creation is ours, a new book, fair and full of promise. And lo! the Master's finger traces the characters in red—each the crimson seal of our acceptance in His school and the earnest of our new life.

Let us very briefly study *the characteristics* of the new writing, which, by the way, is illustrated in the tendencies of actual writing during the last few years. It is plain. It is upright—like print. It is uniform; its ups and downs are ruled by the same principle. It is strong, but graceful; bold, yet chastened and subdued; beautiful, but useful. For though uniform, it is natural, and therefore tempting and charming;* the stilted, artificial "copperplate" that distressed our youth has given place to something more natural and hopeful.

So our Master's copy is *human, divine*, and *natural*. By nature we are really unnatural. Grace is to bring us into a state of nature—sweet simplicity and spontaneity, as the word indicates—that which is always about to be born—hence child-like, but not childish. Now, boys have a rooted objection (at first) to write a large plain hand. They forget that with advancing years our writing becomes smaller, and that if we began with a matured small-hand, our writing would dwindle away to nothing. And similarly, many people are deterred from the Christian life by its simplicity and child-likeness. But let us not forget that the Master Himself began at the beginning. He divested Himself of His native, rightful majesty, and began as a little child. And only little children can find a place in His school. We must become as little children, or we cannot even enter. The doorway only admits little children.

But the standard is *perfection*, after all. Our child-like life is always growing and moving towards that. This natural life is always developing. Hence our Master's fixing the standard at perfection is neither hopeless nor contradictory. Had He placed the standard of Christian life at anything short of perfection—why, it would have been imperfection. We could have attained to it; and what then? As it is we shall have room for eternal progress. We are children, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be. God only knows our glorious future. Thus every time we glance at the pierced hand that holds ours, we are incited to holier ambitions.

So we press forward; we patiently follow our copy wherever it leads; and, the strong, saving hand of the Master upon ours, we write for earth and heaven, for men and angels, for time and eternity. And when our writing is held up to the light of judgment we shall not be afraid, for it is His work rather than ours.

* I once knew a boy, the despair of schoolmasters, so far as his writing was concerned, who accidentally came across a paragraph in "The Popular Educator," the facsimile of a *natural* hand. It at once inspired him, and he wrote that hand ever afterwards.

AN APRIL-DAY THOUGHT.

"Transeunt nubes; Cælum manet."—ST. AUGUSTINE.

I WATCHED upon an April day
The darkening clouds arise,
Until they hid the light away
From out the bright blue skies,
Shrouding the heavens all around
With their black drapery profound.

How changed the scene, erewhile so glad—
The world seemed all so fair:
But now I felt my heart grow sad,
Beneath the gloomy air:
The lark had ceased to pour along
The leaden sky his joyous song.

But soon a gentle breeze of spring
Breathed through the saddened sky,
Bearing upon his buoyant wing
The clouds that hung on high:
Then heaven again beamed out serene,
And sun and light made glad the scene.

And such is life (thus ran my thought),
So chequered and so strange,
With sorrow and with pleasure fraught
Through many a fitful change:
Now smiles, now tears, now hopes, now fears
Brightening and darkening all our years.

To-day I learnt this lesson wise—
That though the clouds may lour,
They yet must pass from out the skies,
And light regain its power:
Or soon or late, clouds pass away;
The heaven above remains alway.

Lord, be it mine, when clouds of sin
Hide heaven from out my sight,
Oh! may Thy Spirit breathe within
My soul, and give me light:
That so, when all the clouds are past,
My eyes on heaven may rest at last!

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER.

A TINSELLED DEATH-TRAP.



INTERIOR OF AN OPIUM DEN.
(*From a Drawing by* W. Simpson, R.I.)



"SURELY this is not what you call an opium palace?"

We were on our way one August night to visit some of the notorious opium divans in Shanghai, and, to my surprise, our first halt in the crowded thoroughfares was in front of a low, rough archway, within which some shabby fruit-stalls were spread out. Here, however, our guide led us in; and a few yards beyond the entrance, the passage opened upon a large, square, lofty hall, on each side of which were counters covered with opium-pipes for sale or hire. Very handsome many of these were—large, flute-like objects, in ivory or carved wood.

This large hall was partitioned off from the space around, to which we passed on, and found it was divided into compartments about the size of a square church-pew, each furnished with broad wooden couches on two sides, and between these a low table bearing a small lamp and tea-drinking apparatus. Two men, or sometimes a man and a woman, lay one on each couch, their faces towards the table; most of them were heating, over the lamp, the opium in their pipe-bowls. In all directions attendants were carrying about trays laden with small metal cups filled with opium of the treacle-like consistency used by the smokers.

Every inch of ground, save the narrow passage running between the central hall and the smoking-chambers, was occupied by the latter, and all of these were tenanted. Besides the inmates reclining, men and women visitors were in many instances seated on the couches, some of whom, we were told, were transacting business with the opium-smokers; but this surely could not come to much, judging by the sleepy stupefaction manifestly overtaking the latter, some of whose faces were ghastly from habitual indulgence in this poison-process.

A winding staircase led to an upper storey arranged like the ground-floor, with galleries running round and overlooking the great entrance-hall. Here also all available space was occupied by well-filled smoking-boxes. An official told us there are on an average 1,500 visitors a day at this opium divan—by far the larger proportion between the hours of eight and twelve at night.

Very elaborate, costly, and even artistic were the fittings of the place. Every partition was composed of beautifully carved open-work in dark polished wood, with panes let in of richly coloured or finely graven glass, whereon were depicted birds, flowers, stars, and other devices; while the great hanging lamps in all directions displayed the same rich carving and fine glass, and were decorated with innumerable tassels of brilliant-coloured silk and beads. Yet the whole effect of the scene was squalor; and every attempt at adornment seemed like gay trappings on a corpse. Most incongruous of all were the sweet flowers here and there growing (or surely perishing) in great porcelain vases;

while, most painful of all, there were little children among the throng, some sadly crying—one pretty little girl fast asleep, her face resting on a smoker's table.

Visibly the fumes were fulfilling their fell office, and faces growing dreamy, glassy-eyed, idiotic; while the atmosphere of the divan had become so foul, so stifling, we had to retreat, and breathed with keen enjoyment the outer air, which half an hour before had seemed so oppressive that still, sultry summer night. We went into three other opium divans, all exhibiting the same features in the main, though none so showy as that above described, which is said to be the largest and grandest in China. Indeed, the opium-smoking houses of Shanghai (of which there are over two hundred in the foreign settlement, and many in the native city) are of every degree of grandeur and griminess. To-day two were pointed out to me which were mere boarded-in, windowless shanties, through whose narrow doorway we peered into a dark, loathsome, and, alas! thickly peopled den. Great also is the diversity in the quality of opium smoked by various classes. The poorest of the people buy a kind of refuse, of which about 80 cash- (threepence-) worth serves them the twenty-four hours. The rate at which opium-smoking injures health and shortens life depends largely on the victim's means of counteracting its effects by nourishing food; but so notoriously demoralising, as well as stultifying, is this indulgence, that an habitual opium-smoker is rarely employed in any office requiring intelligence and rectitude—or even in the smoking divans.

Deaths, both accidental and suicidal, from overdoses of this drug are frequent. A few days ago I saw in our native hospital a stalwart-looking man just brought in unconscious on a stretcher, who had poisoned himself thus because of some dispute with a relative. The native doctor said he had little hope of saving him, and in a few hours he died.

Strangely different was the scene witnessed in the opium divan from that exhibited in a London gin-palace, with its uproar ever faster and more furious, more wild and frenzied the infatuated guests. Here all grew strangely quieter as the victims subsided into their dreamful slumbers. "After all," remarked the leader of our party, one who has spent forty years in labours of Christian love among this people, "what are the poor Chinamen to do with their evening hours? Home-life, in our sense, has no existence for them; of intellectual resources the mass of the people have none, nor harmless amusements in the way of games." And as to their waste of time, health, substance, in this deadly dissipation, what can be expected of a people ignorant of responsibility towards the Giver of all, and of the eternal considerations, the heavenly hopes, which lend such vast import to the life that now is: when we see hundreds of thousands in our own enlightened lands also, according to God's solemn Word, "dreamers," "defiling the flesh, and walking after their own lusts," and needing no less than these poor heathen the heavenly call, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light"!

ALICE JANE MUIRHEAD.

"TUNE ST. ELWYN'S."

A STORY IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.



NCE again, children! From the fifth line—'and e'en though long.'"

"And e'en though long and far we roam,
Thy love, O Saviour, is our Home!"

sang the bright young voices, while Miss Tremellen stood before them, erect and animated, her fair face slightly flushed with excitement as she beat time for the little group by rhythmical passes of her white hand through the air.

"It goes well, doesn't it?" she cried, when the last note died away, and turning as she spoke towards a young man who was seated at a small organ at the other end of the class-room.

He started slightly, and raised a pair of dark, thought-filled eyes, with the expression of one suddenly recalled from a dream of far away. "Yes; oh yes—I think it will do," he replied, without enthusiasm; and Pearl Tremellen's radiant face shadowed as she met his look.

"You may go now, dears," she said, addressing the children. "If we practise with as good a spirit from now until the anniversary Sunday, we shall do well. You like the new tune, don't you?"

"Yes, teacher, it 's pretty!" replied several, in a breath. One bright-looking boy adding, "And we like the words too, miss! Father said you must be a real genius to be able to write a hymn like that."

Pearl coloured, and laughed. "We are fortunate in having such an organist as Mr. Adair to set them to music," she said. "A dull tune would have killed it."

"Good-bye, Willie! Good-bye, Kitty! Good-bye!"

And with hand-shakes and kisses Miss Tremellen bade good-night to her little choir.

Ten minutes later, Laurence Adair was escorting her homewards along the undulating cliff path that led from the school-house to the village. He still seemed sad and *distrait*.

"What are you going to call the new tune?" asked Pearl, in an endeavour to break the strange silence that seemed to be settling down upon them. "It ought to have a name."

"I had not thought of that," answered the young man. "I suppose it should. What do you suggest?"

"I really don't know that I can suggest anything. Unless"—(after a pause)—"how would it do to call it after its birthplace, St. Elwyn's?"

"St. Elwyn's! Yes; that would do well. Nothing better. St. Elwyn's has many pleasant associations for me. I have been very happy here."

The organist spoke slowly, with a brief silence between each sentence. His tone was as that of an allusion to the past, and those wistful, dusky eyes rested unseeing upon the shining wet sands below, that gleamed like a stretch of solid mother-of-pearl as they reflected the faint blue and rainy green, mingled with yellowish pink, of the changeful sunset sky.

Miss Tremellen glanced at him, vaguely troubled. The "have been" smote like a knell upon her ear, yet she could not frame the question which rose to her lips in reply. They were nearing the vicarage, her home.

"Tune 'St. Elwyn's,'" repeated Mr. Adair. "So let it be!"

CHAPTER II.

ST. ELWYN'S was in a state of unusual commotion. The organist, who for two years past had given complete satisfaction to both vicar and congregation, to say nothing of the choir-mistress, the vicar's daughter, had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. Death or disaster were happily, however, ruled out of the numerous speculations of the villagers, for his valise and most valuable belongings had vanished with him, and the exact sum due to his landlady was found neatly sealed up in an envelope directed to her, upon his bedroom mantelpiece.

Not a trace of the how, the why, or the whither of his flight did the closest scrutiny reveal. And it was the day before his three months' salary was due.

For some occult reason everybody looked to Pearl Tremellen as the person most likely to be able to throw light upon the strange occurrence. It was very trying for her to be forced to say, over and over again, "I really know no more about it than you do. I was not in Mr. Adair's confidence. I am really unable to assign any reason for his very peculiar conduct."

The graceful little head took a somewhat prouder turn as she spoke, and the lines grew a trifle strained about the soft red mouth—that was all. Some responded with an air of sympathy which yet they scarcely dared to show, and a few, not wholly acquainted with the invariable characteristics of a lady and a Christian, even doubted her word.

The days and weeks passed on; the Sunday-school anniversary came and went. Miss Tremellen herself presided at the organ, and the new hymn, with tune "St. Elwyn's," went off with *éclat*. The evening was intensely hot, and the church unusually full. Owing, no doubt, to these circumstances, combined with unwonted excitement and exertion, she turned faint, and was compelled to leave the building as soon as this special item was concluded.

The weeks accumulated into months, and the months into years. Pearl Tremellen, fair and sweet as of yore, went in and out among all ranks of her father's parishioners; ever busy, ever bright, and loved by old and young alike. It was whispered, however, that although more than one apparently desirable wooer would fain have laid himself and all that he possessed at her feet, a certain something—a dignified reserve, a gentle closing of the inner door of her being towards every "eligible" of the opposite sex—restrained them. To her bosom friends she still could truthfully confess that she had never received "an offer" in her life.

Towards the completion of the third year from that marked by the singular disappearance of the organist, Mr. Tremellen removed from his little seaboard parish to a sphere of greater power and usefulness in one of our large towns. It was a wrench to Pearl to part from sweet St. Elwyn's, from its grand grey cliffs and sheltered coves, its green ravines and sunny yellow sands, and the ever-chiming sea. Still harder was it to say farewell to its friendly faces, its familiar nooks, its sadly dear memories of the past. Yet she accepted the change cheerfully, with a hopeful look forward into the future, for her hand was in the loving clasp of an all-wise Father, and she could not doubt that He held something good for her in store. Her great desire was that the sorrowful world might be something the happier for her sojourn in it, and this wish being known to Him in whose hand lay her destiny, she believed that the present change would probably work for its fulfilment.

The vicar's daughter was soon as well beloved among her new friends as she had been with the old. Mr. Tremellen was compelled, by stress of work, to engage the assistance of a curate, and in the young wife of the latter Pearl found the companion and *confidante* whom almost every woman craves.

It was on a mild September afternoon that Pearl was sitting near an open window, with dreamy fingers softly touching the keys of her chamber organ, when Mrs. Westmere entered.

"What was that lovely thing you were playing as I came up the garden?" queried the latter eagerly, the moment greetings had been exchanged. "I stood under the window for some minutes listening. I do not remember to have ever heard it before."

"Was it this?" asked Pearl. And again the melodious cadences of her favourite hymn-tune thrilled upon Mrs. Westmere's delighted ear.

"Yes! I never heard anything so sweet. What is it, Pearl?"

The vicar's daughter sought for a few minutes among a pile of loose music at her side, and finally drew forth from the brown wrapper which carefully protected it, a half-sheet of ruled paper, plentifully besprinkled with pen-made dots and strokes.

"Ah, you have it in manuscript! Don't you know where it is published?" said her friend. "'Tune, St. Elwyn's,'" she added in some surprise. "That is where you used to live."

"Yes," answered Pearl quietly, but with a flickering smile.

"Is it original, Pearl? Oh, do tell me!" cried Mrs. Westmere. "And are these the words? and *your* initials to them!"

So Pearl was obliged to confess that the hymn was her own, and that it had been set to music for the school-children to sing by a friend—a gentleman who was their organist at that time.

After this nothing would do but Mrs. Westmere's Band of Hope choir must learn it for their forthcoming anniversary.

children should learn her hymn, and *his* tune; and the blessing of God the Giver be upon both!

CHAPTER III.

IT was a wild night towards the end of October; colder than might have been expected so early in the season. The north-east wind, with that suggestion



"'You know the gentleman, do you say, miss?'"—*p.* 437.

"We are so wanting something new," she said, "and the children will be so delighted. If you will come down on Tuesday evenings and teach it to them, dear, you will know that it is done properly. And it would be *such* a help to me!"

How could she refuse? She had thought, when first the words of that hymn came, like singing angels, into her own heart, that they were from God, with a mission—of which she might be the humble instrument—to someone or other of the few to whom they should become known. Why shut them up, and stop their course, just to gratify a selfish sentiment, to indulge a foolish shrinking? It must not be. The

of remorseless cruelty which distinguishes it from a gale from any other quarter whatsoever, was sweeping through the streets, tearing the few lingering leaves pitilessly from the boughs to which they clung; now hurrying, anon retarding, the steps of such pedestrians as found themselves at its mercy; driving the weak, buffeting the strong, and swirling and flapping the flimsy garments of the shivering poor with, it would almost seem, a sort of spiteful derision.

Among those who appeared least able to stand against its fury was a young man who, with his shabby coat closely buttoned round him, lowered his head, and endeavoured to push forward in the blast,

before which he was visibly staggering. At a bend of the road somewhat more sheltered, he paused to rest and take breath, and the gusty gleam of a street-lamp momentarily revealed a face white and sharp, and darkened, rather than lighted, by its large, hollow eyes. After a moment or two he pressed on again, only to be met at the next corner by a dash of icy sleet.

He glanced up and down, hesitating. Across the way, a short distance farther on, the spire of a church stood out clear and black against the stormy sky; the open doors showing a faint light within. "Anywhere—anywhere, out of this wind!" murmured the traveller, and sought the inviting shelter of God's house.

He entered. All was silence and dusk; a door at the farther end of the building having been closed, the light was gone. But all he wanted was to rest. Groping his way to the nearest seat, he sank exhausted on the cushions, and fell asleep.

How long the wanderer remained unconscious, he never knew. Probably, at the utmost, not more than half an hour. When he awoke his senses were bewildered and dazed. Before him, like a luminous picture in a Gothic frame, the wide open doorway of the church-room showed a scene of radiance and beauty within; a dozen bright-faced children grouped round a lovely woman form, while the music that stole out, echoing strangely yet with wondrous sweetness among the pillars of the empty church, seemed to transport him into a previous state of being.

"Tune St. Elwyn's," upborne with the harmony of those clear young voices—the picture of the singing-class with *her* for its leader, carried the listener back to a scene of long ago, the latest memory of that period of halcyon calm which preceded the long-continued storm that had harassed mind and body ever since. He knew not if he waked or slept; he thought it was a dream. His head was swimming, and he felt faint. The excitement of this marvellous vision was too much for a weakened frame. The concluding words of the hymn:—

> "And e'en though long and far we roam,
> Thy love, O Saviour, is our Home!"

fell upon dulling ears, the music was mingled with surging sounds in his own head, and Laurence Adair swooned away.

"You know the gentleman, do you say, miss?" queried, in scarcely veiled surprise, the verger, who, presently lighting up the sacred edifice for evening service, had discovered the wayfarer's unconscious form.

"I think so," murmured Pearl. "I fancy he was the organist of papa's church at St. Elwyn's. Send for a cab, please, at once, and let him be taken to our house. How ill he looks!"

So it came about that Mr. Adair was nursed beneath the vicarage roof through a long and dangerous sickness which supervened. The fatigue and exposure of a journey of many miles on foot that stormy night was more than a body enfeebled already by illness and privation could bear, and it well-nigh cost him his life. The first conscious words that his lips uttered were the same as had been the last of which his ears took cognisance; they had hovered, angel-like, about his fever-tossed spirit through it all.

"Oh, merciful Saviour!" Pearl heard him whisper. "Take me home, take me home to Thy love. I have wandered long and far; but it has been bleak, and wild, and barren without Thee! Forgive me, and take me home!"

"Why did you leave St. Elwyn's as you did?" the girl asked him, with averted face, a few days later.

"I was unhappy," he replied. "I felt I was under false colours. For I had read sceptical authors of one sort and another till I thought I no longer believed in anything. I had not the courage to confess; I could not live the life of a hypocrite, so I fled."

"But you were none the happier for that?"

"No; thank God, no! Though I had the comfort of feeling that I was no longer deceiving anyone. But the Shepherd sent many sharp-toothed sheep-dogs after the wanderer—poverty, loneliness, disappointment, pain. Yet these alone might have driven me to despair; but, when my heart was broken, the sweet words of your hymn and the precious truth they contained were poured into it like oil and wine. They, as the human vehicle for God's mercy, saved me."

As soon as Mr. Adair was sufficiently recovered to resume work, the vicar's influence was instrumental in procuring him the post of organist at an important church in the neighbourhood. Not very long afterwards Mr. Tremellen also gave him the boon he most desired, a priceless Pearl, to be his loving helper on the upward way.

Some people thought the children's hymn to tune "St. Elwyn's" rather unsuitable for a wedding; but those most concerned would not have exchanged it for the grandest chorus ever penned. At their special request it was sung, and they were satisfied.

J. C.



SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

April 21.—The Two Great Commandments.

To read—St. Mark xii. 28—37. Golden Text—St. John i. 11.

I. CHRIST A TEACHER. (28 — 34.) Christ in Temple on Tuesday before His crucifixion, walking in the courts teaching various classes of people. Sadducees been put to silence, now Scribe comes — one of writers and teachers of the Law of Moses. Find from St. Matthew xxii. 34 that he was a Pharisee—wanted to tempt (*i.e.*, test) Christ. Pharisees had added many things to the Law, such as washings, etc. (vii. 3). So want to see which Christ considers of highest importance. What is the answer?

1. First Commandment is *Love to God.*

Taught to Israelites by Moses. (Deut. vi. 4, 5.)

Taught by God in first four Commandments (Ex. xx. 3, etc.) as follows:—

First Commandment teaches to put God first—*i.e.*, love Him best.

Second Commandment that love to God requires true worship

Third Commandment that love to God will not allow His Name to be dishonoured.

Fourth Commandment that love will give definite part of time to Him, and hallow all days.

This love also requires all man's faculties—

(*a*) *Heart*, seat of the will and choice.

(*b*) *Mind*, seat of the intellect.

(*c*) *Soul*, seat of the affections.

(*d*) *Strength*, *i.e.*, the whole man—body, soul, and spirit.

Examples:—(*a*) Joshua chose to serve and love God. (Josh. xxiv. 15.)

(*b*) Saul loved when convinced Jesus was Christ. (Acts ix. 6.)

(*c*) Woman out of love anointed Christ. (St. Luke vii. 47.)

2. Second Commandment is *Love to Neighbour*, *i.e.*, all men.

This love shown by observing last six Commandments:—

Fifth teaches *respect* to those above us.

Sixth teaches *kindness* to all.

Seventh teaches *purity* in conduct.

Eighth teaches *honesty* in deed

Ninth teaches *truth* in word.

Tenth teaches *regard for rights* of property, etc.

Result of this teaching to the Scribe was—

(*a*) *Understanding*—saw how well Christ had answered—saw spiritual nature of God's requirements. Love seen in the life better than formal outward observance.

(*b*) *Conviction*—was very near becoming a disciple.

Lessons. 1. *Love to God* the first thing needful. Is it so with us?

2. *Love to Man.* Is this seen in our lives?

II. Christ the Son of David. (35—37.) Now Christ questions His questioners.

Christ is the Son (*i.e.*, descendant) of David.

But David calls Him Lord. (Ps. cx. 1.)

How can He be both Son and Lord?

Why could they not answer?

Because thought Christ was only coming to be an earthly king.

Could not understand His spiritual Kingdom.

He *was* as man descended from David, and yet was David's Lord as being also God.

Notice the contrast. His own received Him not. (Golden Text.)

The common people heard Him gladly.

Lesson. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Alternative Lesson for Easter Sunday, April 21.

To read—St. Luke xxiv. 1—12. Golden Text—St. John xi. 25.

I. Resurrection Facts. Our Lord buried evening of Good Friday, hastily embalmed by Joseph of Arimathæa, watched by Roman soldiers, lay at rest all Saturday. Then came Easter Day. Notice the order of the events:—

1. Christ rose at early dawn. (Ver. 1.)

2. Women of Galilee go to tomb to finish embalming Christ.

Find tomb open and Christ gone.

3. Two angels appear to them and tell them He is risen.

4. Mary Magdalene goes to tell Peter and John,

5. Peter and John go to the sepulchre, which they find empty. (St. John xx. 3.)

6. Appearances of Christ:—

(1) *To Mary Magdalene* on her return to the grave. (St. Mark xvi. 9—11.)

(2) *To Simon Peter* or Cephas. (1 Cor. xv. 5.)

(3) *To ten apostles.* (St. John xx. 19.)

(4) *To eleven apostles.* (St. John xx. 24.)

(5) *To nine apostles* at Galilee. (St. John xxi. 1.)

(6) *To* 500 in Galilee. (1 Cor. xv. 6.)

(7) *To* 120 *disciples* at the Ascension. (Acts i. 9.)

(8) *To St. Paul* in a vision. (Acts ix. 5.)

II. Resurrection Lessons:—

1. *Christ's conquest*—

(*a*) Over death, for it could not hold Him. (Acts ii. 24.)

(*b*) Over Hades (or hell), for His body did not see corruption. (Acts ii. 31.)

(*c*) Over Satan, king of death and hell.

2. *Christ's Resurrection affects us now.*

(*a*) Believe in a living Saviour. (St. John xx. 19.)

(*b*) Share His resurrection, new life. (Col. iii. 1.)

(*c*) Have earnest of immortality. (St. John xiv. 19.)

3. *Christ's Resurrection affects us hereafter.*

(*a*) Our bodies shall rise again. (1 Cor. xv. 22.)

(*b*) Our spirits will return from Paradise. (Dan. xii. 2.)

(*c*) Bodies and spirits re-united will live for ever. (1 Thess. iv. 7.)

4. *Present duties*—

(*a*) To seek heavenly things. (Col. iii. 1.)

(*b*) To mortify the flesh. (Col. iii. 5.)

(*c*) To look forward to Resurrection in glory.

5. *Present effects of Resurrection*—

(*a*) *To comfort*—we sorrow not as without hope.

(*b*) *To calm*—the weary are at rest.

(*c*) *To gladden*—the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

APRIL 28.—THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE FORETOLD.

To read—St. Mark xiii. 1—13. *Golden Text—St. Matt. xii.* 6.

I. THE TEMPLE. (1—8.) Christ now has left the Temple with His disciples. They cross the brook Cedron, pass up the slope of the Mount of Olives, and sit down there just opposite the Temple. As they leave the building, one of the disciples calls His attention to the great stones and large buildings of the Temple.

What did Christ answer? Temple will be completely destroyed. Remind of history of Temple.

(*a*) David wished to build; not allowed. (2 Sam. vii. 11—13.)

(*b*) Solomon built and dedicated it. (1 Kings vi., viii.)

(*c*) Chaldæans destroyed it. (2 Kings xxv. 9.)

(*d*) Zerubbabel built new Temple on same site. (Ezra iii.)

(*e*) Haggai foretold its greater glory. (Hag. ii. 9.)

This second Temple lacked some things the first Temple had; viz., Ark, with pot of manna, Aaron's rod, Tables of the Law; but its glory was greater, for Christ came to it. (Golden Text.) What did He there?

(*a*) Dedicated when forty days old. (St. Luke ii. 22.)

(*b*) Kept Feast of Passover at 12. (St. Luke ii. 42.)

(*c*) Kept all the yearly feasts.

(*d*) Cleansed Temple of buyers. (St. John ii. 14.)

(*e*) Taught often in its courts.

Now foretells its destruction. What do disciples want to know?

(*a*) *The time* when these things shall be.

(*b*) *The signs* of their coming.

Christ tells them, and warns them to be ready. The signs are—

(*a*) False Christs will come. (*See* 1 St. John ii. 18.)

(*b*) Wars and rumours of wars.

(*c*) Earthquakes, pestilences, etc.

All which came to pass.

II. THE CHRISTIANS. (9—13.) What would happen to them?

(*a*) Delivered to councils—fulfilled Acts v. 27.

(*b*) Beaten in synagogues—fulfilled Acts xvi. 23.

(*c*) Brought before kings—fulfilled Acts xxvi. 1.

(*d*) Hated by all—fulfilled Acts xxiii. 12.

But great encouragement given them.

(*a*) *Help* of Holy Spirit—fulfilled Acts iv. 31.

(*b*) *Safety* under patient endurance.

(*c*) *Preaching* of Gospel to all nations.

LESSONS. 1. Privileges despised liable to be forfeited.

2. God's people must endure tribulation.

3. Needful help given for all trials.

MAY 5.—THE COMMAND TO WATCH.

To read—St. Mark xiii. 24—37. *Golden Text—ver.* 33.

I. THE SIGNS. (24—31.) Christ has been telling of destruction of Jerusalem, now passes on to speak of destruction of world—the one a type of the other. Notice the signs:—

(*a*) *Darkening of sun, etc.*, as in ninth plague of Egypt (Ex. x. 21); and as at Christ's death (St. Matt. xxvii. 45), fulfilling prophecy of Isaiah (Isa. xiii. 10), causing great fear and alarm.

(*b*) *Coming of Son of Man* to judge. Christ always spoken of as the Judge. (St. John v. 22; Acts xvii. 31.)

Contrast this coming with His first coming.

First Coming.	*Second Coming.*
As a babe, in lowliness.	As a King, in power.
Angels sing in the sky.	Angels surround Him.
Come to save His people.	Come to judge the world.

(*c*) *Sign of fig tree.* Sprouting of leaves shows summer is nigh. So these signs show Christ is near. What will He do?

1. Cause dead to rise from graves. (St. John v. 25.)

2. Sea give up dead in it. (Rev. xx. 13.)

3. Those alive caught up to meet Him in the air. (1 Thess. iv. 17.)

II. THE CALL TO WATCH. (32—37.) Reasons given for watching:—

(*a*) The certainty of Christ's coming.

(*b*) The uncertainty of the actual day.

Remind of similar events foretold and disbelieved:—

Destruction of world by flood. (St. Matt. xxiv. 37.)

Destruction of Sodom by fire. (Gen. xix. 24.)

What are the duties required of Christ's servants?

1. *To watch, i.e.*, expect constantly, so as to keep ready.

2. *To pray* for grace to be ready.

3. *To work, i.e.*, do daily duty to God and man.

Must be like good servants in master's absence—

(*a*) *Faithful* to the trust imposed in them.

(*b*) *Regular* in their service, as if His eye were on them.

(*c*) *Active*—not growing languid or slothful.

All such will be rewarded at Christ's coming.

They will receive—

(*a*) His *look* of love.

(*b*) His *words* of approval—"Well done." (St. Matt. xxv. 21.)

(*c*) His *glory* shared. (Col. iii. 4.)

Shall we not, then, "Watch and pray"? (Golden Text.)

MAY 12.—THE ANOINTING IN BETHANY.

To read—St. Mark xiv. 1—9. *Golden Text—ver.* 8.

I. A CONSPIRACY OF HATE. (1, 2.) Christ calmly awaiting His death.

Daily in Jerusalem teaching—spending night at Bethany.

Making many converts—common people heard Him gladly.

But chief priests and Scribes plot His death. Why did they hate Him?

(*a*) The people turned from them to listen to Christ.

(*b*) Christ had defeated their arguments.

(*c*) He also had told them of their sins.

(*d*) He had warned the people against them.

So they were full of *envy* at His gaining the people; *hatred* for His treatment of them led them out of *malice* to plot against Him. Afraid to seize Him during Feast of Passover.

See how one sin leads to another; envy to hate, hate to malice, malice to murder.

II. A DEED OF LOVE. (3—9.) A feast of loving friends at Simon's house.

Lazarus raised from the dead—a guest—witness to Christ. (St. John xii. 2, 3.)

Martha—his sister—gave active service.

Mary, the other sister, brought an offering.

Judas and disciples made objections.

What was the nature of Mary's offering?

(*a*) *An offering of love.* What called forth her love?

Christ's words when visiting at their house.

Christ's acts in raising her brother.

Christ's death, now close at hand.

(*b*) *An offering of self-denial.* Ointment, etc., very precious, worth more than 200 pence, *i.e.*, man's wages for half-year. Did not count cost, but gave of her best.

(*c*) *An offering approved.* Why did Christ commend her?

She did what she could. She prepared for Christ's death and burial. Therefore her loving deed shall be universally known.

See how she is a type of all true Christians.

Christ's *words* stir feelings in our hearts.

Christ's daily *mercies* call forth gratitude.

But His *death* most of all draws us to Him. (St. John xii. 32.)

How can we show our love?

(*a*) *Give* Him of our best, as Abraham did.

(*b*) *Live* to His service, as St. Paul did.

(*c*) *Help* the poor, sick, and needy for His sake, as Dorcas did. (Acts ix. 39.)

Such sacrifices never forgotten—written in God's book of remembrance. (Malachi iii. 16.)

A SPRING PICTURE.

PAST is the winter drear and cold,
And all the trees burst forth with gems—
Buds purple, red, and brown, and gold,
Upon their leafless stems.

The primrose lifts its starry crown
In woodland ways and sheltered nooks;
And where the tall elms fringe the down,
Caw busily the rooks.

The sheep pass peacefully along,
Cropping the herbage young and sweet;
And wild birds fill the air with song,
Rejoiced the Spring to meet.

Oh! welcome, Springtime, when the earth
Puts on anew her garb of life,
And with glad songs of hope and mirth
The hearts of men are rife.

Oh! may they ne'er by chance forget
The one great Giver of Spring days,
But daily recognise their debt
With loving songs of praise.

GEORGE WEATHERLY.

"THERE WON'T BE NO SUMMER THIS YEAR."

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.

A GOOD many folk get their living in the streets, and an honest living it often is, though a hard one, no doubt.

And these worthy folk who thus get their living are obliged to be very sharp-eyed and sharp-eared, and to depend on the right use of small opportunities for their success in their day's work. And it is astonishing how much comes within reach of the hands of those who thus use their eyes and ears, which otherwise must have been entirely missed.

Now, I go in for anything in the way of teaching. I like to pick it up whenever I find it; and I don't in the least despise it because I pick it up in the streets.

I have been singularly unlucky in life as to picking up material things; but now and again I have been more fortunate in picking up something in the way of thought.

My first impressions with regard to picking up are particularly unfortunate. They date back a great, great many years, but they are very vivid nevertheless.

XUM



A SPRING PICTURE.

See p. 440.

They were fixed upon me in a way very calculated to impress the youthful mind. I picked up a small, rubbishing knife, which almost anyone would be ashamed to own. In vain I protested to my excellent mother that I had found it in the street. She was a woman of inflexible uprightness and honesty, and fearing, I suppose, that I had misappropriated someone's cutlery, she—according to the formula used by an eminent schoolmaster, recently deceased—"administered" to me; what that meant, I leave the reader's ingenuity to guess. I remember it still as an act of injustice in itself, though I honour the sterling honesty and love which would not even give me "the benefit of the doubt."

Well, I hear of lucky people picking up all sorts of things. A young friend of mine picked up a little brown paper twiddled up, and it was full of large, beautiful diamonds. I don't believe she ever found the owner of them; but, as I have said, nothing has come my way, and my chief concern with the pavement is to kick the orange-peel from it, bearing in mind the lifelong injury which a dear relative of mine sustained from slipping on a piece on a doorstep.

I hope you, good reader, will do the same, and when you are looking out for the orange-peel, may you fall in with luck of some kind. I shall not say what, for if it be in the way of finding, why, what you find, somebody must have lost.

But I often pick up a little something in the shape of what I hear people say, and what I see them do; and such a little picking up you see at the head of this paper.

I was walking along, when I came up to an old man talking to another old body; and as I passed I had just time enough to hear a couple of sentences—one vituperating the weather for some time past; the other, that which I have set at the head of this paper, "There won't be no summer this year."

The idea is what I want to dwell on for a moment, not the grammar. According to the undisputed rule "that two negatives make an affirmative," my grumbling friend was prophesying not evil but good; but nothing could be further from his intentions, and it is with his intentions that I have to do.

For, be it recorded, that this dismal prophecy was enunciated on the 1st of May—before summer had begun at all—and the prophet—the dismal man, who knew all about it (though I hope he didn't), said in effect that all through May and June, and July and August (when does spring really end and summer really begin?), there was no hope for us.

The big cart-horses with their Mayday ribbons and rosettes might have put some hope into him; perhaps if we had had a Jack-in-the-green our way it might have danced some life into him: but the leaden clouds which were above our heads at the moment seemed too strong for him, so our doom went forth from his lips, "There won't be no summer this year."

I picked up your saying, my poor friend, and pondered it as I went along.

Surely this hopeless man must have forgotten that we had had some bright days during what had undeniably been a trying spring. He might have gathered some comfort for himself and for the friend he was talking to, and no doubt for a great many others to whom he is sure to have communicated his gloomy thoughts, if he had treasured up some of the sunbeams of the past, and from them argued, or hoped, and even prophesied that we should have some little bits of summer, anyhow. One would have been grateful to the prophet for even an odd day of sunshine, for some gleams during all these coming months, but no, we must face the dismals as best we can. "There won't be no summer this year."

Now, our friend might have remembered that we had had some bright days in the recent past; but we had had, no doubt, some gloomy ones too, and these I suppose were too strong for him; they projected their shadows into the future. Is it not so with ourselves? Some gloomy days, gloomy experiences, make us take a long and wide gloomy view of the future; it is with us as with Jacob of old, "all these things are against us," our grey hairs are about to be "brought down with sorrow to the grave." Our prophecies are often too long and too wide, their horizon is too large, we prophesy too much. If we are wise we shall be very chary of predicting either for others or ourselves.

My prophet seemed to have forgotten also his own knowledge of previous years. When had he a year in which he had *no* summer? The summer may not have been a particularly bright one, or a particularly hot one, but it had some summer in it: but it is to be no summer for us this year; no, none at all. How often we will not recognise and accept thankfully a part because we cannot get the whole! How often we are ungrateful, and say we have not had anything, because we have not had everything! Some summer, my dear prophet, please allow us—a little. I am one of those who wish to be thankful for small mercies. When I look back upon many years of life now past, I remember many summers which had in them a great deal of wet and cold, but some sun too; there were some gooseberries and strawberries, and I remember many long times when sun was scarce; but, O prophet, there were some glints. I didn't die of the cold, though now and again I had to wear my great-coat. O prophet, there *is* some summer in the time to come.

O prophet, consider the unreasonableness of your inconsequentialness of reasoning: cut up that big word into syllables—little mouthfuls if it be too big to be pronounced all at once—and give us peace. It does not follow that because there has been little spring there will be no summer. Even full failure in the past does not necessitate full failure in the future. Perhaps the tardy spring did but keep back the buds, to fruit with more certainty in the coming summer. Pasts, if even wholly dark, do not forbid the oncoming of a future satisfyingly, even if not wholly, bright.

O prophet, I desire to leave to yourself your long looks-out of gloom. Man's prophecies are often much darker than God's dealings. O prophet, you must be extinguished as Jack-in-the-green is, with a great extinguisher of green boughs and spring flowers; and you must, if you will not dance, at least wriggle about somewhere under them. We can't have you standing on life's highway saying within the hearing of poor

old folk who want sunbeams to warm their chill bones, and bright young folk who want sunbeams to play in, and workmen who want to sow, and plant, and reap, and build, "There won't be no summer this year."

O mother, whose child is having a gusty spring, believe in the possibility of a coming summer.

O minister, whose parish has been swept by the cold, bleak winds, blowing chill on your pastor-heart, perhaps bright sunshine will come over it soon, and with it flower and fruit.

O child of Adam, whosoever thou art, refuse to listen to whoever tells thee that the future can have nothing for thee, that "there won't be no summer this year." Say, "O prophet, thy bad English will make thee a good prophet. There WILL be some summer this year is the true rendering of thy doleful words.

"THERE WON'T BE NO SUMMER THIS YEAR."

"TO THE LIONS!"

A TALE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS. BY THE REV. PROFESSOR CHURCH, M.A.

CHAPTER XV.—THE AMPHITHEATRE.

ALL Ephesus was on the tiptoe of expectation about the great spectacle that was soon to be exhibited in its amphitheatre. The preparations were on a scale of magnificence that exceeded anything that had within the memory of man been witnessed in the city. Several things had combined to bring about this result.

A wealthy merchant of Ephesus was going to expend two hundred thousand drachmas in gratitude to Diana, the great patroness of the city, for the preservation of his life. It was a vow that he had made when in imminent danger of shipwreck in the course of a voyage to Massilia, and he thought that he could not do better than fulfil it by giving a popular entertainment. The Roman Governor of Asia had added as much more. It was a handsome gift, but it may be doubted whether it represented a tenth part of what he had put in his pocket by the plunder of the provincials. But the Governor knew what he was about. There would be a chorus of a hundred thousand voices to praise his generosity, and he might reckon on its drowning a score or two of complaints about the extortion which he had practised and the bribes which he had received. Then the city had more than doubled the amount thus raised, by a vote from the municipal funds.

The Emperor had sent a present of money from his private purse, besides putting at the disposal of the managers of the spectacle a select troop of forty gladiators from his own establishment. The Prince's liberality found, as such liberality commonly does, many imitators. There were some especially notable gifts in the way of wild beasts; all parts of Lesser Asia of course contributed. There were panthers from Cappadocia, bears from Cilicia, and elks from Pontus. The Parthian king sent two magnificent lions and a tiger, and lent, for the purposes of the show, a troop of performing elephants, which he had himself hired at a vast expense from one of the princes on his Indian borders. Another Indian prince sent some curious apes which had come from beyond the Ganges. There were even giraffes and ostriches from Africa.

Altogether, the show promised to be one of the greatest splendour, and the city was thronged with visitors from far and near. Among these were some connoisseurs, who were familiar with the splendid spectacles of the capital. And now a whisper went round that an exhibition of a peculiarly exciting kind was to be added to the usual entertainments. A number of persons who had been found guilty of holding the "odious superstition" of the Christians were to fight with wild beasts.

Public opinion was, indeed, not a little divided on this matter. Ephesus had not forgotten the venerable figure of St. John, and there were many, not themselves Christians, who regarded these cruelties with horror. Some had an intense curiosity to know whether the disciples would be rescued from their danger in the same marvellous way that was recorded of their teacher. On the other hand, there were many who looked forward to the promised exhibition with delight. There were bigots, not many in number, but very fervent and energetic, who sincerely hated all that threatened to undermine the old faith. And there was a multitude of people who, like Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen some fifty years before, felt their livelihood to be endangered by the new belief. The silversmiths, who made models of the temple, or of the curious figure of the goddess herself; the less skilful artisans, who manufactured facsimiles of the meteoric stone, the "image which fell down from Jupiter," which had been an object of worship from times going back far beyond history; the bakers, who made a peculiar kind of cake stamped with the sacred image; the tavern and lodging-house keepers, who entertained and fleeced the pilgrims who crowded to pay their devotions at the shrine—all these looked upon the Christians as personal enemies. Lastly, the general population, though without any

particular knowledge of or interest in the matter, regarded them with a vague suspicion as persons who threatened to diminish in some way the *prestige* of the great city of Ephesus.

The amphitheatre was a huge building, which must have contained—when closely packed, as we may be sure it was on the occasion about to be described—as many as thirty thousand spectators. The centre was occupied by the arena, in which the various spectacles were to be exhibited—a circular space, about two hundred yards in diameter, and covered with sand, from which substance, indeed, it got its name. Round it, tier upon tier, rose the seats of the spectators. These were divided into wedge-like portions, broad at the top, and tapering down to a comparatively narrow width at the bottom. The uppermost rows might have held about two hundred seats, the lowest something like five-and-twenty. A strong railing separated the lowest row from the arena. Between each two divisions there was a passage by which the various rows might be approached.

This railing, indeed, did not go round the whole circle. On the north side were ranged a number of enclosures, each with a strong door of its own, opening into the arena. From some of these the gladiators entered; in others the wild beasts that were intended for exhibition were kept. Others, again, served to hold the chariots before they started for a race.* Above these receptacles was placed the seat of the Governor. His retinue and friends occupied other seats close by, and the notables of the city were placed at a greater or less distance, according to their rank. This was the aristocratic part of the amphitheatre, but generally the lower rows of seats were occupied by the more respectable class, while the upper were assigned to slaves and the lower class. A huge awning sheltered the whole of the audience from the sun or an occasional shower of rain. That part of it which was stretched over the seats of the Governor and the aristocratic company generally was of a rich purple. The effect of the sunlight falling through it was particularly striking.



"The Governor delighted the people by his condescension in taking his meal in public."—*p.* 415.

The audience began to assemble as soon as it was light, for there was likely to be a crush for places; but it was about ten o'clock when the flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of the Governor. A small body-guard of soldiers in the half-equipment usual on such occasions preceded him. His colleague of Bithynia, who had been specially invited to attend the spectacle, walked by his side. Next to him followed the Ephesian merchant who had contributed so liberally to the cost of the entertainment; and behind him came a long procession of the notabilities of the city, and then the "chiefs of Asia,"* local dignitaries of much importance, the priests of Diana, the town clerk of the city, the members of the Senate, and the officials of most of the chief towns of Western Asia Minor. The whole assembly rose to greet them, welcoming with special enthusiasm the great contributors to the entertainment. When all had resumed their seats, the Governor gave the signal for the proceedings of the day to commence.

The first part of the show was, we may say, ornamental. The ostriches, which had never been seen before in Ephesus, were especially admired. Yet

* It may be explained that the races were not started as they are among us, by a signal. Each chariot occupied a box of its own. The doors of these were simultaneously opened, and they got out as quickly as they could. Hence the starting point of a race got the name of the prisons (*carceres*). Each competitor was kept in a *prison*, so to speak, till it was time to start.

* Compare Acts xix.

greater applause was excited by some performing animals. A hunting leopard caught a deer, and brought it back unharmed. Still more astonishing, a wolf pursued and overtook a hare, and laid it uninjured at the feet of its trainer. But the palm was given by common consent to the troop of performing elephants. One animal traced the name of the Emperor in Greek letters with its trunk on the sand. Two others imitated a fight of gladiators with great skill. But most astonishing of all was the performance on the tight rope, when two of the animals carried a litter in which a companion, who represented a sick man, was lying. At midday there was an interval for refreshment, and the theatre became the scene of a gay and noisy picnic. The Governor delighted the people by his condescension in taking his meal in public. Every spectator was able to flatter himself with the social distinction of having lunched in the company of the chief magistrate.

The afternoon was devoted to exhibitions of agility and skill. Gymnasts lifted astonishing weights and made astonishing leaps, or constructed themselves into pyramids or other curious erections. Then there was fencing with foils and sword-play with staves, high leaping and long leaping, foot-races, and quoit-throwing. It was the rule that there should be no bloodshed in the first day's performance; and the rule was not distasteful to a Greek audience. Greek feeling, indeed, was distinctly adverse to the cruel spectacles in which human life was so wantonly wasted. The more brutal taste of Rome had gone far to corrupt it, but the very best society at Ephesus, that which prided itself on a pure Greek descent, still held aloof from the theatre when these spectacles were going on.

However this may have been, there was no visible falling off in the attendance on the morning of the second day, and the interest was undoubtedly keener. A hundred pairs of gladiators contended during the day, and though this number was insignificant compared with what had been seen at Rome in the great Imperial shows, it was considered a more than respectable exhibition for a provincial city. During the early hours of the day there was little loss of life. The gladiators were always willing to disable rather than to kill an antagonist. They showed a forbearance which they hoped to have another day shown to themselves. And the spectators were unusually good-humoured. The weather was not too hot, and the awnings were admirably made to keep off the sun and admit the breeze. The Governor, too, by an arrangement with the tavern-keepers, had lowered the price of the wine sold in the building, so that a quart could be bought for half a drachma.*

Accordingly all went well; the wounded were permitted to escape with their lives, with the exception of an unlucky Thracian, who slipped where some blood had been spilt upon the sand, and spitted himself on his adversary's sword. But early in the afternoon an unfortunate mishap irritated the spectators. One of the most popular combats was that between a "netman" and a "fishman," if we may so translate the classical names.* The first was armed with a net and a trident, or three-pronged fork; the second had the ordinary weapons of a soldier. Zeno, the "netman," was a favourite with the Ephesians. He was a native of the city, he had fought for several years without ever suffering a defeat, and he was noted for the audacious agility with which he baffled his antagonists.

On this occasion he carried his tricks a little too far. He had already disabled three opponents, in each case bringing down roars of laughter by the comical way in which he made sport of his enemy—just as a *matador* makes sport of a bull. To put himself almost within reach of his sword; to elude him; to "net" him with a dexterous throw; and then, after dragging him, helplessly struggling in the folds, from one side of the arena to the other, to administer a disabling wound—had been the game which he had three times repeated, to the intense delight of his patrons. But the pitcher that goes often to the spring is broken in the end, and Zeno's fourth antagonist was his last. The man was a heavy, clumsy-looking fellow, and seemed to promise an easy victory. Deceived by his appearance, and elated by his previous successes, Zeno committed the fatal error of despising his enemy. He had thrown his net and missed his aim—that, of course, was a common occurrence: indeed, to finish the combat at the first encounter would have been held nothing less than a blunder. What the populace wanted to see was a victim gradually reduced to helplessness. Then he turned to fly. Here, commonly, came in the best of the sport. To see the heavy-armed soldier toiling in vain after his light-footed antagonist; feeling him, time after time, almost within reach of his sword; sometimes striking out and missing him by little more than a hand's-breadth (the dexterous netman often found the moment after the delivery of a fruitless stroke an excellent opportunity for a throw)—all this was a prime amusement to the crowd. But in this case the "fishman" was, though no one knew it, an athlete of uncommon strength. With a bound, of which no one would have thought a heavy-armed man to be capable, he leapt upon his antagonist, caught him by his girdle, and drove his sword into his back with such force that the point stood out under the ribs in front. Zeno fell almost instantaneously dead upon the ground.

A hoarse murmur of discontent ran round the benches. But the blow had been a fair one; in any other case it would have excited shouts of applause; and now it was impossible to find fault with it. Still, the people were profoundly irritated. When another pair of gladiators appeared in the arena, they were received with shouts of "Away! Away!" Then someone cried, "The Christians! the Christians!" and another voice answered with, "The lions! the lions!" The next moment the two cries were blended into one—"The Christians to the lions!" and this was taken up with furious zeal by the whole assembly.

* Something less than fivepence.

* *Retiarius* and *mirmillo*: the second so called, it would seem, because he had the device of a sea-monster on his helmet.

The Proconsul waited till the first rage of the outburst had been spent. Then he rose in his place.

"Men of Ephesus!" he said, in a voice raised to its utmost pitch, "you shall have your wish. But if you will listen to me, wait till to-morrow. Now the day is too far spent."

At the same time he gave the signal for closing the entertainment, and the crowd, who knew that he meant what he said, dispersed in silence.

CHAPTER XVI.—"THE CHRISTIANS TO THE LIONS!"

SIXTEEN Christian prisoners in all had been sent from Nicæa to the great show at Ephesus. They were confined in cells, constructed under the seats of the amphitheatre, and indeed close to the cages of the wild beasts. That which was occupied by the two sisters, who, by special favour, were allowed to be together, was separated by nothing more than a wooden partition from the habitation of the lions. The heat, the darkness, and the stench were such as it would be impossible to describe. And if anything was wanted to aggravate the horror of the situation, the two prisoners heard day and night the restless pacing to and fro, and now and then the deep growling, of their ferocious neighbours.

Rhoda, indeed, was almost beyond suffering from these or any other causes. The journey to Ephesus had exhausted the scanty remnants of her strength, and since her arrival she had lain in an almost unconscious condition. All the noise of the amphitheatre had failed to rouse her, and even the fierce cry of "The Christians to the lions!" seemed not to reach her ears. Cleoné watched by her sister with the tenderest care. It was little indeed that she could do; but the beauty of the twins had touched the heart of the keeper of the beasts, and he had provided them with such little comforts as his means could furnish, the chief among them being a supply, often renewed, of fresh water from a well celebrated for its depth and coldness.

The first rays of dawn were just falling through the hole in the dungeon which admitted such light and air as were permitted to visit it, when, for the first time since her arrival, Rhoda seemed to rouse herself from her stupor. Cleoné, who, after a wakeful night, had fallen into a brief sleep, heard her move, and was immediately at her side. The sick girl turned a smiling face on her sister.

"I am going home to-day," she said.

"Yes, dearest," answered Cleoné, who had no difficulty in putting a meaning on her words.

"But you will stay," she went on.

"Nay, dearest, we will go together," said Cleoné, with a little tone of reproach in her voice.

"The Lord has not willed it so. You have something to do for Him here; but me He suffers to depart and be with Him; which," she added, after a pause, "is far better."

For a few minutes she was lost in thought. Then she threw her arms round her sister's neck, kissed her tenderly, and said, "You will marry Clitus, dearest!"

Cleoné, lost in astonishment, said nothing; she thought that her sister was wandering.

"I was wrong," Rhoda went on to say, "to hinder his love for you. Wives, too, have a vocation from the Lord. You will be not less faithful because you are happy."

"But, sister dear, you forget!" said Cleoné.

"No," returned the other, "I do not forget. But I have had a dream, and I know that the Lord showed me in it what shall be. This is what I saw. I dreamt that we two were walking together on a narrow road; and as we walked I saw two men in shining apparel who were talking together: and it was given to me to understand that they were two of the blessed Apostles, and that one, who seemed to be a man of middle age, and somewhat rugged and stern of look, was Peter; and the other, a youth of very fair and sweet countenance, was John. And Peter pointed to us two as we walked, and said to his companion, 'Brother, how shall it be with these two? Will they follow me or thee?' To whom answered John, 'One for thee, and one for me.' And it was given me to know that they to whom the Lord gives the crown of martyrdom are they that follow Peter, and that they who live long, and die after the common manner of men, follow John. For thus it was with these two when they were upon earth. And, lest I should doubt which of us two should live and which should die, I dreamt again. And this time I saw you sitting with children standing by your knees; but the place where you were was wholly strange to me, and all the things about you such as I had never seen. Therefore I am sure that for you the Lord will shut the lions' mouths. And now, dearest, I would sleep again, that I may be ready when the time shall come."

Both sisters were resting peacefully when the keeper's wife entered their cell, about an hour after daybreak. She brought with her some food, which she had made as dainty as her means and skill permitted, and a pitcher of wine. Those doomed to death were commonly wont to dull their senses with heavy draughts of some intoxicating drink, and the kind woman was doing, as she thought, her best for the prisoners by giving them a liberal allowance. The sisters surprised her by begging for their usual supply of water from the well.

"Please yourselves," said the woman, "but I will leave the pitcher, in case you should think better of it when the time comes."

"Sister," said Rhoda, when they were left alone, "nothing need hinder us from remembering the Lord's death, according to His commandment, even though there be no minister to give us the bread and wine."

Cleoné gave a ready assent, and the two went through the simple ritual which St. Paul describes in his first letter to the Corinthians. This finished, they took their meal, which Rhoda ate with an appetite that she had not known for many weeks. All the time that was left to them they devoted to prayer. About nine o'clock the wife of the keeper of the beasts knocked at the door of the cell. She carried on her arm two white dresses.

"By special favour of the Governor," she said,

"you are permitted to wear your usual clothing, and I have brought you these, for what you have is sadly soiled."

"The Lord reward you!" said the two sisters together.

The woman helped them to dress and arrange their hair, which, for want of a mirror (not part of the furniture of a prison), was sadly in disorder. She had just finished when the barrier that separated the cell from the arena was raised. One of the attendants of the amphitheatre beckoned them to come forward. Their companions had preceded them, and were standing in front of the Governor's seat. As the sisters, in obedience to the bidding of the attendant, moved across the arena to join them, there were visible and audible signs of emotion in the vast multitude that watched them. More pathetic figures could not have been seen than these two, as, hand in hand, with downcast eyes but unfaltering steps, they walked to their death. A ray of sunshine, falling through a chink in the awning, touched with a golden light the long tresses which fell over their shoulders. The angry cries which had greeted their fellow-victims were changed to a murmur of mingled admiration and pity. Not a few voices even raised a cry of "Pardon! pardon!" Had the Governor interposed to save them at that moment, not the sternest bigot for the old faith, not the most cruel frequenter of those hideous spectacles, would have questioned his action. But the multitude had not yet tasted blood; let them once have feasted their eyes on death, and innocence and beauty would plead for mercy in vain.

The condemned, after being thus exhibited, were put into an enclosure, from which they could be brought out one by one, or in pairs, to be exposed to the fury of the wild beasts.

I shall not harrow the feelings of my readers by describing in detail the hideous scenes which followed. Each victim was provided with a weapon, a short sword or javelin, according to the animal which he was called upon to encounter. It was supposed that he *fought* with the beast, and the weapon was to give him a chance of victory—a chance that was a mere mockery, as scarcely even the most practised hunter could have used it to any purpose. Most dropped the weapon on the ground; one or two would have thought it sinful to use it. There was one exception, and this was the centurion Fabius, the officer whom my readers will remember as having commanded the arresting party on the occasion when the Christian assembly was surprised. Fabius had felt great remorse for the part which he had played on this occasion. The courage and faith of the prisoners whom he had been the unwilling instrument of taking had touched him to the heart, and he had resolved to make his long-delayed profession. Between the first and second hearing of the accused he had been secretly baptised, travelling to a neighbouring city for the purpose, and had then come forward and boldly avowed himself to be a Christian. He was now matched with a panther from Cappadocia, an animal of unusual size, which, in preparation for its duty as an executioner, had been kept in a state of starvation for several days.

The old fighting instincts of the soldier revived when the weapon was put into his hand, and though he did not hope or even wish for life, he resolved to strike a blow for himself. A pole stood in the centre of the arena, with the ground slightly rising round it. Fabius planted himself by this, with his short sword in his hand, and his eyes fixed on the panther as it crept cat-like towards him, waving its long tail backwards and forwards in its rage. His resolute attitude was greeted with a roar of applause from the spectators, who had viewed with contempt and disgust what they regarded as the cowardly submission of the other prisoners to their fate. When the panther had come within the length of its leap it paused awhile, dropping its eyes before the soldier's resolute gaze, but watching its opportunity. This was not long in coming. A puff of wind moved aside one of the edges of the awning, and sent a ray of sunshine into the soldier's face. For a moment he was dazzled, and at that moment, with a loud roar, the panther made his spring. Simultaneously, Fabius dropped upon his left knee, holding his sword firmly with both hands, as if it had been a pike. Had it been a more effective weapon, he might have escaped almost unharmed; as it was, the blade inflicted a long gash in the animal's breast, but bent, so poor was its temper, when it came into contact with the bone. Still, it checked the panther's attack, and the soldier was able to find a temporary shelter behind the pole. But the creature was not seriously wounded, and what was he to do without a weapon? The bent sword lay useless on the ground, and the beast was gathering its forces for another spring. Suddenly the soldier's eye seemed to be caught by something which he saw on one of the benches near the Proconsul's seat. He ran in this direction at the top of his speed, amidst a howl of disapprobation from the spectators, who thought this attempt at flight as cowardly as it was useless. But as he approached the side of the arena the reason for this strange movement became evident. A long hunting-knife, thrown by one of the spectators, came whirling through the air. An old comrade of the centurion's had bethought him of this as the only possible help that he could give. Fabius caught it dexterously by the hilt, and turned to face his savage antagonist. Man and beast closed in fierce encounter. More than once they rolled together on the sand. But the blade of the knife was of a better temper than the faithless sword. Again and again the soldier plunged it into the animal's side. In a few minutes he stood breathless, and bleeding from a score of deep scratches, but substantially unhurt, with the panther dead at his feet. A roar of applause, mingled with cries of "Pardon! pardon!" went up from the multitude.

The Governor beckoned the centurion to approach. "Well done, comrade!" he said. "The Emperor must not lose so brave a soldier. Hush!" he went on, perceiving that the centurion was about to speak, and fearing lest some ill-timed declaration of his faith might make it impossible to save him. "Hush! it is not a time to ask questions. A surgeon must look to your wounds; I will see you to-morrow." And the centurion was led out of the arena.

The turn of the two sisters was now come. Led to the centre of the arena, they sat down side by side, awaiting their fate. Immediately the barrier of one of the dens was raised, and a huge lion bounded forth with a roar. It walked round the arena, and not a few of the spectators on the lowest tier trembled as he passed them even behind the stout iron railings which protected them. Of the two stationary figures in the centre the creature seemed to take no notice.

The spectators watched its movements with so fixed an attention that they scarcely noticed the darkness that had been for some time spreading over the building. A storm had been working up against the wind, and now broke, as it seemed, directly overhead. A vivid flash was followed by a deafening crash of thunder, and this again by a loud cry of dismay. The huge gilded eagle that stood over the Proconsul's seat had been struck, and came crashing to the ground, striking in its fall, and instantaneously killing, two of the Governor's attendants.

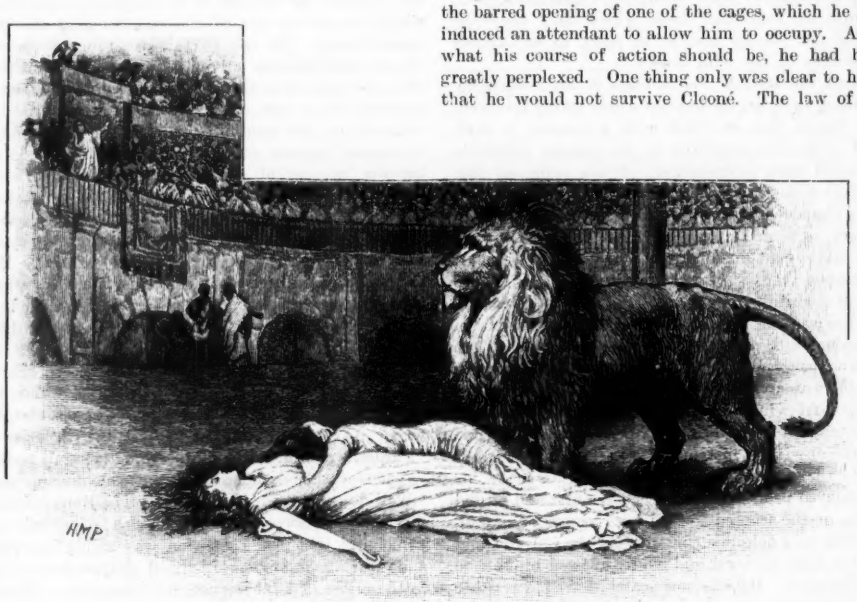
A thrill of fear was felt by the boldest and most philosophical spectator. As for the multitude, their superstitious terror rose to the pitch of agony. "The gods are angry!"—"Dismiss the assembly!"—"Let us depart!" were the cries that could be heard on all sides. The Governor rose in his place; and at the very moment of his rising the darkness seemed to roll away, and all eyes were turned again to the arena. Two white-robed figures were lying prostrate on the ground, clasped in each other's arms, and the lion was standing motionless by their side.

A few minutes afterwards, in obedience to the Proconsul's commands, the animal's keeper appeared. Several attendants accompanied him, for his errand was a dangerous one, and his best chance of safety was in being able to distract the creature's attention. As it turned out, nothing could have been more easily done. The lion seemed entirely to forget his hunger and his rage, and answering to the call of his name as readily as if he had been a dog, walked quietly back to his cage.

The sisters still lay motionless on the sand. The lion had not touched them, for there was not a trace of blood on their white robes; nor did it seem likely, so undisturbed were the two figures, that the lightning had struck them. But the attendants who advanced to carry out the bodies readily perceived the truth. Rhoda was dead. Her strange revival on the morning of the day had been the last flash of an expiring fire. She had died, clasped in her sister's arms, without a struggle and without a pang. Cleoné had felt the heart cease to beat, and the cheek pressed against her own grow chill in death. Then her own sorrows were lost in a merciful unconsciousness. The spectators almost universally believed that the attendants were carrying away two corpses.

CHAPTER XVII.—ESCAPE.

CLITUS had watched the proceedings in the amphitheatre, not indeed from among the spectators, whose company would have been odious to him, but from the barred opening of one of the cages, which he had induced an attendant to allow him to occupy. As to what his course of action should be, he had been greatly perplexed. One thing only was clear to him: that he would not survive Cleoné. The law of his



"The lion was standing motionless by their side"

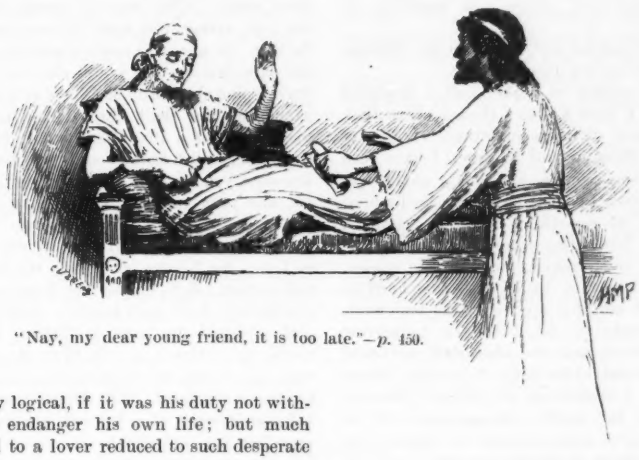
faith forbade suicide; yet surely, he thought to himself, it would not be difficult to die! He armed himself with a hunting-knife, though, of course, the idea of rescue was hopeless, and to use the weapon could only serve to provoke his own fate. Perhaps this was not very logical, if it was his duty not without necessity to endanger his own life; but much may be pardoned to a lover reduced to such desperate straits.

He had, as may easily be believed, never taken his eyes off the sisters. When, in the very crisis of the thunderstorm, he saw the lion approach them, he actually started from his hiding-place, and traversed half of the distance that separated them from him. When he saw them fall to the ground, some old story that he had read, of how the lion will not tear what he thinks to be a dead body, had come back to him, and this with such force that it seemed a message. He retraced his steps, and, so occupied was the audience with the storm, was unobserved both in coming and going.

He had since heard from the keeper's wife of the real fact about the sisters, and he had been anxiously considering what he could do. His hope, of course, was in Pliny. The Governor of Bithynia had treated him as a personal friend, and, though his conduct with regard to the Christians had not been consistent, it was clear that, on the whole, his leaning was to mercy. But how was he to be approached? He was the Proconsul's guest, and was probably now assisting at some State banquet, from which he could hardly be called. Yet time was short, and the need of taking some immediate action was urgent. He was walking up and down in front of the Proconsul's palace, deep in thought about his next step, when the problem was unexpectedly solved for him. A hand was laid upon his shoulder, and, turning to see who it was that wished to speak to him, he recognised the Governor's private secretary.

"Well met, most excellent Clitus!" was the young man's greeting. "I was just about to seek you at your lodgings. The Governor desires to see you without delay. Follow me!"

The secretary led the way to the Governor's apartment. Pliny was reclining on a couch. He was reading, for he never lost a moment that could be given to study; but he put down the volume when he heard the door open, and beckoned Clitus to approach. The secretary saluted, and withdrew.



"Nay, my dear young friend, it is too late."—*p.* 450.

The young Greek, who had not seen his patron close at hand for some time, was shocked at the change in his appearance. Occupied though he was with his own thoughts, he could not help remarking it. Pliny had the look of one who had not many days to live. He was beginning some expression of regret, when the Governor interrupted him.

"That matters not. I have more important things to speak of, and things that will not wait. But how did my secretary find you so soon? It is but just now that I sent him to fetch you."

"I had myself come, most Excellent, to the palace, in the hope of seeing you, but did not know how it was to be done. I thought you must be still at the Proconsul's table."

"Ah!" said Pliny, "I escaped from him. But not till I had got from him what I wanted. Look here!"

He took from a writing-case three documents sealed with the Proconsul's seal. He handed two of them to Clitus. They were orders addressed to the keeper of the prisoners, authorising him to deliver up to the bearer the persons of Cleoné and the centurion Fabius.

"I had not much difficulty about the matter," said Pliny. "As to the girl Cleoné, I fancy that the way had been smoothed for me. The Proconsul has a heart, and possibly he might have let the girl go free after the wonderful deliverance of to-day; but her father has been with him, my secretary tells me, and, I fancy, gave him substantial reasons for pardoning her. He came yesterday, indeed, and offered three million sesterces* for her and her sister's liberty; but then, of course, it was impossible. What he has paid

* About £20,000

now I do not know, but I feel sure that it was something large. However, this does not matter. There is the order for her release. As for the centurion, there was never any doubt. The Proconsul—you see, I speak freely to you—did not require any inducement here. He can admire a brave man without being bribed. So they are free. But the question is, Where can they go? Have you anything to suggest?"

"I thought of making my way into the Cilician Highlands," answered the young Greek.

"It is a long journey to make, and a doubtful refuge after all. I have a better thought than that. There is a merchant of my acquaintance at Miletus who trades with Massilia and Britain. I have been able to do him some service, and he is anxious to repay me. Ever since I came I have cherished a hope of being able to do something for the prisoners, especially for the two sisters, whose case touched me more than I can say; indeed, but for this reason, I would have had nothing to do with this horrible spectacle. Well, I sent for my friend the merchant. He has a ship ready to sail, I believe, to-morrow morning. Get Cleoné and the centurion on board without delay: it should be done, if possible, before dawn to-morrow. I should say, Go as far as Britain. It is quite out of the world; no questions will be asked you there as to what you are or whence you come. But now there is another matter. Look at this!"

And he handed him the third of the three documents. It was an order for the delivery to the bearer of the body of Rhoda, lately a prisoner in the amphitheatre of Ephesus.

"There will be a difficulty here," Pliny continued; "I must leave you to overcome it. Cleoné, hard as it will be, must leave the care of her sister's funeral to others. To delay might be to ruin all. Unless you escape at once, there are some in this city who will take care that you do not escape at all. My advice is this. Take this document at once to the chiefs of your Society in Ephesus. Do it, I would say, before Cleoné knows anything about it. Let them remove the body. When it is gone, and not before, tell her. She will ask to see her sister before she goes. Then you must tell her. It will be a bitter pang to her; but she will see that it has been for the best. And now go—there is no time to lose; you have much to do before morning. The Proconsul has provided horses for your party, and an escort under an officer whom he can trust. And now for a few words for yourself. I shall never see you again; for my days, as I know well, are numbered. It seems a pity to banish so fine a scholar to an island of barbarians; but there is clearly no choice, and you can court the Muses there also. And then you will have your Cleoné. But you must not go penniless. I have arranged with my friend the merchant to hand you something wherewith you can start. That you may consider a loan, if you will, and repay to my estate. I shall not be alive to receive it. And I have put your name into my will; a legacy you can hardly choose but take. And now farewell! Remember me to Cleoné, and bid her not think too hardly of the Governor, though he was a pagan and an enemy of the faith."

"O my lord," broke in the young Athenian eagerly, "it is not too late! There are those who will teach you; and if, as you say, you have but a few days to live——"

"I must make haste, you mean," said Pliny, with a faint smile. "Nay, my dear young friend, it is too late; or, rather, this faith of yours was never meant for me. It seems to make good men and women. I am sure that no one would die for the old gods as bravely and cheerfully as I have seen slaves and weak women die for their Christ. And you have a hope, too, I hear, of a life after death. It is a beautiful thought. I wish that I could have heard of it before. But now, you see, it is impossible. You will think of me, and pray for me. I hear that you do pray for others, even for those who hate you. Perhaps it will be well with me after all; and, if not, I must bear it as I can, for I have tried to do my duty as a Roman and a man. But I must not keep you, or else our trouble will have been wasted. And now farewell!"

He reached his hand to Clitus. The young man would have kissed it, but Pliny drew him towards him, kissed him on both cheeks, and then laid both hands on his head. "My blessing on you," he said, "if the blessing of a heathen can avail. The gods, or rather, the God, the Father whom we all acknowledge, protect you! And now, do not lose another moment."

It was a hard night's work that Clitus had to do. His first care was to see the Bishop of Ephesus. The good man willingly, or, it should rather be said, joyfully undertook the care of Rhoda's burial rites. One lock of her hair was taken as a remembrance for her sister. Then the body was removed by the bishop himself, with some helpers of assured loyalty, who might be trusted not to reveal the secret of her resting-place till the return, if such should be granted to the Church, of more peaceful times. The pious task was finished by the time, an hour after midnight, when Clitus presented himself at the house of the keeper of the amphitheatre, with the order of release in his hand.

In a few minutes Cleoné knew that she would never again see the outward form of the sister whom she loved, who was more than the half of her heart. But she had a faith, more vivid than is often granted to us, that the body is but the perishable image of the true man, and a hope of a future life, which the tribulations of the present intensified into an absolute assurance. And then she saw that the safety of her two companions, not to speak of herself, depended upon speedy action.

"You have done well," she said, after the first burst of grief was over, "and I trust you."

And she reached her hand to him, with a little smile that flashed for a moment through her tears.

The sun had scarcely risen when the good ship *Centaur* had cleared the harbour of Miletus and was speeding westward over the waters of the Ægean. Pliny, anxious to secure as far as was possible the party against disaster, had arranged with the captain to make the voyage to Britain direct, touching at as

few ports as possible on the way, and these the most obscure. For some weeks after her embarkation, Cleoné was prostrated by illness—the natural consequence of all that she had endured. She was carefully and tenderly nursed by the captain's wife, for whose companionship the thoughtful care of Pliny had provided. Once or twice during her illness she seemed to herself to catch the tones of familiar voices; and several times, while she was slowly coming back to health, she saw figures which she seemed to know, and which appeared carefully to avoid her. It was not till after she had landed that the secret was revealed. It was her father and mother whom she had seen.

"Forgive him, for my sake," cried the poor woman, falling on her knees before her child; "you are all that he, that we, have left to us."

The old man stood two or three paces behind, his head bowed down with a shame and a remorse that passed all utterance. Cleoné threw her arms round his neck. Her tenderness divined that it was to him who had sinned that her love must first be shown. And the mother, to whom, by all laws of justice, that first embrace was due, was glad to have it so.

Lucilius had lost his son, who died the day after the removal of the sisters to Ephesus. Most of his property had been spent in purchasing the Proconsul's favour; with what remained he had determined to commence a new life in the land for which his daughter was bound. Clitus and Cléone were married at the Christmas festival next after their arrival in the island, which, indeed, they did not reach till late in November. The next Easter Lucilius and his wife were baptised. Of the life of the family thus strangely brought together, little need be said, but that it was remarkably happy and prosperous. As the years went on, a little Bion and a little Rhoda recalled the sweet and tender memory of those who were sleeping far away under an Asian sky, far away, but in that "sure and certain hope" which under all skies is still the same. Both were dear to their good neighbour Fabius, one of the senators of their little colony; but it was to Rhoda that the stout soldier-farmer would talk of one who had borne her name in days long past, best and most beautiful of women upon earth, and now bearing the martyr's palm before the Throne in heaven.

THE END.

*** A new Serial Story, "Dorothy's Vocation," by Evelyn Everett Green, author of "Oliver Langton's Ward," "Monica," etc., will be commenced in our next number.



THE JEWISH SABBATH IN ENGLAND.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM BURNET, M.A.

"THERE is one argument in favour of Christianity," said Lord Rochester, the noted deist of the seventeenth century, "which I could never get over, and that is the continued existence of the Jew." That evidence has lost none of its force since his days, but has rather grown stronger with the lapse of time. We see that wonderful people still living in our midst, conforming to our laws and institutions, speaking our language, often occupying high positions in our Legislature, bound to their adopted country by ties of truest patriotism, and yet, besides many physical and mental peculiarities, cherishing social and religious customs which date back to the very origin of their race. The Bible supplies the only key to this phenomenon. Without it, it would be impossible, for instance, to account for their observance in all ages and countries of their weekly Sabbath. Many persons who meet the Jews in every-day life have never had their attention called to their Sabbatical ceremonies and usages. A brief description of some of these may therefore be found interesting.



"'God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh.'"—*p.* 452.



EARLY MORNING SERVICE.

In this country, where the Lord's Day is still generally regarded as a national as well as a religious institution, the observance by the Jews of the Saturday as their Sabbath is more remarkable than elsewhere. Just as of old, they reckon the day from sunset to sunset, beginning it on the Friday evening. According to the Talmud, the time is to be determined by the appearance of the stars. If only one is visible, it is yet day; if two, they may have the benefit of the doubt: as soon, however, as three stars are seen the Sabbath has really commenced, and all work must cease. So the first synagogue service is held on the Friday evening. It opens with an anthem of welcome to the Sabbath, taken in part from Solomon's Song, and consists of the daily evening prayers with special additions.

A very solemn peculiarity of this service is the recital of the Kaddish, a very ancient act of praise, offered by the eldest sons for the repose of the souls of their deceased parents. With their Tallith or prayer-scarf thrown over their shoulders, the mourners hasten at the prescribed moment to take up a position on the right side of the Ark, and repeat together in Chaldee those time-honoured words. The neglect of this custom during eleven months after their father's death would be considered as a grievous offence against both religion and filial duty.

Their public devotions having been duly performed, all return home. There certain interesting domestic rites claim their attention. The house has been previously swept and cleaned for the occasion, the table has been spread for the Sabbath meal, and the Sabbath lamp duly lighted by the mother, who walks thrice round it, and with uplifted hands pronounces these words, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who hast sanctified us with Thy commandments, and commanded us to light the lamp of the Sabbath." Besides the ordinary food, two loaves or cakes of a special kind of bread are laid on the table and covered with a clean white cloth. These are called "chaloth," the name applied to the shew-bread of the Tabernacle in Leviticus xxiv. 5—9, and are said to be memorials of the manna, of which a double portion fell on the Friday, and was found lying between two layers of dew.

As soon as all are assembled, it is the duty of the children to ask their father's blessing. He lays his hands upon their heads, saying to each son, "God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh;" and to each daughter, "God make thee as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah." The family then joins in the Sabbath hymn, invoking the presence of the angels at their festivities in such words as these: "May your coming be in peace, ye messengers of peace from the Supreme King of Kings; holy and blessed is He. May your departure be in peace, ye messengers of peace," etc., etc. The master of the house then takes a glass of the wine in his right hand, and says the Kiddush or sanctification, in which he recites Genesis ii. 1—4, with a thanksgiving for the gift of the Sabbath; after which the wine is partaken of by all. One of the two cakes is next broken, a portion being eaten by himself and the remainder distributed to the company, with these words, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who bringest forth bread from the earth." Family religion is thus combined with public worship, and the pious Jew is taught to act very much in the spirit of the Apostle's precept—"Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the

glory of God." There is also something very beautiful and scriptural in the idea that the angels preside over the sacred rejoicings of a devout family, and it is in striking harmony with the truth revealed in the New Testament that they are "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Since, too, these Sabbatical rites are very similar to the more solemn ordinance of the Paschal Supper, we may even trace in them a resemblance to the form in which the Sacrament of His Holy Supper was instituted by our Lord on the latter occasion. The partaking of bread and wine by the light of the Sabbath lamp has thus its infinitely higher and spiritual counterpart and fulfilment in the Christian believer's communion with Christ, the true Bread of Life, revealed in his heart by the light of the Holy Spirit.

Early on the Saturday morning takes place the principal service at the synagogue. Those who witness it for the first time cannot fail to be struck with its many peculiarities. The covering of the head by the men—so contrary to our modern notions of showing reverence—generally takes by surprise the stranger, who naturally removes his hat, and is startled by a request to replace it. The separation of the sexes is thoroughly Oriental—the women occupying a latticed gallery, from which they can witness the service without themselves being seen.

The monotonous, yet melodious, chanting of the Hebrew prayers and psalms somewhat resembles the ancient Latin Gregorians, which are said by some to be derived from these Jewish harmonies. The wearing of the Tallith adorned with fringes at its four corners, and of the phylacteries on the hands and head, reminds one forcibly of the Pharisees as described by our Lord. But the most impressive ceremony is that connected with the reading of the Law and the Prophets. At a certain part of the service the sacred rolls laid up in the Ark are taken out and carried to the reader's desk, amidst a solemn procession of the rabbis and the officials of the synagogue. Seven members of the congregation are called up in turn to hear a portion of the appointed lessons read, very much as was done at Nazareth and Antioch in New Testament times. This is considered a high honour, and is obtained by purchase. As of old, a second lesson follows, taken from the Prophets. After this the roll of the Law is spread out and elevated in the sight of the assembly, whilst all repeat, with evident enthusiasm, the formula of their faith—"Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord." Then the procession re-forms, and the scrolls are taken back with joyous singing to the Ark, and as they pass, many press forward to touch them with their fringes, which they then devoutly kiss.

The service often concludes with a sermon from a rabbi, although preaching does not occupy so prominent a place in Jewish as in Protestant Christian



RECITAL OF THE KADDISH.

worship. Such are the principal rites enacted in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Perhaps their most noteworthy characteristic is the central position assigned to the Old Testament Scriptures, and the outward reverence shown to them; although, alas! as in St. Paul's days, while Moses is read, the vail is upon their hearts, and they fail to discern the Messiah, of Whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write. Nevertheless, we are assured that the day is at hand when their hearts shall turn to the Lord, and the vail shall be taken away.

It may now be well to add a concluding word about the strictness of Sabbath observance, as held at least in theory by orthodox Jews. They seem to attach much more importance to the part of the Commandments which enjoins repose than to the injunction to keep holy the Sabbath day. After duly attending the synagogue in the morning, they consider themselves at liberty to spend the rest of the day in visiting and amusements. On the other hand, the Oral Law is most stringent respecting work. No less than thirty-nine Aboth, or kinds of occupation, are forbidden. These include walking more than a mile, riding on horseback or in a carriage, lighting or extinguishing a fire, writing, playing on an instrument of music, even combing the hair or shaving. These are some of the burdensome rules handed down by tradition, and against which our Lord protested as opposed to the Divine principle that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Many of them are found impracticable, and ingenious methods have been devised for evading them. Thus, whilst it is unlawful to carry a handkerchief loose in the pocket, it may be pinned to the pocket or tied round the waist! As in our climate it would be impossible to spend the Sabbath without fire or light, Gentiles are employed to attend to these things for them. At the same time we cannot too highly commend the conscientious fidelity to their religion which induces many English Jews to incur considerable loss by closing their houses of business and abstaining from work on their own Sabbaths, although compelled by the law of the land and the customs of their Christian neighbours to rest also on Sundays.

In the present day, when there is a growing disposition amongst ourselves to relax the obligations of the Lord's Day, and for the sake of their own pleasure some would rob others of its much-needed repose, the example of the pious Jew may well put such careless professors to shame. We are indeed entitled to liberty in this matter, but we may not abuse our liberty for an occasion to the flesh. Our light is clearer, our privileges much higher, and therefore our responsibility is proportionately heavier. Our Christian Sabbath commemorates our deliverance from a much worse than Egyptian bondage through the accepted sacrifice of our risen Saviour, and is "an Easter Day in every week." If, then, we are risen with Christ, we shall burst the trammels of unnecessary toil and of worldly amusements, in order to enjoy the blessings of closer communion with God.

METRICAL VERSIONS OF THE PSALMS.

TATE AND BRADY.

NOTWITHSTANDING the great success of the Sternhold Psalter, the extraordinary number of editions of it which were published, and its well-nigh universal use everywhere out of Scotland, there sprang up towards the close of the seventeenth century a desire for an improved version that might on its merits fairly be entitled to supersede the version then in use. In one or two quarters it would seem that objections were being made against the "singing psalms," and an amended version would no doubt be looked upon by those in authority as the chief means whereby such objections might be removed. Since the first publication of the Sternhold Psalter, several metrical versions had appeared, some of which were superior, both in poetical feeling and smoothness of rhyme, to the early version. The Psalter of Francis Rous had already (1650) been adopted by the Scottish Church, which had recognised in it an immense improvement over its predecessor; and although the English authorities were at first disposed to favour it—and indeed had it, along with other versions, under protracted consideration—nothing definite was done until 1696, when the version popularly known as "Tate and Brady" appeared, and was authorised for public use. It is of this version that we now purpose giving an account; and, as in the case of the Sternhold Psalter, it will be convenient to speak first of the authors by whose names it is familiarly designated.

Nahum Tate was born in Dublin in 1652, and received his education in the college of his native city. He appears to have adopted literature from the first, and having removed to London, he was made poet-laureate, in succession to Shadwell, who died in 1692. This post he could hardly have secured by merit—for he was at the best a feeble poet—and it is generally believed to have been procured for him through the interest of his friends. Tate wrote a good deal besides his Metrical Psalms. He was the author of several plays, which were occasionally acted; and among other things, "Panacea, a Poem on Tea." He had the temerity to attempt a continuation of Dryden's great satire, "Absalom and

Achitophel," for which he has been severely and justly censured. He is described by Jacob as "a man of learning, candour, and courteous to all," and he is said to have had "a good share of wit and a great deal of modesty, which prevented his making his fortune." His character was, however, unsatisfactory: he was not only improvident, but he was also intemperate; and when he died—on the 12th of August, 1715—it was in the privileged precincts of the Mint, where his creditors could not arrest him. The career of Tate makes, indeed, a sad page in the history of the Psalters—a page which, in all truth, cannot be turned over too soon.

Nicholas Brady, it is almost unnecessary to say, was, like his coadjutor, an Irishman. Born at Bandon in 1659, he studied at Westminster School, and afterwards at Oxford and Dublin. He was at first a prebend of Cork Cathedral; but being a zealous supporter of William III., he removed to London, and was appointed Chaplain to the King. Frequently in debt, he took to keeping a school at Richmond, where most of his Psalms were translated, and where he died on the 20th of May, 1726. Brady's literary reputation rests entirely on the part he had in the "new version"; a play, some volumes of sermons, and a translation of the "Æneid," which he published, are all among the most forgotten of books.

The history of the Tate and Brady Psalter is one which is easily told. We first hear of the work in 1695, when there was published "An Essay of a New Version of the Psalms of David, consisting of the first twenty; by N. Brady and N. Tate." This incomplete version was, no doubt, issued by its authors as a specimen, intended to prepare the way for the complete Psalter: there is no evidence to show that it was ever used in public. By the end of 1696 the Psalter had been finished, and it was now published under the following title:—

"A new Version of the Psalms of David, fitted to the Tunes used in Churches. By N. Tate and N. Brady. London: Printed by M. Clark, for the Company of Stationers, 1696."

The work bears a dedication in these terms:—"To His Most Excellent Majesty William III. of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc., this new version of the Psalms of David is most humbly dedicated by His Majesty's most obedient subjects and servants, N. Brady, N. Tate."

Attached to this and the subsequent editions was a copy of the Order-in-Council permitting the version to be used in "Churches and Chapels."

By a very long deed bearing the same date as this order, Tate and Brady entered into partnership with the Company of Stationers for printing the new Psalter, the copyright being divided into three allotments of eighty shares each, with option of purchase by any one or more of the shareholders. Very soon after this, however, the property vested entirely in the Stationers' Company.

The new Psalter failed at first to make any impression. The great body of the people seemed to be satisfied with the earlier version, and clung to the old familiar rhymes with a tenacity which would have befitted a better cause. In truth, however, this tardiness of the people in adopting the new version showed on their part no little discrimination. At best it could only be said of Tate and Brady that they were a little more refined than Sternhold and Hopkins. Their version was free from the rudeness of its predecessor; the general run of its verse was smoother and more correct; and it had also the merit of being fairly faithful in its renderings of the Psalmist's original. On the other hand, it had defects which the earlier version had not. It showed a frequent weakness and wordy inflation which the Sternhold Psalter seldom exhibits. As the author of "The Minstrel" says in his "Letter to Dr. Blair": "It often sinks into flatness and prose; and as often affects familiar phrases, antitheses, and other conceits that prevailed among the middling poets of its time." Archdeacon Hare writes that it "has been singularly successful in stripping the Psalms of their life and power"; and James Montgomery thinks it is at least as inanimate as the Sternhold version. In our own day there may be conflicting opinions as to the merits of the two Psalters; but at any rate, we think a fair judgment of the Tate and Brady version would be that, "though not excellent, it was not intolerable." It never quite succeeded in supplanting the earlier Psalter: the present century was nearly reached before it distanced its competitor; and not long after this both versions became "reminiscences of the past."

The respective parts taken by the authors of the "New Version" have not been ascertained, but a majority of the renderings are believed to have come from the pen of Brady. All the originals were subjected to considerable alteration at various times, by different hands;* and, in fact, one or two of the psalms were entirely re-versified by other authors. Perhaps no metrical version has been the subject of more criticism, more humorous quotation, or more anecdotes. Its defenders were long engaged in a polemical warfare on its behalf, and pamphlets on both sides of the question came from the press in no inconsiderable number.

For us the chief interest of the old Psalter lies in the portions which survive in our hymn-books. We would mention especially the rendering of Psalm xlii., one verse of which, wedded to the music of Spohr's lovely anthem, is likely to become immortal—

> "As pants the hart for cooling streams,
> When heated in the chase,
> So longs my soul, O God, for Thee,
> And Thy refreshing grace."

Other psalms which might be noted as having become popular hymns are—

Ps. lxvii.—

> "To bless Thy chosen race,
> In mercy, Lord, incline."

Ps. xxxiv.—

> "Through all the changing scenes of life,
> In trouble and in joy."

Ps. lxxxiv.—

> "O God of hosts, the mighty Lord,
> How lovely is the place."

* Dr. Hawtrey, the late Provost of Eton, used to say that he had heard in his youth that Dryden had revised the Tate and Brady Psalter, and that to him many of the graceful touches are due.

Ps. cxlviii.—

"Ye boundless realms of joy,
His praise your song employ."

Ps. li.—

"Have mercy, Lord, on me,
As Thou wert ever kind."

Mention should also be made of the excellent Christmas hymn (included, with others, in a supplement which was added to the Psalter in 1703)—

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground."

From these examples it will be seen that our heritage from the old Psalter is by no means an insignificant one; and although the version itself has been allowed to die, it is likely that the portions of it which we have specified will live as long as the language in which they are written. No metrical version has ever yet proved entirely satisfactory, but one has seldom existed in which something that is good could not be found; and there is in "Tate and Brady," as we have seen, not a little that deserves to be kept alive by every assembly of Christian worshippers.

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

"FATHER'S GIRLIE."

BY L. SHARP, AUTHOR OF "NAN'S STORY," ETC. ETC.

"FATHER dear, put away the picture now; I'se so tired."

"All right, girlie; you have been patience itself, and father will play with you soon. Just wait a minute till I get this shading in;" and the speaker surveyed his work critically as he spoke; then, throwing a white cloth over the easel, he lifted his disconsolate little daughter on to his knee.

"Now, girlie!" cheerfully, "what would you like to do best? Shall we run out for a nice brisk walk in the snow and get roses in our cheeks? Or would you rather stay indoors?"

Mabel considered gravely.

"Wouldn't it make us ever so much more hungry, father, to go out?" she asked wistfully.

"I suppose it would, you old-fashioned chick," replied Mr. Ingram half-laughingly, half-sadly. "But I think that it would clear my brains a little if we went; so here goes, girlie!" and he tossed from its peg the little straw hat which had done duty for many a month, tied on her woollen cape, and putting on his own hat and muffler, the pair sallied forth to the cold air without.

Mr. Ingram was a young man to be the father of a child of seven; indeed, he was not yet thirty, though the hollow cheeks and sunken eyes made him appear older. Unfortunately, he had never been brought up to do anything for himself, having always had plenty of money, and had married a pretty young girl when barely twenty, who had, however, died before her baby daughter had numbered many months. For the first three years of her life the little motherless Mabel had been reared in every luxury; then her grandfather, having speculated and lost every penny which he had possessed, died, leaving his son to face the utter ruin by himself. Harold Ingram was too proud to ask his only relative, Mr. Rodgers, for the help he so sorely needed, and resolved, with all the rashness of inexperience, to earn a livelihood for himself and child with his brush. It did not take long to settle matters with his creditors, and to begin his career as an artist; but it took a very long time indeed before his pictures found purchasers. The pretty, bright rooms to which he had at first removed had been left years ago; and now the poor young artist had to put up with very third-rate ones in a dreary London street. In the summer it was not quite so hard to live; but in the winter it was a sore struggle. As little Mabel quaintly said, "the cold made one ever so much more hungry."

"Is your brains cleared yet, father?" asked Mabel, with a patient little sigh, after they had walked some distance.

The child had begun to think that her father had forgotten her, he had been so strangely silent all the way, and his eyes had such a far-away look in them.

"Eh! what? my poor wee girlie!" exclaimed the young man remorsefully, catching sight of the blue, pinched face; "why, you are nearly frozen! Father actually forgot he had his little mouse with him. Never mind, pet! we'll run home now and try to get warmed there. I wish I could give you a warmer dress, my darling! the cold wind seems to go right through you."

"Like the little girl we saw in the Park?" with sparkling eyes. "Oh, father!" Then, as she heard a long-drawn sigh, "But it's not *very* cold, dear father; and perhaps," with a loving squeeze of his hand, "somebody will buy our picture soon. Would we have dinner every day, father, if it sells?"

"I'm afraid not, girlie," with assumed cheerfulness; "but we would manage to have one nice one, anyway. In the meantime we will go in and ask Mrs. Symonds to give us some hot water, and then we'll get tea ready, and father will tell his girlie the very nicest story he can think of afterwards."

Affairs were very low with Mr. Ingram this bright Christmas season. None of his paintings had sold lately, while the accounts at the baker's, grocer's, and landlady's, were gradually increasing. As a last resource, he had determined to paint his "girlie" as he called her, and to offer the picture for sale to his uncle Rodgers. His pride did not prevent him seeking his assistance thus, for the money would be

fairly earned by his own work. And the child made a lovely picture! Very fair, with large, dreamy blue eyes, shaded by the darkest lashes, and with long golden curls, she had a look of spiritual beauty rare in one of her age. Yet she was a bright, thoughtful,



"The two sat together in silence."—*p.* 459.

sweet little thing, and the very joy of her father's life. He would sit and watch her by the hour with the peculiar guardian tenderness in his eyes which one seldom sees except in the fathers of motherless children, or in the wistful gaze of childless women. And the love between the pair was very deep and touching.

Tea without milk or sugar, and half a slice of dry bread, is neither a very satisfying nor a very tempting meal; yet that was all the tea consisted of in the artist's shabby lodgings.

How the poor father longed to give his child better fare! But with no money coming in, and the terrible clog of the unpaid debts, he did not dare to attempt it. Even the wretched fire which flickered feebly in the grate could not make the place look cheerful; while the hoar-frost and bitter wind without seemed to creep through the window and envelop the room with a dreary chilliness.

"And your mother looked so pretty, girlie, as I led her into the dining-room," Mr. Ingram continued, washing his brushes carefully for the morrow's work. "that I said to myself, 'When I grow to be a man

I'll have that pretty Nellie for my wife.' And somehow I felt so delighted with the idea, that I could hardly eat any of the beautiful supper."

"Was it very, very beautiful, father?" put in Mabel, gazing earnestly in his face, a slight quiver in her voice passing unnoticed. For had he not told the same story in exactly the same words and with the same interruptions from the small listener for more than two years? And was it not her prime favourite?

"Yes, girlie, the most beautiful supper," he went on seriously, still arranging his easel and paints; "trifles, and jellies, and lovely pink and yellow shapes, and custards, and tarts, and cakes, and—hullo! little woman, what's the matter?"

For a pitiful childish cry had broken from the parted lips, though it died away quickly in a tearless sob, as Mabel threw her arms round her father's neck and buried her head in his shoulder. The weariness, cold, and hunger of the present, compared to that golden past, had suddenly been too much for the overwrought heart!

"My precious child," whispered Ingram, kissing with an infinite tenderness the little wan face, and raising her to his knee, "trust father, and some day, please God, he will give his girlie as good a feast as that. Poor little starved one! no wonder it was too much for you to think of," with a bitter sigh; "I should not have told you that story to-night."

"Oh, yes, dear father, I like that one best," answered Mabel, kissing him eagerly, already full of repentance for vexing him, "it was only—only—that it all seemed so nice, and," with a half-sob, "I am so cold and hungry."

"God help me, girlie!" groaned her father, pressing her wildly to his breast; "it is bad enough to be starved one's self, but to see our darlings drooping away before our eyes is more than flesh and blood can stand. Hush thee now, my little one, and try to sleep." When the weary eyelids had closed, and the light burden had been laid in its little crib, Mr. Ingram restlessly paced the floor. His mouth was firmly set, his long, thin hands were clenched, his dark eyes were full of misery and pain.

"For your sake, my precious girlie, I will do it. I will give you up," he muttered slowly. "The young soon forget, they say—God help us!—and you will be happier there."

Christmas day dawned bright and clear, and the bells were pealing merrily as Mr. Ingram left his lodgings. He looked back once to wave his hand to the wistful face at the window, then walked rapidly in the direction of Hampstead.

"Mr. Rodgers in?"

"Yes, sir; step in, please," replied the butler, with a suspicious look at the shabby clothes and haggard face. "What name, sir?"

"Tell Mr. Rodgers that Mr. Harold Ingram would like to see him for a few minutes on business."

It seemed a long time to Ingram before he was admitted to his uncle's presence, though in reality but a moment or so had passed.

"Well, sir," grunted Mr. Rodgers, eyeing the young man suspiciously as the butler withdrew, "found out at last that the painting line won't pay, and come to beg me to pay your debts and set you up in business, I suppose?"

"I think you know me better, Uncle Robert, than to believe that I would stoop so low," replied the young man coldly, an angry light in his eyes; "I have come to ask you to buy honest work at a fair price, and then I shall trouble you no more."

He undid the picture he had brought as he spoke, and disclosed to Mr. Rodgers the loveliest child's face that he had ever seen.

"Hum!" he exclaimed gruffly, though with a softened glance; "might be worse! It would please the wife. What do you ask for it, eh?" grimly.

"A home and love for the original," was the unexpected answer. "If you will take her at once," feverishly, "this very day, Uncle Robert, and promise to bring her up for a few years as you would a child of your own, I shall give you my treasure with a thankful heart."

"Heyday, young man!" said Mr. Rodgers coolly, "that is not a matter to be settled in a minute. I must think it over first."

"And in the meantime the child will die," interrupted his nephew, in a dry, hard, metallic voice. "She had only a scrap of bread last night—will you allow her to starve," passionately, "when you are rolling in wealth?"

"Tuts, tuts, man!" cried Mr. Rodgers crossly, wincing inwardly at the revelation of such poverty; "we will come for the bairn this afternoon; the wife will be glad enough to hear the patter of little feet about. But remember, you're not to come near her; we must have the child to ourselves, or we will never be able to wean her love from you."

Perhaps Mr. Rodgers did not mean to be cruel: indeed, in his own way, he was a kindly enough man, but of a selfish, exacting nature; yet his words caused every drop of blood to leave his nephew's face. He stared incredulously when the latter gave a discordant laugh, and muttered—

"To wean her love from me!" Then, with a heavy groan, "Yet better that than to see her die."

"Look here, Harold Ingram," said the old man, bringing his hand down on the table with a thud, "give me your word of honour that you'll not come near the child for a year—say till next Christmas Day—and then, if we find that she don't take to us, nor we to her, we'll send her back to you. Do you agree to this?"

"I have no choice in the matter," bitterly; "we shall be ready for you in the afternoon." And without another word Harold dashed out of the room and house, thankful to feel himself once more in the open air before he had lost control of his temper.

"Oh, father! did they buy our picture?" cried Mabel, in great excitement, when her father walked into the room with his hands full of parcels, and Mrs. Symonds followed with some milk.

"Yes, darling," very quietly. "And now let father see his girlie take a good meal," displaying to her delighted eyes a variety of cakes.

Then when she had quite done, he pushed away his plate, and lifted her tenderly in his arms.

"Would my little girlie like to go and live in a

beautiful house, with a pretty garden full of flowers, and have plenty of nice things to eat every day?" he asked gently.

Eyeing him gravely, for something in his expression troubled her, the child deliberated a moment, then answered—

"I would like it very much, but not one bit if you weren't with me too, father dear." Adding, with a loving glance, "I would rather stay here with you till the picture sells."

"But, darling," lowering his voice to hide the trembling in it, "if father wished his little girlie to go away for a few months, I am sure she would try to be a good girl and be happy in the new home."

The child's face whitened, and the eyes dilated with fear.

"What is 'a few months,' father?" she whispered, nestling closer to him.

"A great many days, my pet," wearily. Then, feeling the little breast begin to heave, he continued very gently—"Our Uncle Robert and Aunt Anna are coming to-day to take my little Mabel to their pretty home, while father works at his pictures here in order to make money for his darling; and next Christmas Day he will come for her—if he can."

Poor little Mabel was too bewildered at first to understand.

"Do you want to send me away from you, father?" she asked incredulously, in mournful tones.

"*Want* to, my darling?" catching her to his breast and kissing her wildly. "I should think not! I shall be wanting you here instead every minute of the day."

"Then girlie won't go away," replied the little maiden decidedly.

But Mr. Ingram told her sadly that it was necessary for them to part. And after that the two sat together in utter silence, until the sharp knock at the door made the young man rise hastily and put her down.

"My dearest child, I hope you will soon learn to be happy with us," exclaimed the lady who had entered the room with the old gentleman, going straight up to Mabel, after a quiet greeting of her unknown nephew. "What is your name, my dear?"

Mabel shrank behind Mr. Ingram, trembling violently.

"I'm father's girlie," she replied, with a defiant jerk of her golden head.

"Tuts, child! you're to be *our* girlie now," ejaculated Mr. Rodgers, glancing at her complacently. "She don't do you much credit in the way of flesh, Harold; but we'll soon alter that, I hope, when we get her to Hampstead."

"Father!" cried the child piteously, clinging wildly to his side, "I don't want to go; oh, father!"

Laying his hand with a caressing touch upon the curly hair, the young man answered, his tones full of suppressed emotion—

"I have sought to do well by my little girlie, but," with a proud, though disparaging glance at the barren aspect of the room, "I have failed miserably. God knows how I tried." Then looking straight at Mrs. Rodgers, whose kind face spoke well for the child's future, he continued with a faltering voice, "She is a very tender plant, Aunt Anna; you will take every care of her?"

"Certainly; she is a lovely child. You will come with us now, won't you, darling?" holding out her hand kindly.

"If father says so," was the mournful answer.

But the little girl grew very white, and a shiver ran through her like a bolt of ice.

Mr. Ingram lifted her in his arms without another word, and carried her to the carriage which was waiting below; but all the way down-stairs she kept murmuring in his ear, "Girlie will come back again, father dear!"

Poor little mite! she felt he needed consolation as much as she did herself; and till the very last sight of the tall, thin figure she kept a brave smile upon her quivering lips.

The desolation of the young artist, when the carriage had departed and the lonely night dragged on, was complete. How he missed the soft touch of the pure mouth, the nestling of the little head against his breast, the sound of the loving voice! Fortunately, Mr. Rodgers' bark had been worse than his bite; for though he hated and despised artists as a class, he had exerted himself among his friends and had obtained several commissions for his nephew, and hard work was the one thing that the latter craved for then.

In the meantime Mabel was becoming accustomed to the routine of her new and luxurious life. At first every bit of food which she swallowed brought the tears to her eyes and destroyed her appetite; for she could not bear to eat the nice things unshared by her father. And, indeed, Mrs. Rodgers began to be frightened, fearing that the child would make herself ill. She had expected trouble with her, but had had no idea that she would fret so much or pine so dreadfully for her father.

"Is there anything you would like me to get for you, dear?" the old lady asked her little grand-niece one morning.

"No, thank you, Aunt Anna," replied the child, listlessly.

"Would you not like me to ask the little girl next door to come in and play with you?"

The lips quivered slightly.

"I like playing best with father, please."

"Oh, yes, my dear, but you must try and forget father; you are *my* little girl now—mine and Uncle Robert's."

Mabel's cheeks wore a hectic spot as she answered quickly, "I've got to be a good girl, and stay here and love you, father said, but," with a choking sob, "I'm only father's girlie; and oh! I want my dear, dear father! I want to go to father!"

And the four months of weary waiting found a vent in an agony of tears, while the little frame shook with its passionate sobs. Then, to pacify her, Mrs. Rodgers promised that if she would only be a good girl, in a very few months—on Christmas Day—she would take her to see her father.

And from that moment the child began to improve. The little limbs grew plump, and the pale cheeks were flushed with a healthy tinge. Only neither Mr. nor

Mrs. Rodgers, who imagined she had begun to forget her former home, ever heard the low sigh that accompanied the words with which she fell asleep each night—"One more day near Christmas;" or the ceaseless question to the good-natured nursemaid, "Is it still *very* long till Christmas, nurse?"

With the innocent faith of childhood, Mabel never doubted but that her aunt would keep her promise, until the day before Christmas, when she chanced to hear her say to Mr. Rodgers—

"Really, Robert, it seems a pity that the child should be upset again by the sight of her father; don't you think we might take her to the country to-morrow, and she would soon forget the disappointment, and learn to make this her real home? What do you say?"

"A capital plan," returned Mr. Rodgers heartily, rubbing his hands together; "the little puss makes sunshine in the house; we must not let her run away from us. But I say, Anna, there's some stuff in the young fellow after all; he's beginning to make his way in the world, I can tell you."

And on they talked, never hearing the convulsive beating of a little heart outside the door, or seeing the white trembling of the small face that was pressing against it.

"Take her away to the country! Never see her father again!" echoed in the child's ear with awful tones. One moment of indecision, and then the little figure had glided quietly away, opened the hall-door with shaking fingers, and darted far, far down the Hampstead Road before her absence was discovered.

A queer, quaint little object she looked that December day, and many a one turned round to look after her with a smile, as she ran on and on without stopping. If the air was cold, the sun was shining brightly, and the frosty roads were very pleasant to walk upon. The golden hair waving about the flushed and eager face, the red dress with its dainty fittings and little shoes, were a pretty sight when she paused, out of breath, to look around her.

"Lost your way, my child?" said a kind voice beside her, taking pity on the bewildered, anxious face; "perhaps I can put you right. Where do you live, eh?"

"I want to go to father, please," said the little girl, looking up at the gentleman eagerly, and placing her hand in his; "but I don't know the way," sorrowfully. Then with a winning smile and a shy glance, "Please, would *you* take me to father?"

The gentleman smiled.

"I don't know but I might, little one," he said kindly. "I've nothing much to do. But what's your father's name, and how does he let his little girl run out on the streets on such a cold day without her hat and cloak, eh?"

"Father doesn't know," quickly, anxious to shield the beloved name from any blame, "and—and he's Mr. Harold Ingram," with a proud intonation on the last two words.

"What! Harold Ingram the artist?" repeated the gentleman in astonishment. "Why, I bought a picture of his the other day. You poor little mite," hailing a passing hansom, "you are miles and miles from your home. However did you manage to get here? Ingram the artist's child! Well, I never!" lifting her into the vehicle.

Mabel was not the least afraid. She sat holding the stranger's hand, her cheeks flushed with excitement, her heart beating like to break with its fierce little throbs. She was going to her father at last!

And the stranger watched the lovely child, wondering what it all meant.

He was soon to understand.

When the hansom drove up to the well-known door, Mabel could hardly contain herself. When the landlady answered the bell, the child slipped quickly past her, and turned the handle of the artist's room.

"Father!" she cried breathlessly, all the love and longing of the past months sounding in the tremulous word. And then, as Mr. Ingram sprang to his feet with an exclamation of astonished delight, she held out her little hands, and whispered faintly, "Girlie has come back again;" then fell into the dear arms in a state of utter exhaustion.

"My darling! my precious girlie!" exclaimed Mr. Ingram, pressing her closely to him, and showering kisses on her lips. And then perceiving the stranger, whose face seemed familiar to him, he bowed courteously as he said, "Am I indebted to you, sir, for bringing me my little one?"

"Faith," said the stranger, laughingly, "'t was she brought me, I think!" explaining his meeting with her at Hampstead, adding, "I had the pleasure of purchasing a gem of yours the other day, Mr. Ingram, and so I knew where you lived and could direct the child aright."

The next moment he had raised his hat politely and had walked off, leaving the reunited pair alone.

Mr. Ingram could not find it in his heart to scold Mabel for her flight, he was so rejoiced to hold her in his arms again; only he resolved that nothing, unless God willed otherwise, would ever part them again.

Poor Mrs. Rodgers was nearly frantic with fright when she discovered the child's absence, and had searched all Hampstead before the thought of trying Harold's rooms occurred to her, though she could not believe that she could have found her way there.

When the old couple arrived, the little girl was sound asleep, and only woke up as they were taking their departure.

"We'll let bygones *be* bygones, Harold, my boy," Mr. Rodgers was saying heartily, referring to the old family feud; "and now that you're getting on so well, perhaps you won't be too proud to come and make your home with us."

When the childish treble broke in passionately—

"I'm father's girlie, Uncle Robert; and I'm never, never, never going to leave him again."

"But we cannot do without you, little rogue," replied the old man; "so if you won't leave father, you must bring him with you instead."

Mabel opened her eyes widely, and stared gravely at the three smiling faces. Then her cheeks dimpled happily as she said half-merrily, half-sorrowfully, as if she did not want to relinquish her pet name—

"I'll be everybody's girlie, then!"

MEMORABLE LETTERS AND THEIR WRITERS.—II.

BY THE REV. ROBERT SHINDLER, AUTHOR OF "HYMNS WITH A HISTORY," ETC.



ROBERT HALDANE AND THE STUDENTS.

THE years 1816 and 1817 were blessed years for the city of Geneva. The great Continental War was over; Napoleon I. was a prisoner, and the world was at peace. The city of John Calvin had passed through many changes and conflicts, but, sad to say, the faith of the great Reformer of France was no longer tolerated by the theological faculty of Geneva, nor taught in its churches. The fine gold had become dim; the glory had departed. The true faith of the Gospel of Christ was almost unknown, and Rationalism was everywhere prevalent. Jean Jacques Rousseau, the Sophist, whose statue the Genevans have placed by the side of the bridge which spans the Rhone, in one of his "Letters from the Mountains," writes thus:—"Oh! Genevans, these gentlemen, your ministers, in truth are a singular people! They do not know what they believe, or what they do not believe. They do not even know what they would wish to appear to believe. Their only manner of establishing their faith is to attack the faith of others."

Voltaire resided for two years at Ferney, only a pleasant walk from the gates; and Gibbon fixed his residence at Lausanne, twenty miles up the lake. Neither the theology nor the morals of the Consistory were improved by their influence.

While these mists and this darkness brooded over the city Robert Haldane, was led by a singular providence to revisit Geneva, after having passed through Switzerland. Space will not allow of our even giving the briefest outline of the circumstances which led to this issue, but we can truly say, "It was the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes."

Mr. Haldane was led to commence a series of expositions of the Epistle to the Romans, which resulted in the conversion of quite a number of the theological students, besides many others of both sexes and of different ranks. In a letter to the Rev. Edward Bickersteth, whose name is still fragrant with many Evangelical Christians, Mr. Haldane relates some particulars of a work which was as remarkable as it was unexpected, and as thorough as it was abiding:—"The two students with whom I first commenced brought six others in the same state of mind as themselves, with whom I had many and long conversations. Their visits became so frequent, and at such different hours, that I proposed they should all come together, and it was arranged that they should do so three times a week, from six to eight o'clock in the evening. This gave me time to converse with others, who, from the report of the students, began to visit me, as well as leisure to prepare what might be profitable for their instruction. I took the Epistle to the Romans as my subject, and this portion of Scripture I continued to expound to them during the winter, and to dilate on the great doctrines which it unfolds.

"After having proceeded in this manner about a fortnight with these eight students, I was earnestly solicited, in the name of the other students, to begin anew, in which case, I was assured, the rest of them would attend. I accordingly complied with this request, and during the whole of the winter of 1816—17, and until the termination of their studies in the following summer, almost all the students in theology

regularly attended. And God was pleased to accompany His own Word with power. In addition to the general knowledge which all of them acquired, a goodly number soon appeared to be turned to the Lord. Some of them have now finished their course with joy, and, like MM. Rieu, Gonthier, and Henri Pyt, have left behind them the blessed assurance that they are now in the presence of God and the Lamb; while others have, in like manner, evinced the reality of the work of grace by the steadfastness of their faith and the abundance of their ministrations."

Among the converts was a young man who had been chosen by the students as their president, when, in the middle of November, 1816, they drew up a protest against a pamphlet by Henri Empeytaz, on the "Divinity of Jesus Christ." They described the pamphlet, which was on the side of orthodoxy, as "calumnious," and its being addressed to them as an "odious aggression." That young man has become known to the world as the historian of the Reformation, "Dr. Merle D'Aubigné." This sound and faithful historian, when attending the meetings of the Evangelical Alliance in London, in 1851, bore his personal testimony to the blessing he had received from Mr. Haldane's teaching. One speaker was recommending the Foreign Aid Society, on the ground that it employed only French and Swiss preachers, and did not send out Englishmen. Dr. D'Aubigné rose at once, and said he for one could not accept that as a recommendation, "for had it not been for the grace of God in ordering the mission of the venerable Robert Haldane, from Scotland, I myself, so far as man can see, would not have been here to-day."



"She was in a very anxious frame of mind."

Among those who, though awakened before, had received further enlightenmen and establishment under Mr. Haldane, were Professor Gaussen and Dr. Cæsar Malan. Space alone forbids further reference to the former, but of the latter we must say a word.

Dr. Malan met casually with Mr. Haldane at an hotel, in the autumn of 1816. In the spring of 1817 he was constantly with him. To him he owed his first lucid and definite apprehension of salvation by grace alone. "I was in the faith," he says, "though I had not the assurance of salvation. That blessing I experienced while Mr. Haldane, whom I love as a father, instructed me in the way of God more perfectly."

In a letter to J. Campbell, of Scotland, Dr. Malan wrote in 1824:—"It pleased the Lord, about this period, to enlighten and convert my soul, and to dispose me to listen to the pious instruction of an Apoilos from your country, who taught me from the Scriptures *the value of the Pearl of great price, of the treasure hid in the field.* I was made rich, and from that blessed hour I viewed the world and heaven, time and eternity, man and his God, under quite a different aspect. A total reformation seemed to have taken place in my moral and intellectual being. The Bible taught me that the duration of this world bears no proportion to eternity; and that man only appeared to me to be in truth alive whose *life is hid with Christ in God.* Out of Christ everything seemed to me to be dead."

In 1822 Dr. Malan was visiting Great Britain, and on the 9th of May of that year was introduced to him a young lady, then in her thirty-fourth year. She was the daughter of Charles Elliot, Esq., of Clapham and Brighton, and the granddaughter, by her mother's side, of the Rev. Henry Venn, of Huddersfield and Yelling. She was an accomplished lady, with a good deal of force of character. At the time of her first interview with Dr. Malan, at her father's house at Clapham, she was in a very anxious state of mind. She was deeply convinced of sin, and of the evil of her own heart, but she had not fully realised the fulness and freeness of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. As a consequence, she was frequently greatly distressed under the painful uncertainty whether it were possible that such a one as she felt herself to be could be saved.

"Dr. Malan, as a skilful physician," says her sister, in a short sketch of her life, "had carefully probed the wound, and led her to the true remedy for all her anxiety, namely, simple faith in God's own Word, directing her attention to such passages as the following:—'Ho, every one that thirsteth,' etc. (Isa. lv. 1); 'God so loved the world,' etc. (St. John iii. 16); 'He that hath the Son hath life' (1 John v. 12). Whilst he thus showed her the fulness and freeness of this blessed Gospel, he also, with his own peculiar earnestness and tenderness, impressed upon her the guilt of 'making God a liar, by refusing to believe the record that He hath given of His Son.'"

By God's blessing her burden was lifted, and

henceforth her spiritual horizon became for the most part cloudless. Thus she was prepared to write the world-known hymn :—

"Just as I am, without one plea," etc.

The letter she wrote to her brother Henry, in January, 1865, on his last birthday, is certainly worthy a place among "Memorable Letters."

"MY DARLING BROTHER,—I send *three* little mites for your *three* charitable funds, 'with a willing mind' and a grateful heart; and may the privilege be granted to me of helping you in some little measure, by my poor but heartfelt prayers, in all the arduous works entrusted to you by your heavenly Master, and in which, indeed, you have 'long laboured, and have not fainted.' Oh, how full has my heart been of deep and loving thoughts of you, my brother, on this day; and how sweet and precious to me has the privilege been of pouring out all these thoughts to Him, whose you are, for Whom you labour, and Who says to you, 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' You feed *His* sheep, Henry, you feed *His* lambs, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, what an abundant recompense will He bestow!"

"THE DEAR OLD FACE."

I SAW him in a dream again last night—
The dear old face, the patient, rayless eyes,
The well-known figure sitting in the light
In the old chair—and it was no surprise!

Nay, but my soul went out in one great cry
Of wild rejoicing, to behold him there,
And at his feet I knelt convulsively,
Fondled his hands, and stroked his soft grey hair:

"Father, dear father! is it really you,
Speak! ease the doubt that at my heart doth ache—
Say that this hour is merciful and true,
And the stern past a weary, long mistake!"

One moment—just one moment—did it seem
He smiled upon me—then my hope was o'er!
But oh, thank God if only in a dream
I have beheld my life's best friend once more!

J. H. D.

"THE DISTINGUISHED CONTRACT LABOURER."

AN INTERVIEW OF OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER WITH THE REV. WALPOLE WARREN, M.A., OF NEW YORK.

"DISTINGUISHED Contract Labourer," that is what they call me here," said the Rev. Walpole Warren. "I am dubbed D.C.L. unexpectedly. You see, it is a new degree. The New York merchant, the Texan ranchman, the Mexican cowboy, and the Californian labourer all know me as the 'Distinguished Contract Labourer.' Quite lately at a banquet I responded to the toast of 'The D.C.L.' Everything I say the papers quote as the language of the D.C.L. It is the law of the United States that if anyone should import skilled labour he shall pay a fine of a thousand dollars. A wealthy Scotchman brought out one of his own countrymen to do certain work, and the law was put in operation against him. His disgust was great. Scotchmen to be so treated! Hence, when I came out as the minister of the Church of the Holy Trinity, he said that my labour was skilled, that I was imported, and that the fine ought to be levied. He instituted the action to show the absurdity of the law. The action has nothing to do with ecclesiastical relationship, although Mr. Kennedy is a Presbyterian and I am an Episcopalian. He intends, when the case is given against me, to pay the fine, I believe. He will, however, probably compel the Congress to change or abolish the law, and that speedily. He calls me a "labourer;" but it is all friendly, all friendly."

"But you are, and rejoice, I suppose, to be a fellow-labourer with all the good."

"Certainly. I have just been holding, as a fellow-labourer, a mission, and I may say that the notoriety I have acquired by the action instituted against me has been of service even to the mission. More people came to see me as the D.C.L. than I should otherwise have had."

At this Mr. Warren produced a copy of a most flattering resolution, thanking him for the good done by his mission. He pointed out that one of the signatures was that of a son of the far-famed General Lee.

"The papers, too, are eager to secure any sermon of mine on any special subject. Why, only to-day the *Tribune* sent down for my next Sunday's sermon



MR. WARREN'S 'SERMONISING DEN.'

in advance. Amusing! Of course they could not have it, as I never write a sermon."

"You like New York?"

"Yes; I am glad I came. The church was in a very low condition. I had held a mission in the church, and the trustees asked me to be rector."

"Had the communicants or the congregation any voice in the matter?"

"They did not vote, but the trustees knew their wish. My salary is a first charge on this building, and as it is said to have cost nearly half a million of dollars you can see I am well secured, even if I had not good congregations. A minister cannot be dismissed except for immorality. My congregation is most generous. They give me ten thousand dollars a year (about £2,000), and they would give me another ten thousand if I wished it, or if they thought I required it. In addition, I have this house, worth about five hundred pounds a year. The furniture was all put into it, and is a personal gift to myself. Look at the splendour of the gift! Then they give me seven hundred dollars a year to spend on my holiday. They *are* generous!"

"The report of such generosity will make many in England look with longing eyes over the Atlantic."

"Yes, the Americans are a very generous people. Why, at Christmas-tide and Easter the gifts are simply overwhelming. One has to remember, however, that they expect you to be such a man as they can be proud of; then they treat you right royally."

"I suppose they like to boast of a minister as being able to draw the biggest crowd in New York."

"Perhaps so. The character of the work in New York is much more cosmopolitan than in England; I have hearers from all parts. Moreover, I think the work is more spiritual when once you get down to the foundation and get people to believe in you. Moreover, there is more freedom here."

"In what sense?"

"We mingle more freely with men of other denominations. If all could come to America and talk over difficulties on a free platform we might end them; there is so much restriction in England. You know very well that Church of England clergymen cannot easily go on the platform of other denominations, but here it is the common thing. There is so much red-tape at home in England, so much thought of *prestige*, so much stiffness in the backbone."

"Divisions and inconsistencies are a great hindrance to the spread of religion. One wonders how religion survives the divisions and misrepresentations of the spirit and work of Christ."

"Yes," said Mr. Warren, "and many of the things that keep us apart are not, as they say in the South, 'worth two shucks,' or, as they say in the North, 'worth a row of pins.' But come and look at my offices."

The offices referred to are rooms in different parts of the church, set apart to various purposes. There is one for the curates, another for the private secretary, another for the rector to transact the business of the congregation, and to see those who wish to see him. In the latter is a table with six electrical knobs thereon; so that, without stirring from his chair, he can communicate with as many different people in



THE REV. WALPOLE WARREN, M.A.
(From a Photograph by Rockwood, N.Y.)

of the congregation was not drowned by the thunder of the diapason, but vigorously sustained by its principal.

In crossing the Atlantic, by chance I met on board the *Umbria* the veritable Mr. Kennedy who had instituted the legal action against Mr. Warren. He informed me that it was as President of the St. Andrew's Society he had entered into the struggle. The St. Andrew's Society is a Scotch society for the aid of emigrants from the "land o' cakes." A Mr. Cummings had been engaged in Scotland to be head-gardener on an estate in Kentucky, and after two weeks had been sent back again under the constraint of the law because he had made before arriving a contract of service. He took his wife and children with him. When he reached Scotland again his contract was, of course, at an end. He then, being free from his contract, took ship, and returned to America. Of course he was allowed to land, and then entered into the contract with his original employer. Thus was defeated what was, in his case, a stupid law. The law was only made in the interests of the Knights of Labour and other trades unions, and was rushed through Congress during the latter part of President Arthur's *régime*, and confirmed by President Cleveland. The aim was to secure the labour vote. When a strike is on, the law is intended to prevent the introduction of various parts of the building. The room of which Mr. Warren seemed to be most proud is the "sermonising den." He led the way up the stairs of the front gallery, and then up smaller stairs to a room in the tower, where one would little expect to find it. Here, secure from interruption, he can go on with preparation for public work. "Not twenty people save myself have probably been in the room; it is my sanctum."

"Here, before the Baltimore stove, and with books and every appliance for a minister's convenience, a man ought to produce good addresses."

"Yes, and I hope I do. We have about 800 communicants, and at Easter the church must have had 2,000 in it. My greatest joy is the spiritual results effected among prominent business men. Men from Wall Street have said that through hearing me they have altered the whole arrangement of their lives."

The church seats 1,800; on any extra occasion 500 more can be packed in. It is square outside, but in the form of a horseshoe within. The pulpit is of wood below and brass above. The open work in brass allows the figure of the speaker to be plainly visible. The pews are arranged in circular form, so that every face is turned towards the pulpit.

The whole place is carpeted with bright red, and the cushions of the pews are in a tint harmonious. The organ is a most elaborate and powerful instrument; the action is by electricity, but the blowing by hand. I was taken down to see the gas engine, busy in storing up the electricity. The tones of that organ were as soft at times, and as sweet, as any to which I have ever listened. Very tastefully was it played during service. The singing



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, NEW YORK.

foreign labour that might enable an employer to fulfil a contract in spite of strikers. *Puck*—the *Punch* of America—has well satirised the absurdity of the law, in a cartoon. It represents as emerging from the gangway of a trans-Atlantic steamer a number of respectable travellers, clergymen, artisans, and those who would make good citizens, but all prevented from landing by a policeman flourishing a cane. On the shore, landed from the same steamer, are represented a troop of Germans, pedlars, Italian organ-men, Irish dynamitards, and less valuable refuse from Europe's over-peopled countries. Said Mr. Kennedy: "That hits off the position exactly; that pictures the absurdity of the law."

Shortly after our landing in England we learned that the decision of the judge had been given against Mr. Warren, so the thousand dollars import duty would have to be paid on him. He has become an excisable product! What the effect will be on the law-makers has yet to be ascertained.

EASTER HYMN.

THERE was a grave in a garden once,
Wherein no man had lain,
Thither they carried the Lord of Life,
Dead from His cross of pain.
They set a guard; and sealed the stone;
And left Him there to sleep alone.

The Sabbath passed, and the morning broke
Over the eastern hill.
The Temple front flashed glittering rays;
The city was sleeping still;
The guard had fled; the Mighty Dead
Had risen from His rocky bed.

O! Lord of Life, Who for us didst die,
For us, art risen again!
Grant that our love for Thee may rise
To the measure of Thy pain;
Till all our hope and longing be,
To die to sin, and live to Thee!

NELLIE WILSON.

THE NEW WEDDING-RING.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.



I BELIEVE not only in the life of people, but of things—trees, stones, straws, anything you like; I believe they all have a life of their own. And if only we had ears wherewith to hear their histories, we might give all the story writers holiday for a good long time; for we should hear much more wonderful things than they could tell us. I can imagine how some of them would make our philosophers stare; I can imagine some of our writers going to them and asking them for a plot. Even the parson they would be capable of helping with his sermon; and as to articles in magazines, they would, after men's ears had been opened, have them all to themselves.

Sometimes I fancy I hear things talking. At times with speech that is joyous, at times with that which is sad; like the green leaves on the trees, rustling in the summer breeze; like the withered leaves upon the ground, with harsh and rasping sound, whirling, swirling in the wind, as though rest they could not find; running in a prizeless race, hunting in a phantom chase; eddying in circles round and round, upon the hard and frozen ground; and as they speed upon their way, "O, man," I hear them sadly say, "behold in us thy little day."

But I don't hold with people's always being sad; if people and things have some sad testimonies to give, they have some bright ones too—indeed, life might be said to be not all "mixed pickles," where every variety is one of sourness; nor all "Scotch mixture," where every variety is one of sweetness; but some pickles, and some sweets, be they more or less of each.

This appears to have been the experience of a certain thing with which I once, I might almost say became acquainted, at a "Hydro" whither I had gone in search of health. That thing was a wedding-ring—a thick, bright, spick-and-span new wedding-ring, in the very first bloom and blush and shine of very early wedded life, for it had not escaped from the shop window, and been to church, and come out into the world on its own account more than one

calendar month, when what I am now going to tell you happened.

I must tell you I had been dreadfully ill, and had just paid a chemist's bill of £14 7s. 6d., and what that means I leave you to guess. I can only tell you that I was dreadfully weak after it, and I used sometimes to think that I might have been a little stronger if I had swallowed only the odd seven-and-six. My advice to you in these matters, good reader, is to keep as near the odd coin as you can. Well, I went off to a "Hydro" for the restoration of my health, and there I heard what I am going to tell you now. I heard a wedding-ring talking—no, a couple of wedding-rings—one, an old battered stager, looking dull and discoloured, as though it had had hard times of it—as, indeed, between ourselves, I believe many a wedding-ring has had; and the other, a brand new wedding-ring, very bright and very smooth as regards outward appearance—a very prophet of brightness for all time; but as regards its moral character, if I might speak of such, somewhat "cocky," or "bumptious," and "self-sufficient"—self-sufficient, because ignorant, as is always the case.

The "Hydro" folk had douched me, and rubbed me, and scrubbed me so effectually this summer morn, that I was glad when breakfast was over to go and take a quiet seat in the grounds; and there to feel boozy—not with strong drink, but from the aforementioned rub and scrub. I may have gone off, or I may not—I am sure I cannot exactly tell; I only know that I presently became conscious of having a lady at each side of me. One was young, I should say about twenty; the other—shall I count her by summers, or by winters; by autumns, or by springs; by the longest days, or by the shortest days; by Michaelmas or Easter Day, or by Lord Mayors' days—as they used to be long ago? I am afraid I may not give satisfaction, whichever standpoint of time I take. Take the almanack, dear lady, and settle it for yourself.

I suppose I looked old enough to be trusted in a general kind of way; perhaps, too, my hat being a little over my eyes was a kind of testimony that I was on no ill intent, for the lady in question, after four or five tentative turns in front of my seat—each one shorter than the preceding—finally sat down beside me. I think the little ivory rule which I generally carry in my pocket—marked to the sixteenth of an inch—would have said she was one foot one inch away from me. She sat there very quietly and demurely; anything else would, as you will see, have been quite foreign to all her habits and thoughts. Her lungs were evidently sound, for all the time she sat there she never once coughed; and her throat was also in good health, for she never once needed to clear it and say "Ahem!"

My silent, quiet neighbour had not been there long, when down the walk came a charming young *girl* (nay, she had been three weeks married; so I must say young *lady*), full twenty years of age. She was a *blonde*, and nature appeared to have taken a deal of trouble over her, showing its highest art in hiding its art, as in its greatest triumph is its wont. Rose Wavenley had grown to be a woman; but there was something or other about her which made one think that Nature had been loth to part with her as a child.

I suppose she thought the remaining seat a safe resting-place, for down she sat at my other side; and so I was sandwiched, as it were, and had to tarry where I was; for to get up and go away would have been manifestly rude.

Possibly, the two ladies might have engaged in conversation if I had not been between them; but as they could not talk across me, and rouse me up, they sat silent.

Presently, the *younger* lady (Miss Popplethwaite would have said, "That was a nice way of putting it, for if one were young*er*, the other was, at any rate, implied to be '*young*'")—the younger lady laid down the bunch of ferns she had gathered, and took off her glove. It was the left hand glove she took off, and I could see she had on the orthodox finger a bright new wedding-ring. It shone as if it had just come from the jeweller's shop; and, in truth, it had not been long out. It was a white tapered finger, with a filbert nail, that that ring shone upon; and if I had been a wedding-ring, and on that finger, I should have shone my very best.

Now, Miss Popplethwaite having, no doubt, taken such stock of me as she could, and having exhausted me as nothing very particularly interesting, passed her attentions to my left-hand neighbour, and, of course, to the ring upon her lap. She could see her quite well, for in my half-somnolent condition I was naturally sitting back. The sight of that ring had evidently a disturbing influence on Miss Popplethwaite. She became uneasy; she fidgeted; she made A B C with her parasol in the gravel at her feet; she rubbed out C with her foot and made a D, thus spoiling the alphabet without any reasonable cause. Miss Popplethwaite tossed her head a little—a very little—but she did toss it; and she jerked her elbows right and left—very little too—but she did it. Finally, she relapsed into thoughtfulness. She looked as though she had suddenly taken to playing chess, then having apparently made up her mind as to the right thing to be done, she whipped off her left-hand glove, and mated the bride's wedding-ring by throwing down the orthodox left finger into her lap, and on it a somewhat battered wedding-ring. That comforted Miss Popplethwaite's mind; she believed she had won the game.

The ladies did not speak to each other—perhaps it was because I was between them, and they were too polite to speak across a third person; but the rings apparently had a code of manners of their own, for they had not been long exposed to each other's view before they began to talk to one another.

The bright-looking ring on the bride's fourth finger began the conversation. As soon as it caught sight of one of its own immediate kind it called out in a jaunty, uppish, and, I am bound to say, most unseemly tone of voice, "Hallo, old Fusty! where did *you* come from?" Neither of what it said, nor of how it said it, would its wearer, I am quite certain, ever have approved, if she could have heard, as I seem somehow to have done.

At first the old wedding-ring did not deign to make any reply; it was evidently standing on its dignity; so the glittering new one called out again, "Wake up, old girl; let's have a chat. I think I can tell you a thing or two; I've seen a bit of the world; have you?"

Now, this was too much, apparently, for my old neighbour, for it said, slowly and deliberately, pausing between each syllable, "I have been wide awake *these fifty years*—I've been a wedding-ring long before even the gold that you're made of was put into a crucible, or, for the matter of that, brought out of the mine—and I can tell you, not only *a* thing or two, but *a couple of dozen* things or two. But if you don't know how to speak, I strongly suspect you don't know how to hear; I prefer, therefore, to keep my own company, and you can keep yours."

This was the first snub which this cheeky little ring had had since its first appearance in public life, and it did not relish it much; however, like a good many things which we do not much relish, it made it think. The fact was that, hitherto having just lived in a jeweller's window, with a lot of other inexperienced rings like itself, and being confined in a little white satin groove, and hearing no observations but such as were complimentary (especially from young ladies passing by, who looked at it and its fellows much more than at diamonds and sapphires), this ring had no notion of what was due from youth to age, and from callowness to experience, and was therefore, perhaps, to be as much pitied as blamed.

So it was still for a while, during which time it was evidently coming to a better mind. Then it said, in a much more subdued and respectful tone of voice, "I didn't mean to give offence, and I hope you won't take any; if only my wearer knew that I had offended anyone, or hurt anyone's feelings, I don't know what she would do. Now, as you have been long out in the world, and I have been but a short time, maybe you'll tell me, while we are here, some of your experiences? Something jolly, you know—something that will pass the time."

"Be good enough to express yourself more suitably," said Miss Popplethwaite's ring; "that word 'jolly' is one peculiarly offensive to me—at least, as people use it now—it partakes of the nature of slang, and slang I abominate. It may be that I am old-fashioned—certainly I came into the world many years ago, before people misused words as they do now—and my experience of life has not been altogether 'jolly.' I have assisted at many weddings, and could no doubt tell you of something that was jolly here and there, but my experiences of life do not, in a general way, run in the jolly line; therefore, if you want me to talk to you, you must listen to such things as I have to say.

"In the first place, I am at the present moment not a wedding-ring at all. I am a ring, no doubt, but not a wedding one. The lady upon whose finger I am worn is not married."

"Then why does she wear that ring? why does she wear you? Are there not plenty of rings in the world besides wedding ones?"

"Yes, my dear, plenty, set with diamonds, and pearls, and all manner of precious stones; but you see, there's a magic in you and in me, that there is not in them. When once we get on people's fingers we confer privileges upon them, and exact responsibilities from them which no other rings do, or can do; except, my dear, engagement rings, which are rings on their way to us, just as babies are on their way to being grown-up people, or chrysalises to becoming butterflies. But they are in all points so far beneath us that I need not waste any time on them now, seeing neither you nor I know how soon we may be marched off. I feel sure if that old party between us were to brisk up, and let my wearer see more than his nose, she would be off. She seems to have faith in his nose and mouth, but I don't know what his eyes may be like—we wedding-rings have a lot to do with eyes.

"This, indeed, is how I come to be here to-day; and on the finger of an unmarried lady. I am here as a kind of policeman. I am here to take care of Miss Popplethwaite. Sometimes, my dear, I look upon myself as retired from active service; and as, so to speak, on half-pay; and I don't deny that I am glad to have a little rest. I've had many anxieties and many griefs during my life with married folk; but as I know I'm only a make-believe now, and not what people call a 'stern reality,' I take it easy; for, with all her nervousness, I see Miss Popplethwaite is quite well able to take care of herself. I am more for the relief of her mind than anything else. She has a great dread of men. She calls them 'creatures.' She believes that they have, every one of them—even the harmless old gent between us—the elements of the wild beast in them. 'Unmask them, and you'll see what they are'—that's one of her leading principles in life; for you must know, my dear, that she was once engaged to one of these wild beasts, and, instead of running away from it, it ran away from her; and ever since, her idea is that pits should be dug for them, and that they should be made to tumble in, and then be either tied up or put an end to, as the case may be.

"You'd think that, under these circumstances, she'd scorn to wear a wedding-ring—and so she would in a general way; but when it became necessary for her to come here, she thought a



"I may have gone off, or I may not, I am sure I cannot tell."—*p.* 467.

wedding-ring would be 'a great protection,' and get her more respect, and keep off young sparks, of whom she is greatly afraid; though you see with your own eyes, my dear, that it must be all on the nerves; for there's no cause.

"Well, when she made up her mind to come out for a while as a married woman, she had to get one of us; and this exercised her mind for a while. She looked in a lot of jewellers', but could never muster courage to go into one of their shops. She felt she was the wrong sex for that. It was the wild beasts, who ought to be trapped in pits and made away with, that went in for such things, and she was fairly puzzled what to do.

"At last she hit upon a shop where there were not only wedding-rings, bright and glistening like you, my dear, but where, in a little dish of old gold, she spied an old one. You see, to have come here with a brand new blushing, blooming creature like yourself, she'd have been worse off than before. The times are out of joint, and there's no knowing what people may say; so she determined to buy an old ring which would look as if she had been married five-and-twenty years before, and was, perhaps, a grandmother now. I was in queer company then, my dear, and was not sorry to be taken out of it. There were two or three coins, and an entire set of artificial teeth mounted in eighteen-carat, and a broken pencil-case, and a few more coins which were not gold at all, but only make-believes to help to fill up the dish; and there were some seals, and some broken earrings, and myself—a genuine article, as I'm sure you can see in an instant. I'm Hall-marked if you look at me inside.

"'I am looking for an *old* wedding-ring,' said Miss Popplethwaite to the gentleman in the shop, an iron-grey, hard-featured, dry-looking man.

"'Most folk, madam, come here for *new* ones,' said Mr. Pistle. And said he, mutteringly to himself, 'Many a one would be glad if he had never come.

"'Here is one,' said the shopkeeper—'the only one I have. Its value in metal is not much. You see, 't is very thin, but 't is old, and age is honourable, at least, it used to be (and'—this to himself—'I make it so still by putting on ten shillings to its actual value); the price is a sovereign. Compare it with these,' said Mr. Pistle, taking out of the shop window a whole tray full of such as you. 'In old times a little hoop of gold, almost a wire, was enough to hold people. That was in the old-fashioned times; but now, my word! look here, madam, we'll be coming to pot-hooks soon. Look at the thickness of some of those. I think, ma'am, that marriage can't be now what it used to be in olden times. People aren't held together now by their hearts as they used to be; perhaps that's why they try to be held by their rings. But if all the gold in the Bank of England were hammered into a wedding-ring, it wouldn't make some marriages happy. It wouldn't keep some folk together as they ought to be.'

"So it came to pass that I was bought as a

curiosity—for of course Miss Popplethwaite never told what she wanted me for; and here I am."

"Go on," said the new wedding-ring, "pray go on. I'd much rather be listening to all you have to say than sitting here by myself. I suppose Miss Popplethwaite is all right now that she has you?"

"She is, and she isn't," said the old wedding-ring. "She is, inasmuch as I've protected her from some folk who would have annoyed her; and I've given her a kind of confidence in herself; but in other ways I'm afraid I've made her uncomfortable. And she isn't the first person I've made uncomfortable, I can tell you, though not in the same way."

"Why, who'd have annoyed her here? If anyone annoyed my lady, her husband would soon lay his cane across his shoulders."

"Ay, ay, all very good; but, you see, my owner has no husband with a cane; and when people, especially cowards, think they can insult with impunity, or play upon others, they'll do it. There are young raps—and, for the matter of that, old ones too—going about these places like birds of prey, trying to pick up anyone with money. Miss Popplethwaite would be pestered by two of that very sort at the 'Hydro' now, if I didn't protect her: they see the ring, and sheer off. And there's a fellow here who would borrow money from her but for me: he's afraid of the invisible Mr. Popplethwaite; he doesn't know the moment when he'll appear; he may be down on his shoulders before he knows where he is. A man is very often useful, my dear, *in the background*, whatever he may be when he comes to *the front*. 'T is not a bad plan, my dear, to hang up a hat and coat and stick in the hall, even though there be no man in the house: it makes some people who call upon one careful. My owner was once delivered from a terrible tramp, who got into the hall, by her calling out, 'Major Popplethwaite! Major Popplethwaite!' as loud as she could. Major Popplethwaite is not known in any of the services—not even in the Horse Marines!—but the name did quite as well as himself, and the tramp made tracks as fast as ever he could.

"I've done my duty by Miss Popplethwaite while I've been with her, though I confess I sometimes feel somewhat humiliated, as everyone must do who is acting a part. I tell you candidly, I don't care for my present mode of life. Not but 't is as good and honest as that of a great many who, like yourself, are the real thing. I dare say, now, when you heard me begin to tell you how I am at present circumstanced, you felt rather inclined to look down upon me and snub me. I can forgive you, poor child! if you did—it came through your ignorance of life. There are plenty, like yourself, who are in entirely a false position. You are supposed to be emblems of *love*——"

"That I am," interrupted the little shiner energetically and indignantly. "I am the emblem of love, and truth, and constancy, and adoration—of two fond hearts and two loving hands bound together for ever and ever. My owner's husband *adores* her; love and truth and constancy are all very good in their way, but Claude Wavenley *adores* his Rose, he calls her a 'star,' and a 'gem,' and an 'angel;' he says he 'could kiss the ground she walks on,' and you should see him looking at her. Moreover, he'd give up anything—all the world for her."

"And she?"

"She! She calls him an 'angel,' and a 'hero,' and a 'saint,' and a 'duck'——"

"And she'll live, perhaps," said the old wedding-ring, "to call him a 'goose'—ducks and geese are nearer each other than most folk suppose; they have very much the same flavour when they are eaten, and the same waddle when they walk. But go on."

"You don't deserve that I should," said the little shiner in an indignant tone of voice; "they both of them believe every word they say."

"Not a doubt of it, my dear; they're as innocent of any deceit this blessed day as if they were two turtle-doves; and the longer all this lasts the better shall I be pleased. If Rose calls Claude an 'archangel' in five years' time—in ahem—don't let us even go so far as five—I'll say, 'There's one for matrimony;' and if she hasn't called him a 'goose,' I'll say, 'There's two;' and if he doesn't say, not that 'he'll kiss the ground she walks on,' but that 'he wishes she'd get out of the way,' then I'll say, 'He has hit out from the shoulder and given single life a black eye, and a bloody nose, and damaged materially its pretensions and its respectability.' I never look upon one of you young bright things without the greatest apprehensions as to the false part you will have to play—the only shine of matrimony that will be left will be just what glitters on you."

"But my lady has read different from all this in books. I've often held them up for her—at least, the hand on which I am has—since she was married. She keeps on reading the same now that she used before her wedding-day, and what grand pictures there are there of love! She believes them all, and she means them all to be hers."

"What colour were the books, my dear?"

"For the most part, yellow, like myself. Shilling novels I think I heard them called."

"Precisely so," said the old stager; "those books go forth to deceive mankind who dwell upon the face of the earth—or, more properly speaking, to deceive womankind. Women are the chief readers, and women are principally deceived. The false pictures which those books have drawn, and the false expectations which they have raised, have been the ruin of many a poor girl's hopes, and the breaking of many a poor girl's heart in this world of everyday life in which we live. Did you ever know one of those books tell of threads and tapes and buttons, of squalling children, and of doctors' bills? did you ever hear them speak of the grit and wear-and-tear of daily life, of irritations and fretfulness, and discoveries

of imperfections, and the disappointments of the failure of exaggerated hopes, and ideals, and thoughts? They tell a good deal about all *before* marriage; but what do they say about *after* marriage? Oh, little one! bright one! I am afraid that you have a great deal to learn; if I had my way, little one, do you know what I would do?"

"Something dreadful, I'm sure," replied the new wedding-ring, which began to feel shuddery, as though it were in the presence of some dreadful being capable of saying or doing anything.

"I'll tell you! I'd murder you, and all like you; and I'd commit suicide myself." [Here the new wedding-ring gave a little scream, and I think the bride must have felt uneasy in some way, for she moved her hand quickly for a moment or two, and then, I am glad to say, put it back again; or perhaps I should have heard no more.] "Yes; in my opinion we ought to exist, but not in our present form. We ought to be made of iron, to signify how tightly we hold, and to make folk think twice before they meddle with us. After five years I'd have every one of us brought before a jury—a mixed jury of men and women, for I go in part in for women's rights, you know; only in part, and I won't and don't say how much—and if we can give a good account of ourselves, the court is to have authority to give a silver one in our place; and in ten years—jury and court again—then a gold one. What stands ten years ought to stand a life. But no humbug. To plate a ring I'd make penal servitude for five years, and to gild one, death without hope of mercy; then young people, and perhaps some foolish old ones too, would think of what they were about before they meddled with us."

"You old dragon!" ejaculated the little shiner; but so imperfectly was this heard that my old friend merely caught the sound of the last two syllables, and, taking them up, said—

"Yes, my dear, I would put the drag-on; 't is very down-hill work, and the drag would save a good many accidents which happen now; but I think we've wandered a little from what I was going to tell you. We can return again to these matters if you like, and I will give you one or two of my experiences in past life; but while Miss Popplethwaite herself is in our minds, let me tell you that she is not altogether happy with me now. Of course, you know what she bought me for—not for a curiosity, or to put me in a cabinet, but to wear me here, and so pass off as a married woman. Indeed, so little is she pleased, that she says, 'Well! if the real thing brings no more pleasure than this, I'm fully persuaded I'm as well—nay, much better—off without it.' That's *her* way of putting it, you know; the fact being that she feels she's not her real self, and she despises herself a bit, I think, if the truth were known; but she would be loth to acknowledge that, even to herself.

"There was a time, my dear, when I thought myself of much more importance than I do now—not that I think myself of little consequence now; far from it; I am one of the most important things in the world; but I have learned that I am not everything, as I dare say now you fancy that you are. I don't blame you, my dear—oh, no! There is much that can come only by experience; all the talking and preaching in the world won't bring it; and this is one of them. I used to look on every old maid (as they are called) with scorn. The fact is, I was so wrapped up in my own importance that, unless people had to do with me or mine, I didn't think much of them; but I've been down a good deal, and a good many times, in the world, and the consequence is that I have learned a good deal. I've looked beyond my own circle, and doing that is always a help to forming a right judgment. And that makes me a little uncomfortable myself in my present position. I am glad, no doubt, to help in steadying Miss Popplethwaite's nerves—I have learned to respect those who are outside my circle, as those who are within, and if I can keep adventurers and impertinent people away from her I am glad—but, you see, what I think is that she ought not to want me at all. The married woman has her mission in life, but so has the unmarried, too; and if all the good that is done by single women in the world were only known, I think the world would make more of them than it does. Mind you, there ought not to be any such thing in the world as an unmarried woman; it is my belief that God intended, when He first made man, that every man should have a wife and every woman have a husband; but everything is now upside down. A great many here and there and everywhere have not what is their due, and I think a lot of good is brought out of evil by One who overrules as well as rules. No doubt there are right kinds of old maids and wrong; but my owner is one of the right kind, and I shall be glad when she parts with me and becomes her real self again."

"You *do* preach!" said the perky new ring; "where in the world did you learn all that? You might have been a bishop's ring, for all I know, and a great deal of good I've no doubt you'd have done."

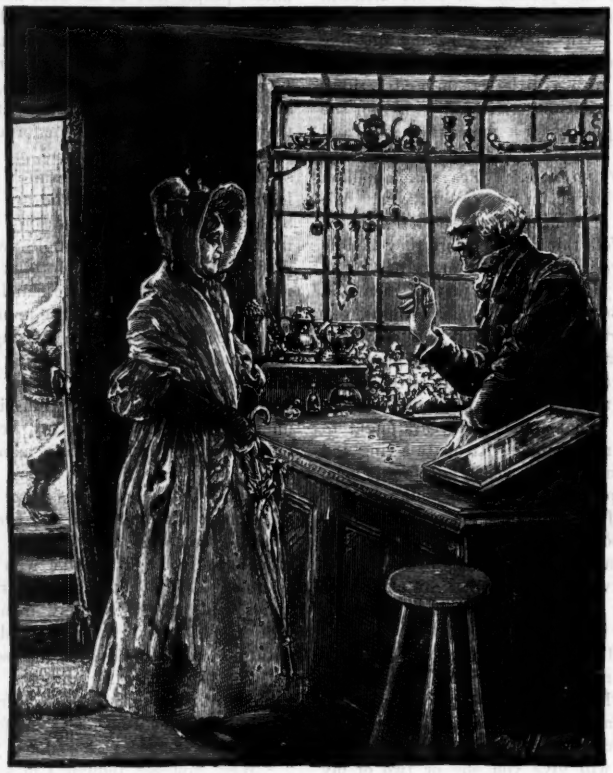
"Well, you see, though I'm sorry to say I have been owned by those who never took me near a place of worship of any kind, I've belonged to those too who have taken me there regularly; and as I have, as the saying is, 'sat under' a good man and a wise man part of my time, I picked up what I've told you, and a good deal more. You see, you are only about a month old, and can't know these things. Shop-window rings aren't even born—they're only waiting to be born. They live amongst little more than what I might call the vanities of this life. What sense—common sense—much less wisdom and experience, could you pick up from emeralds and diamonds and pearls, and a lot of young chits like yourself, who were never anywhere, and had their heads full of unreasonable and impracticable expectations?

"'T is all very well for you to be proud of being

on the taper finger of an inexperienced girl, one who is all smiles and brightness—for what has she known but petting and admiration and comfort in life? But let me tell you that many a thin finger, and many a wrinkled face, and the heart within many a shrivelled breast, are of more use to the world, are truer members of the great family of man, than those who are thinking of themselves and as She Was, and as She Is, and as she Might Be,' and at the third I gave in; and you see now what I believe."

"But I thought all old maids were sour," said the bright ring.

"Don't say, my dear, that you *thought*, for you have never *thought* in your life—you *imagined*. I like to be particular in the use of words. I



"'You see, 't is very thin, but 't is old, and age is honourable.'"—*p.* 469.

their happiness, and nothing else. Where a woman is true to herself, she can never be in God's sight, nor in the world, only a faded and a blighted flower, a dry and withered and fruitless stick."

"You seem to know a lot," said the new wedding-ring.

"I didn't sit under the Rev. Dr. Bunce for nothing. I held out against him for a long time by reason of my being a wedding-ring; and, of course, I thought I was in duty bound to stand up for my own kith and kin. But there is such a thing as being open to conviction, and I slowly gave way under his arguments, until I came to my present mind. The Doctor preached three sermons on 'Woman learned that in a lawyer's office. I had once to give evidence in what is called a breach-of-promise case. I was bought by a silly fellow six months before the intended wedding-day, and he gave me to the girl to keep. He had only known her one week before he what they call 'popped the question.' Poor dear! she kept me wrapped up in a bit of silver paper, and made a little blue silk bag for me, and actually kissed me every evening when she went to bed, and even in the middle of the day. But Edwin proved a faithless swain. Before three months he found someone he liked better, and I was taken with a lot of letters—documentary evidence as the lawyer called it—to Pitfalle and

Holdemtite's chambers, and I was booked then and there to give evidence in the cause. Unless you were placed in a similar situation, it would be impossible for you to know what I felt when I appeared in court. All my associations and thoughts had been connected, even as yours are now, only with love, and joy, and peace, and heart clinging to heart, and hand clasped in hand. Now, for the first time, I had to come into contact with what is called £ *s. d.* I was produced in open court. My lawyer, of course put up to it by Pitfalle and Holdemtite, asked me—or the young lady (which was of course the same)—about my life in that blue silk bag. I was handed up to the old judge, who examined me with his spectacles; and to the jury, who handed me about from one to another, some taking no notice. One man with long black hair, who they said was a poet and an artist, looked sad; one man, who was a banker, passing me on to the next as if I were a vulgar sovereign; one young man actually tried me on; and the one next him, who was a neighbour, and knew that he had been seen walking several times with a young lady—putting his finger wisely to his nose, said knowingly, 'I say Joe, beware of Angelina;' and all this because the defendant, after a week's acquaintance, not satisfied with buying a wedding-ring and giving it to a girl, actually had engraved his initials and hers on the inside with an & between them —an & with two dashes. Oh! how much my owner's counsel, Sir John Clinch, Q.C., made of that '&,' and of those two dashes. Ah! I can hear him even now. One would think that that man thought the human heart the most priceless thing in the world; that he knew every turn of its labyrinth; that human affections were, in his eyes, beyond all price. He ran his eye all over the jury, to see where he was most likely to make an impression. He began with one old bird in the corner of the box, a knowing old fellow who had secured a place well out of the draught. All he got from him—as he began, 'Gentlemen of the jury, the human heart'—was a knowing wink, as much as to say, I know all about it, you needn't try it on here; so he rapidly passed up and down the whole of them, while he said, slowly and solemnly, 'must not be trifled with in its affections.' By this time he had fixed himself upon two or three upon whom he was likely to make an impression. On he went, through letter after letter, until at last he came to me, and he worked me with a will. 'Gentlemen of the jury,' said he, 'even if there were no other evidence in this case, I should be well content to claim a verdict upon the mute but overwhelming evidence of this ring. His lordship has seen, and you have seen—yes, my learned brother, who I might almost say has the audacity to defend this case, has seen, what there is inside this ring. There, gentlemen, are two letters, E standing for Edwin, the defendant's name, and S for Sophonisba, the plaintiff's name. Those letters, gentlemen, might have been found inside that ring in the closest propinquity, and yet the defendant might have eluded the reward of his evil deeds. My learned friend would, with his usual ability, have plied you with examples of wonderful chances, and endeavoured to persuade you that these two particular letters came there by chance, that somebody was once told to engrave something there, and that E and S would do as well as anything else, and so he cut those two letters there. But why E and S? why not B and C, or Y and Z?—why, gentlemen, but that Edwin ordered this ring for Sophonisba, the lady who is now looking to you to redress her wrongs? But there is that within this ring which settles the question, and of which my learned friend, with all his acuteness, cannot make anything.' [You see, it was the counsel's desire in lauding his learned brother's ingenuity to make the jury put up their backs, and by giving a verdict for the plaintiff, show that they could not be come over, or hoodwinked, or put upon by the artifices of even that wily man.] 'What I now wish to draw your attention to as final in this matter is the symbol between the two letters E and S; that symbol, as you have seen, is the abbreviation of "and," and it can have but one meaning; it is that E and S stand in a close relationship to each other, or were intended to do, which is practically the same thing. I almost wonder that my learned friend did not try to make out that that symbol was shorn of its significance because it was not written out at length; had he done so, I should have been under the unpleasant necessity of characterising the argument as an insult to your understanding. In my opinion, my learned friend has ventured as far as he well could do along that road; but there are limits, gentlemen, which even so skilful an advocate cannot with impunity attempt to overpass. That symbol, gentlemen, is and was intended to be a coupler; it is small, no doubt, but capable of great things, as is the little coupler between an engine and a train; that it has failed is patent to you all, failed to join hearts, and failed to join hands. His lordship will tell you, I have no doubt, that you cannot assess the damage in the matter of hearts, but that you can in the matter of hands. But, gentlemen, in spite of yourselves, there will come welling up in your minds, in your own hearts, the feelings and sufferings of this lacerated heart—and a worse case of laceration I have never met with during my long experience at the bar. I will not run the risk, gentlemen of the jury, of lacerating *your* hearts by dwelling on the sufferings of, I might almost say, this child; when you retire to consider your verdict, I trust that his lordship will direct you to take with you this ring and its silken bag. I would only add that the two dashes under that "&" you will no doubt see are to be treated as evidences of the fixed determination of the defendant to marry the plaintiff when he gave her that ring; they aggravate his present desertion, and I should say, add, each of them, one-third more to such damages as you might have otherwise been inclined to give.'"

(To be concluded.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

61. What answer did Jesus make to the Pharisees who desired to know which is the great commandment of the Law?

62. What does St. John give as a sign to us of the indwelling of God's Spirit?

63. What was a special cause of thankfulness to St. Paul on the part of the Corinthian Church?

64. What does Christ teach us by the parable of the fig-tree?

65. What is the teaching of the twenty-third Psalm?

66. Which of the prophets refers to our Blessed Lord's entry, as a child, into the Temple?

67. In what way did St. Paul obtain his knowledge of the institution of the Lord's Supper?

68. From what discourse of our Blessed Lord do we learn that true religion must have its practical manifestation in charity to our neighbour?

69. To which of the Seven Churches was the command to "be watchful" specially given?

70. What reward does God promise to those who are faithful in the duties of this life?

71. In what way did St. Paul teach the Corinthians the duty of kindness to one another?

72. What comforting promise did Jesus give to His disciples as to their conduct when brought before magistrates?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 400.

49. "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." (St. Matt. xix. 14.)

50. "They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." (St. John xxi. 6.)

51. The question of purification. (St. John iii. 25.)

52. He chose wisdom. (1 Kings iii. 9.)

53. To keep the feast of the Passover. While there He conversed with the doctors, and astonished every one by His learning. (St. Luke ii. 41—46.)

54. They must have faith. (St. Matt. ix. 28.)

55. "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and to the poor the Gospel is preached." (St. Luke vii. 22.)

56. "But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house." (St. Mark ii. 10, 11.)

57. Because power and mercy belong only unto God. (Psalm lxii. 10, 11.)

58. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (St. Mark viii. 29.)

59. "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on Me." (St. Mark x. 47.)

60. "Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (St. Mark xi. 9.)

SHORT ARROWS

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

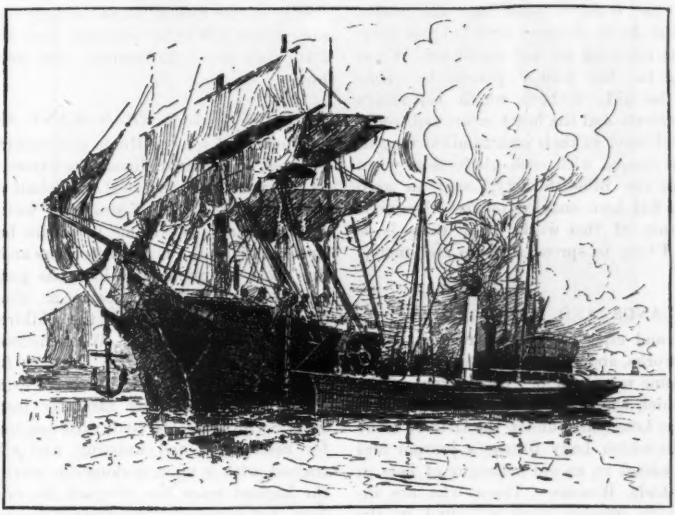
ANGEL-HANDS.

WE read that when Lot lingered in the dangerous neighbourhood of Sodom, the angels hastened him out and laid their constraining hands upon him and his, "the Lord being merciful unto him." "Are there no angel-hands that lead *us* forth"? asked a minister, preaching upon this subject. He reminded his hearers of the good impressions and aspirations they had experienced, desires after God, longings for a better, fuller life—might not these be likened to angelic messengers constraining them to leave the world behind, and lay hold on eternal life? It is a solemn thing to trifle with such yearnings and impressions, lest they grow fewer and fainter, and we be left to the Sodom of our choice. Not only the undecided, but the backslider has known moments when heavenly whispers seemed to arrest his wandering feet, and his way has been hedged in so that he could wander no further, but was constrained to arise and go homeward to his Father, to love and peace. And if the thought appeal to any of us that we are not yet at our best and highest, not near enough to the Master, not doing the work which our God-given talents require, may not these inward voices be as the angel-hands which would fain guide us from the plain to the mountain? Nay, may not the Spirit of God Himself be constraining us upward and forward? Let us yield to the heavenly touch, and follow where God would lead, not looking behind, but striving to attain unto those heights which the Redeemer's feet have pressed.

"MISSION WORK AFLOAT."

Of all the callings embraced by the divers sorts and conditions of our fellow-men, there is none to which such a strong spice of romance attaches itself as to that of the sailor. Even in these prosaic times the term "sailor" is synonymous with all that is frank, brave, good-humoured, and generous. Yet there is no body of men so sorely beset with temptations as our seamen are. Ostracised by his vocation from enjoying

those social and religious privileges so dear to a landsman, and rendered callous and reckless by a life of hardship and danger, a sailor's worst perils assail him when his ship is safe in harbour. To step in at this crisis and win the sailor to God, sending him forth to battle anew with the elements, truly strengthened and refreshed with his brief cessation from toil, is the object of the Liverpool Branch of the St. Andrew's Waterside Mission. After five years of indefatigable exertion, the organising secretary, the Rev. R. F. Winter, has procured a steam yacht, the *Mona*, to assist him in his work. Short as is the time that the *Mona* has been on the station, she is



THE *MONA* AT WORK.

now well known on the Mersey, and her graceful form as she glides on her message of love is a welcome sight to many a weather-tanned seaman. The number of vessels visited by the *Mona* is astonishing, as many as thirty being sometimes boarded in a single day. Each ship so visited is supplied with wholesome literature; Bibles and religious and temperance periodicals being supplied to the crews. An increased revenue is much desired, as it would enable the executive to provide Welsh, German, and Greek seamen with Bibles and literature in their own languages. But the Mission does not confine its attention exclusively to the sailor afloat; it watches over him ashore, providing for his spiritual welfare, relieving his bodily distress, and striving to make him a temperate, thrifty, and thoroughly good Christian man. Persons wishing to help the society by donations of money, clothes, Bibles, magazines, illustrated papers, or other literature, should place themselves in communication with the secretary, the Rev. R. F. Winter, Central Chambers, 17a, South Castle Street, Liverpool.

"THE COUNTER-REFORMATION."

In his little book entitled "The Counter-Reformation" (Longmans), Dr. Ward has dealt with a subject which has hitherto been comparatively unfamiliar to the ordinary reader. We have here a concise history of efforts, more or less honest, and more or less politic, on the part of individual members of the Church of Rome, in the direction of reform, during the great Reformation period. Dr. Ward has compiled his facts with impartiality, and has stated them without passion. He has clearly shown by his narrative that these endeavours at internal reform were for the most part half-hearted and futile, and that, viewing them as a whole, the attempts at "Counter-Reformation" proved a miserable business. The ordinary volume limits of the series ("Epochs of Church History") have somewhat cramped the author's hands in his manipulation of this important subject, with the result that many interesting episodes are passed over with a bare word; but, considering all things, Dr. Ward may be complimented on the ability and fairness with which he has accomplished a difficult task. To Dr. Reginald Poole's recent contribution to the same series we can give only a few words of mention. In dealing with the subject assigned to him ("Wycliffe, and Movements of Reform") the author has made as much as was possible of the limited space allowed him. The views and teachings of the great English Reformer are briefly but carefully and fairly expounded. and the ordinary reader has now no excuse for ignorance on this point. Thousands of people who are aware and speak of their indebtedness as English Protestants to John Wycliffe, really know little or nothing of his life and work; and to these we earnestly recommend a profitable study of that fruitful epoch.

"GOD'S WORD FOR GOD'S WORLD."

This is the aim and object of the Bible Society, which, through the freewill offerings of those who love the Book, has spread the Scriptures in hundreds of dialects across the world, in places where they were once prohibited as dangerous, in regions where missionaries were once forbidden, and where God's Word proved the great missionary and reformer. All God's people will seek to have a share in the work of the Bible Society, that has cheapened the Scriptures for our Sunday-scholars at home, and strengthened the hands of many a worker in the dark places of the earth. We heard of a clergyman who, when in England, confessed that he saw very little need for such a society, but he went out to labour abroad, and translated the Word of God into the native dialect, when the Bible Society came to his help, and brought out the work he had completed. Years after, speaking in his former parish, he spoke gratefully of the aid, without which his native scholars and converts and the heathen around would have lacked the Gospel in their own familiar tongue. "I never sign a cheque with such gladness as when it is payable to the Bible Society," said an aged gentleman, who has been enabled to give thousands to the furtherance of this work; "my Bible is so dear to me that I long to spread it more and more."

OTHER LANDS AND OTHER TIMES.

Most readers, and especially young readers, know Lady Brassey's works, and all must have heard of her sad end at sea some months ago. The journal of the voyage upon which she died has recently been published by Messrs. Longmans, under the title of "The Last Voyage," in which Lady Brassey's journal and notes have been edited by an old colleague of hers in literary work—Lady Broome. Those who are interested in foreign mission work will find in the descriptions Lady Brassey gives of her visit to India and Burmah much information that will be valuable to them, and the illustrations with which these descriptions are accompanied will be found very useful in giving young people an idea of the different appearance presented by the Eastern towns. The warm interest which Lady Brassey took in the good work of the St. John Ambulance movement is evident throughout the book; and we find frequent references to her anxiety that new branches should be formed in these out-of-the-way places in the New World, where such knowledge as the Association diffuses should prove peculiarly valuable. Lady Brassey's book would make a most acceptable present, or would be very suitable indeed for a prize to an elder scholar.—To those who have not the same opportunities of travel, Dr. Richard Newton's "Scripture Animals and the Lessons Taught by Them" (Nisbet and Co.) should prove not only instructive but very interesting. It is addressed mainly to the young, but teachers are likely to find it useful. The preface of the work tells us that this is Dr. Newton's last work, and that he did not live to see it published.—We are glad to welcome a new edition (the fourth) of Mr. Benjamin Scott's admirable little work on the "Catacombs of Rome" (Morgan and Scott), which he justly calls "a vindication of pure and primitive Christianity, and an exposure of the corruptions of Romanism." Some of the illustrations taken from the inscriptions upon the tombs in the Catacombs are very interesting, and to many of our readers they may be quite new. The same publishers have sent us a new work on the evidences of Christianity, under the title of "Many Infallible Proofs." It is from the pen of the Rev. Dr. Arthur T. Pierson, of Philadelphia, and deals with the various points which are generally seized upon by scoffers against our faith. There are some very valuable lines of thought suggested in this useful little work.—Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton have just published the second edition of an excellent "Story of the Life of Jesus," simply told in plain and easy words for little children, and accompanied by forty full-page illustrations, just such as children love.

"MORE VALUE THAN MANY SPARROWS."

"Come and see our Home and children," says Mrs. Parsons, of Eastfield House, Hoe Street, Walthamstow, to all who are concerned on behalf of orphan and destitute little ones. Visitors are welcomed any day after two, and the Home is within half an hour of London. Through many difficulties and trials of faith this work of rescue and love has gone on, gifts of money or food having come at times just when urgently needed, so that the children have never wanted a sufficient meal. When necessary, the children are taken as young as three or four, and up to thirteen or fourteen. They receive every day a plain, useful education, being carefully instructed in the Holy Scriptures. The little girls can undertake orders for needlework and knitting, and all are specially trained with a view to domestic service. Success in the highest sense has crowned the efforts put forth here, for many of the children have been enrolled



A QUIET AFTERNOON.

upon the Saviour's side. In connection with the Reformatory and Refuge Union, there are valuable Industrial Homes for boys and girls at Forest Hill, where, without regard to the doctrine of any particular body, Christ is set before the little waifs as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Churches and chapels unite in bearing testimony to the helpful work carried on



THE ORPHANS AT WORK
(A Sketch at Eastfield House.)

here; the children are taken from sad surroundings, and some have passed out of the Homes into promising situations; while all are sent daily to the National Schools, and take their part in supporting the large family by chopping firewood, making boots, and taking in laundry-work. The income is just now in need of increased help; may we commend this effort to give poor children a fair start in life to all who hold with the "good Earl" who has passed away, that by reclaiming the little ones England will be regenerated!

"THE OPEN WINDOW."

Earnestness is a great thing, but patience is no less essential; it is easier for most of us to be fervent, zealous, enthusiastic, than to possess our souls in patience; yet if we would be Christlike, this is a summit we are called to reach. By patience we grow stronger, humbler, more loving, more trustful, more charitable and forgiving; our Heavenly Father prunes the fruitful branches, and if we are called aside from *working* to *waiting*, let us bring Him a patient heart, recognising that He is tenderly teaching us now the highest lesson of all—the patience of Christ. It is said that suffering either softens or hardens the spirit; we bring reproach on our profession if, amid pain and weakness, we *give way* to selfish repining. We glorify our Master if, like certain invalids of whom we read lately—invalids belonging to the "Shut-in-Society," and conducting a paper, *The Open Window*—we make our room of suffering a Bethel, and employ such powers as remain for the comfort and help of others, in passing on precious Bible promises, and striving not only to be calm, but sympathising and self-forgetful. Yet patience is a grace found more frequently amid the feeble and suffering, than in the busy, healthy, energetic Christian, whose time is taken up with plans, the frustration of which seems most grievous to be borne. We start the day with resolutions that seem helpful and beneficial; we intend furthering certain charities, writing to those in need of Christian counsel, fulfilling kindly work on behalf of the poor. But unexpected hindrances arise: callers seem to waste our time, innumerable little interruptions change our projects, and at eventide we seem constrained to exclaim, "I have lost a day!" One busy worker issued the mandate concerning certain hours in the day—"I will see nobody between those hours, except the poor;" the poor have visible claims upon us at all times, for His sake who had not where to lay His head. The mandate did not answer, however; people came, needing little acts and words of helpfulness, who could not be considered poor, and in cases like these—familiar especially to our lady-readers, amid their domestic cares—there is nothing for it but to accept the Heavenly teaching of *patience*. If a quiet, uninterrupted day were better for us, such would have been our experience: but let God choose our daily work for Him; if the little, unexpected duties have been patiently performed, if each visitor has left us cheered, comforted, strengthened in some way by our influence, eternity will reveal to us that the interrupted day was "not lost time at all."

THE LIVERPOOL NEWSBOYS' HOME.

This noble institution, situated in Everton Road, Liverpool, has been established "to help newsboys and other street-boys in their efforts to obtain an honest

livelihood." Thoughtful men and women everywhere, dwelling in our great cities, and touched in any measure with the Spirit of the Lord Christ, must surely feel a pure compassion, that will find expression in self-sacrificing endeavour, for the waifs and strays of our English-speaking race, who drag out a miserable and suffering existence, ignorant from their first childish years of all the natural elasticity, brightness, and buoyancy of youth, and for whom a boasted civilisation has hitherto done little more than provide policemen, magistrates, and prisons. It is beginning to be recognised that the thousands of gutter-children who infest our streets have an absolute claim, if not on the State, at least on the community at large. This grave responsibility, so far as the second city of the Empire is concerned, is being cheerfully accepted by numerous sympathetic workers, comprising young men of education, position, and means, who take an active share in the beneficent operations of this and kindred institutions. The Committee of the "Newsboys' Home" are at present, for lack of funds, only able to board and lodge between fifty and sixty lads, though it is satisfactory to note that the advantages of the Home are extended to over one thousand boys living outside. There is also, in addition to the shortness of bed-room accommodation, a pressing necessity for a very considerable extension of the large hall and workshop department, where struggling lads, by the acquirement of useful industries, may be equipped for the future with something like "a chance in life."

FOR THOSE WHO TEACH.

For those who teach, probably more lessons have been founded upon the life and times of David than of any other of the men of the Bible, and still the subject is unexhausted, and is as popular as ever; so teachers, whether of old or young, will be glad to see the latest addition to Messrs. Nisbet's "Men of the Bible" series, which is "David: His Life and Times," by the Rev. W. J. Deane, M.A., who wrote the valuable Lives of Abraham and Daniel which have preceded this volume in the series. The chapter on David's character, with which the volume concludes, is a peculiarly able and suggestive one, and all teachers and students would do well to read it.—Nearly two centuries and a half have passed since Jeremy Taylor wrote his famous work "Holy Living," but it has lost none of its charm with age, and probably has as wide a circle of readers now as it had any time in its history, and it ought to have a larger circulation than ever now that Messrs. Cassell have issued it in two volumes in their "National Library," so that it is brought within the reach of the most moderate purse. —We have heard much during the last few months of the failure of Protestant Christian missions in foreign lands. For our own part, we have never sympathised with the recent outcry, and we are glad to welcome a valuable work from a retired American missionary, the Rev. John Liggins, upon "The Great Value and Success of Foreign Missions," published by the Baker and Taylor Company, New York. The work is a compilation of testimony from distinguished men all over the world, in positions of honour and trust, as to the success of missions in the districts where their own work lies. Governors and consuls, ministers and generals, business men, literary men, and scholars are all pressed into the service, and all yield their testimony of the value of the great forward movement of the Christian Church. The book is timely, and it is well ordered.—We have two works before us which should prove interesting to those of our readers who are working in the cause of Temperance. The first is a prize essay entitled, "The Case for Total Abstinence" (National Temperance Publication Depôt), of which we need say no more to readers of THE QUIVER than that it is from the pen of an old friend of theirs, and a frequent contributor to our pages, Mr. W. J. Lacey. The second work is a new edition of Canon Ellison's "Brands Plucked out of the Fire," published by the Church of England Temperance Society. This work consists of records of a number of cases of rescue effected by temperance work during fifteen years' ministry in the parish of Windsor.—Messrs. Nisbet have sent another volume of the Rev. J. S. Exell's "Biblical Illustrator," this one being devoted to the Epistle to the Ephesians. Our readers cannot have forgotten our appreciative references to the former volumes in this series, and we need only say that this one is a worthy companion and successor to its predecessors.

"SUNBEAMS LIFTED HIGHER."

Thus does the poet describe those kind and tender souls who for a space have passed beyond our vision, leaving behind such bright memories that, when their names are sometimes spoken, we who have known them feel a sense of genial warmth, a heart-radiance inspired by their close, constant contact with Him Who is "a Sun which ever shines." Some time ago we were deeply impressed by attending a memorial service in connection with the death of a maiden lady, neither wealthy, clever, nor great, but a faithful Christian soul, shining day by day to the Master's glory. Probably her name was unknown beyond her immediate neighbourhood; probably she knew nothing at all of modern systems of teaching, or of the notes and aids which are so helpful to Sunday-school workers nowadays, and which only the unwise would neglect—but young and old thronged that place of worship with tender, sorrowing faces in memory of her life of love. From the little children who had known her as their superintendent and friend, to the young men and maidens who had prized her sympathy, and grey-haired fellow-Christians with whom she had walked in fellowship, there was but one deep feeling pervading that assembly—that she had lived her creed before our eyes, that the meekness and humility of her godliness had made it lustrous. There were those present whom differences of opinion had set apart for years, but who united to revere the memory of the teacher all had loved; there were those who softly told how she had pleaded and counselled, and written earnestly, "Do not forsake the services, the prayer-meetings;" and in our own spirit, we bethought us of the time when, fresh from studies

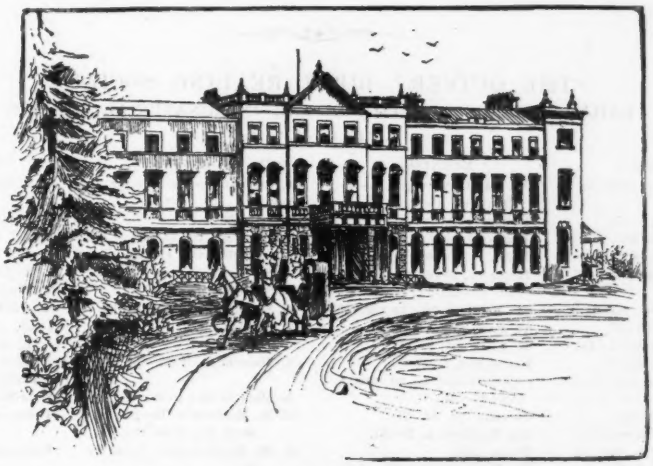
and deeming ourselves very clever, we listened somewhat impatiently to her advice concerning Sunday-school teaching, responding "Yes, yes, we know all that," and soon found that the aged teacher knew very much that we had yet to learn in the school of work and experience. It came to us impressively how powerful, how far-reaching is a faithful Christian life—that simple, quiet career closed amid the honour of hundreds. May a similar life be our own, so loving, so compassionate, so beautiful that other hearts glow with the warmth of our own, and we mirror in some measure to our neighbours the loving-kindness of God!

FROM THE EAST COUNTRY.

The Royal Hospital for Incurables, Putney Heath, has been called a "Pool of Bethesda," for though it does not mean *healing*, it certainly brings help, comfort, and marvellous relief. Many of our readers know the Home itself, with its tender ministrations to more than two hundred inmates; but there is also an outdoor department of benevolence. More than five hundred pensioners in town and country are cheered and aided by the funds, and invalids are thus spared the pain of dependence, while many a home-circle remains unbroken. A visitor called last year on several pensioners of the hospital, residing in the east of England, and the result is an illustrated booklet, entitled "Letters from the East Country," which has been forwarded to us by the Secretary, 106, Queen Victoria Street. The wind may be easterly where these pensioners dwell, but it does our heart good to read of abounding thankfulness, sweet fruits of patience, tender offices of friends. The visitor tells us of the words of a widow, referring to her past privations, "I still trusted God, feeling sure He would never leave me nor forsake me, and He raised up for me a dear, kind friend who worked to get me the pension from that noble Institution." In a Suffolk village was an invalid whose treasured volume is "The Words of Jesus." and the visitor happened to open it at the passage, "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." The sufferer looked an assent plainer than words as he said, "For Him to know is to give, is it not"? Of another pensioner visited we read, "She is bright as a May morning," cheery and content in her thankful piety: faith has triumphed over shadows and illness and doubts, for when the visitor spoke about the Institution, its many claims and calls, and said smilingly, "Suppose some day we could not pay your pension?" she answered the smile, and calmly quoted the words of Scripture, "If I were hungry I would not tell thee; Mine are the cattle on a thousand hills."

THE LAST POSY.

With joy so deep as to be almost akin to tears, we welcome again the flowers that are blossoming round us; for the buds of spring, as we grow older, hold *memories* as well as new-born hopes. To the children, however, spring means only rapture and gladness; the little feet seem tireless as they play amid the grass; the little hands are quick to find the hiding-place of violet and anemone. Those were beautiful words in which George Dawson once described a child whom he watched among the flowers—a glad little creature that fell quietly asleep at last upon the grass, still treasuring the sweet, fragrant posy. And he prayed in his heart that when the last sleep shall come, some flowers, some precious posy might still be his own! What should he gather from his little garden for that hour of rest? Our genius, our own righteousness, our money will seem worthless to our hold when earth is growing dim; but the Christian spirit bethought him of two precious blossoms—lowliness towards God, humbleness towards man. And then he gave the counsel ever availing, whether in extremity of life or death, "Turn to the fulness of



THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES, PUTNEY HEATH.

God." George Dawson's mind rejoiced as he seemed to gaze upon fadeless flowers—"the great passion-flower of God's love, the flower of forgiveness, the blood-red



rose and amaranth of the Eternal Realm." However the gardens of earth may change, herein is summer glory that will shine through the unbounded ages.

SPIRITUAL INFLUENCES.

If in darkness or light we have been taught of God, we ourselves are thus placed in the position of teachers; others may be needing the help He enables us to give, for the Master's dealings with us are surely never meant for our own spiritual growth *alone*. Generations have been cheered and inspired by the messages of hymn-writers, some of whom "learnt in suffering what they taught in song," while others, moving amid sunlight, tuned their minstrelsy to notes of never-dying praise and joy. A speaker, dwelling once on the blessed truth that minds, differing in various minor points, yet meet in Him to Whom every knee shall bow, spoke of a religious service in which the composers of the hymns were specially noticed. The hymns sung were alike helpful, scriptural, beautiful, yet how various were the creeds of the writers! They called themselves by differing names, but all blended harmoniously in praising God, and all had a message of inspiration for those who had met in the Saviour's name. "We owe a debt of gratitude," said the speaker, "to these men of various creeds; God has enabled them all to help and influence us—but what about the influences that are *unknown?*" For he noticed, too, that certain hymns were anonymous; their composers were unknown, though hundreds of hearts found expression in those words of trust and praise. The song lived, though the singer had passed away, "remembered by what he had done:" how many at this present time are inspiring others with new peace and faith and hope, yet unseen, unrecognised as to their quiet influence, save by Him Who knows how they are working out His will! We cannot all be sweet singers in Israel, but we can all make life "one grand, sweet song;" and it will matter little how soon our names be forgotten on earth, if only some of our fellow-creatures enter eternity the better for our existence, our influence, our Christianity.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

List of contributions received from January 25th, 1889, up to and including February 22nd, 1889. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month:—

A. W., Crawley, 1s.; An Anxious Girl, Sydenham, 5s.; Wighill Park, 14s.; H. F. H., Leicester, £1; G. E. H., Chichester, 5s. 6d.; A Reader of THE QUIVER, Barnstaple, 5s.; S. S. S., Staines, 5s.; J. J. E., Govan (sixteenth donation), 5s.; Maude Fallowfield, Brixton Hill, 3s.; T. G., Beckenham, 5s.; Anon., Dublin, 1s.; E. M. H., Newbury, 10s.; Anon, Glasgow, £1; A Wellwisher, Worcester, 3s. 6d.

The Editor has received 10s. for THE QUIVER Lifeboat, which he has forwarded to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE READING SOCIETY.

DAILY READINGS BEARING ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

APRIL 15—MAY 12.

APRIL.	MORNING.	EVENING.
15.	Deuteronomy x., from ver. 12.	St. Matthew xxii. 34–40; Deut. vi. 3–9.
16.	Leviticus xix., 9–18.	Romans xiii.
17.	St. Luke x. 25–37.	Psalm ii.
18.	Isaiah xlv., 5–18.	Micah vi., to ver. 11.
19.	Galatians v., from ver. 13.	Hosea vi., to ver. 6; 1 Samuel xv. 17–23.
20.	1 John iv., from ver. 11.	St. Matthew vii., to ver. 12.
21.	St. Mark xii. 28–37.	St. Mark xiii. 1–13.
22.	St. Matthew xxiv. 1–14.	St. Luke xxi. 5–19.
23.	Acts v., from ver. 33.	Psalm xlvi.
24.	St. Luke xix. 41–48; Acts ii. 17–27.	1 Corinthians i., to ver. 8, and 17–24.
25.	Colossians i. 6–23.	Romans xv. 13–21.
26.	St. Luke xii., to ver. 12.	St. Matthew x. 18–31.
27.	Revelation ii., to ver. 11.	Psalm xxiii.
28.	St. Mark xiii. 1–13.	St. Mark xiii. 24–37.
29.	St. Luke xxi., from ver. 25.	Revelation iii., to ver. 12.
30.	St. Matthew xxv., to ver. 13.	St. Matthew xxiv., from ver. 42.
MAY.		
1.	1 St. Peter iv.	Acts xx. 22–32.
2.	St. Luke xii. 35–46.	Daniel vii., to ver. 14.
3.	St. Luke xix. 11–26.	Revelation i.
4.	St. Matthew xxv. 14–29.	2 St. Peter iii.
5.	St. Mark xiii. 24–37.	St. Mark xiv. 1–9.
6.	St. Matthew xxvi. 1–16.	St. John xii., to ver. 11.
7.	Exodus xii. 3–14.	Deut. xv. 7–11; Galatians vi., to ver. 10.
8.	Malachi i., from ver. 6.	Exodus xxxvi., to ver. 7; Psalm xcvi., to ver. 8.
9.	Malachi iii., to ver. 12.	St. John xi. from ver. 45.
10.	St. Matthew v. 16–24; St. Mark xii. from ver. 41.	Psalm cxvi.
11.	St. Matthew xxv., from ver. 34.	Psalm cxii.
12.	St. Mark xiv. 1–9.	St. Mark xiv. 12–26.

XUM



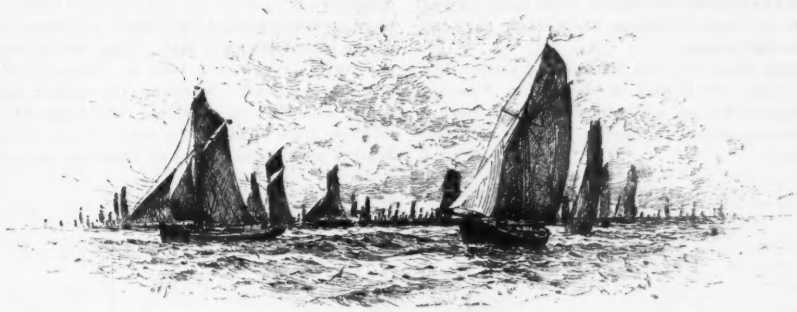


THE VICARS DAUGHTER.

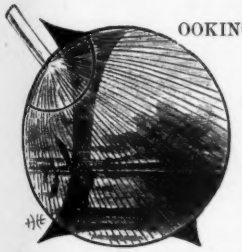
See p. 518.

SUNDAY UNDER THE SHADOW OF HELIGOLAND.

BY THE REV. F. HASTINGS.



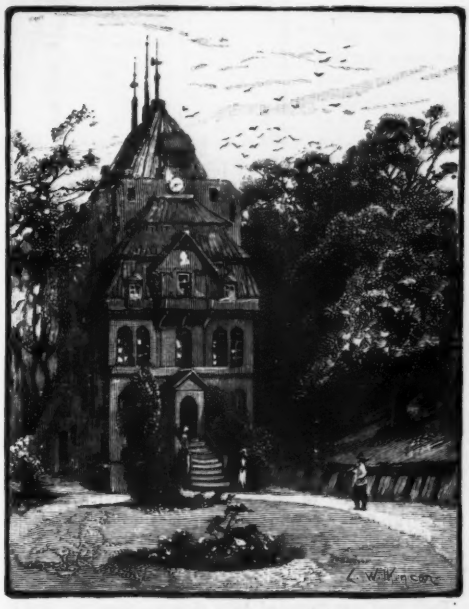
THE FLOATING TOWN.



LOOKING for "a needle in a bottle of hay" is doubtless a difficult task. To look for a fishing fleet in the North Sea is perhaps more difficult. The needle would probably be stationary, but the fleets move about. They are now in one place, then in another, and the North Sea is very wide. The skipper of the *James Knott* thought he could soon find one of the great fleets, but somehow we were several days before we came on one. We had evidently passed the "Short Blue" in the night, and went on and on until we found another. We had calm and fog at times to contend with. I would rather have the former than the latter. We could hear in the dense fog, at night-time, the horrible warning whistles of two great steamers. We had only a trumpet, blown by a bellows, with which to reply. We grunted and squeaked out thereby our supplication to the leviathan to avoid running over us. When we could hear her fog-whistle begin to die away in the distance, we began to breathe more freely. Then a ship nearly ran over us. So near was she that our skipper ordered the boat to be got ready for escape. His brilliant "flare" saved us. The "flare" is a strong light, probably of magnesium. With flapping to and fro of the sails, groanings of the boom, and screechings of the peak, so the fog-night passed. Morning brings clearness. We can go forward. Where is the fleet? We hail steamers and passing fishermen: "Where is the fleet?" We get on the track of one at last; and it is the Grimsby fleet.

It is Saturday morning when we come up to the long-looked-for fishing squadron, appearing in the distance like a great floating town. Soon skipper Goodchild, of the *Sophia Wheatly*, is on board. He is glad to see us. He tells me that I was the first, in a previous trip, to lead him to try and muster courage to address a public meeting. Soon arrangements are made for services on the morrow. Oh, that it may be a fine day! "We have been praying for it," said the skipper. "If it is too rough the men dare not leave their smacks, and if foggy they may not find them again."

Morning breaks. At five I am on deck. Yes, the prayers of the hopeful Christians on the waters are answered. Will the weather hold? It does. At seven there is a rare hearty prayer-meeting on board our vessel. At ten we go on board the larger Mission



THE RITZIBÜTTELS SCHLOSS.

ship. Smack after smack, with white or dark russet sails, slowly pass. Boats push off with several in each who wish to attend worship. The ships carrying Christian skippers are easily known, as the Bethel flag will be seen floating at the mast-head. This is done to confess Christ, and also, should there be no regular service, to let other Christians know where they can find like-minded men.

Our great blue-and-white Mission-flag, sixteen feet long, is flying. So is that of the *Sophia Wheatly*. The whole fleet can see, and recognise them as readily as on shore we should the joyous jingle of the Sabbath bells.

could easily get away. Over the waves they danced in irregular measure. When our boat was wanted our skipper called for "the carriage and pair." Really, our two pullers were as strong as horses.

It must be said that Miss Gwennie Davie and my daughters, who went to sing solos and play the harmonium, accomplished the task of getting in and out of the boats with great skill. They had to leap when the waves brought the boat up; then the bulwark could be clutched. Sometimes it seemed as if the rolling smack would smash our small boat. No ladders or steps were used at the sides of the vessels, but brawny and willing arms of fishermen supplied the



THE DERELICT "COPER."

Here come more boats. Soon a goodly number of men are gathered on the deck. Leaning against the bulwark, I give out a hymn. It is sung with vigour. The sound wafted o'er the waters draws more on board. Still they come. We will go down between decks. The fishermen like warmth. We have it in two senses. What a sight it was to see the hold crowded with seventy rough fishermen! And what singing! They put some energy into their praise. Hymns about Heaven and Christ stir them most. Poor fellows! living such a hard life, exposed to great dangers, and so long away from home, they like that which speaks of home and rest. With a brief interval for refreshments, services went on about six hours.

What a peculiar appearance the great Mission ship presented, with the number of boats dragged behind! Each boat was fastened by a separate rope, so that it lack. The men were delighted to see ladies come among them. Thoughts of home and their own dear ones doubtless crowded behind those moistened eyes. Some of the men expressed to me their surprise that ladies dared to come to the wild North Sea. One said, "I am thankful that so much interest is now taken by the ladies of England in such apparently God-forsaking fishermen as ourselves."

After the regular services on board the *Sophia Wheatly*, Skipper Goodchild, Mr. Cook, the temperance lecturer, and others, came on board the *James Knott*. On the deck all lingered long, singing more hymns and having a Bible-reading. With reluctance they said, "So long; good-bye." The twilight fell. Lights—red, green, white—were moving about. Then the "Down-trawl" signal was given by a rocket from the admiral's ship, and only white lights then were seen, to show that the vessels were at rest in trawling.

We leave the fleet with less misgiving than we had felt aforetime. We know that now there is no dark-looking, wretched coper, or floating public-house, following the fleet. Thanks to the international arrangement, drams, debt, and drowning cannot now be dealt out to the poor fishermen for the profit of conscienceless men. We had been privileged to see the last "coper" brought into Ostend—an ill-shapen derelict, with sails torn and spars broken. May none ever go out again to do damage to the good work now carried on among the deep-sea toilers!

As we were close to Heligoland, we hoped to be able to hold a service there, such as has been held by the Mission, once a year, for several years past. A strong wind, however, sprang up, and we could not venture to enter. We beat round about the island, and then had to run for Cuxhaven. The heavy seas tumbling over our vessel, and the wind increasing, the captain thought it advisable to make for that place, as we could find no shelter elsewhere. It was fortunate we did so. The gale that night would have tried very severely the qualities of our little bark, even if she had weathered it. The skylight, being large and square, would have let the sea in, as it afterwards did, much to the alarm of the ladies, the very last night before she reached Yarmouth.

We had, as we passed, a grand view of the island of Heligoland, with its square lofty red rocks rising like a huge mahogany table from the midst of the blue waters. Its white lighthouse crowned the loftiest and greenest point, and its houses nestled in the southern sheltered spot. Beyond was Sandy Island, with a narrow space of water between. Through the passage between the two islands winds raged, and would have given our cable a severe straining, even if it held. We were glad our skilful and careful skipper determined to run for Cuxhaven. Soon we sight the first of the six red lightships that direct the mariner up the treacherous channel of the Elbe. Our signal is hoisted for a pilot; after a time one comes on board, and we reach Cuxhaven and turn from out the Elbe into the pleasant little river. We could appreciate the words of the Psalmist: "Then are they glad, because they be quiet." At night, as the gale increased and swept over the town, we could only thank our God most heartily that we were not exposed to its fury on waters so difficult to navigate.



THE OLD GERMAN MILL.

The harbour of Cuxhaven was crowded with the gaily painted smacks of the German fishermen. Their carven green-tipped rudders, their brilliant vermilion mast-heads, their deeply tanned sails, and light brown varnished hulls in the foreground; the old mill, the quaint and tumble-down buildings on either hand; the soft woods surrounding the Schloss, or château, and the pointed spire of the church of Ritzibüttels in the distance, formed a picture that might tempt the skill of any artist. We were soon ashore and wandering along the sea-wall, all shaded by lime- and walnut-trees. Then we go through narrow streets, with timber-crossed, gable-ended houses and shops thrown into prominence by the old-fashioned outside oil-lamps. As the twilight fell the whole place became quite romantic in our eyes.

A piece of notepaper with a border of tarred twine, nailed to a post on the wharf, told in English and German that a service would be held on the yacht at six o'clock. That hour was said to be the best, because at seven the *Abendbrod*, or evening meal, was taken. To the many fishing smacks I went round and asked the crews to come. I had thereby brief conversations on religious subjects with many of the men. I found them prepared to receive any good word that might be spoken. They were reverent, and gladly accepted the invitation. They promised, and came. Not only they, but many others likewise, shipowners,

brokers, captains of steamers, visitors, and sailors from the neighbouring man-of-war. Four or five nights successively, spite of strong winds, were services in English and in German held. At the last there must have been at least eleven or twelve hundred people within hearing, on the deck, swarming the ratlines, on steamers around, and lining the wharf ten or a dozen deep. Books were eagerly sought. If only we had had sufficient copies of the "Sacred Songs," we might have sold a great number. How they begged for them! "We would willingly pay anything for them," said some. "Would we come back again?" "You must come back next year, and bring plenty of the sweet books with you." How sorry we were to have to go away from people so ready for good things!

When the yacht reached Heligoland the second time, she was regarded as tainted and needing quarantine. On no account would the governor permit a landing. "Anything can be sent to you, but no one can come ashore," was his message. The fact is that small-pox had broken out in the Grimsby fleet, and as the yacht had been in that fleet, she was put under the ban. The governor, of course, is right in doing his best to keep disease out of the tight little island he rules; but it was awkward for the crew of the yacht. The purposed services had, alas! to be postponed.

Through this repulse, services were held in another fleet which was sighted the next day. As they were like those in the Grimsby fleet, it is unnecessary to speak further of them. A letter brought by the fishing steamer from the "Director" of the Mission, summoned the *James Knott* in haste to Scarborough, where help was needed in various services. Mr. Mather awaited her arrival, and had the pleasure of bearing away to Queen Victoria Street from that fashionable sea-side resort nearly a hundred pounds towards the expenses of the Mission. Friends there helped very generously. We were glad there should have been such liberal help; as we believe that, if there is a useful organisation, it is that known as the M.D.S.F. (Mission to Deep-sea Fishermen). These mystic letters are seen on ship's prow, skipper's cap, men's guernseys. In "Nor'ard of the Dogger" mention is made of one little girl who is said not to have been able to understand them. She was puzzled greatly over them. She thought at length, as her father had been reformed, and had become one of the crew of a Mission ship, and had greatly changed his conduct in the home, that they meant, "Mother Doesn't Scold Father." That girl had not learned her letters in vain!

DOROTHY'S VOCATION.

BY EVELYN EVERETT GREEN, AUTHOR OF "MONICA," "OLIVER LANGTON'S WARD," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER I.—MR. TEMPLETON'S FAMILY.

"MY dearest Dorothy," said Claudia with a little laugh, half condescending, half mocking, "girls with vocations do not care about riding in the Park."

"I did not say I wanted to ride in the Park," answered Dorothy. "I don't; I think it is very dull. But I should like sometimes to have a ride again—a real good ride, out into the country; but I never get the chance. You always say the horses are wanted for something else. I don't quite know why you and Mabel always get it all your own way; I think my turn ought to come just now and then."

Claudia laughed again, touching Dorothy's face with the tips of her gloved fingers as if she had been a child. This kind of condescending treatment always ruffled up Dorothy's feelings more than anything. She was twenty-one—only five years younger than Claudia, and three years younger than Mabel; she had at last been introduced in society, and she saw no reason why she should be treated by her sisters as if she were a mere school-girl. She was not aggressive or exacting—she accepted the third place as a matter of course; but she could not see why matters should be arranged as if a great gulf divided her from her sisters. She had willingly remained in the schoolroom a decidedly longer time than most girls do; but now that she really was "out," and had made her *début*, not altogether unsuccessfully, in society, she failed to understand why she was kept so studiously in the background.

"My dear child, you must be reasonable. We have only three horses, and papa cannot get on without his ride in the Park, and he likes Mabel and me with him. In the afternoon there is always something to be done, or else in the evening. You must consider the poor beasts. With all the work they get, long country rides are out of the question. You go into your district like a good little girl, and give the children their music and French lessons. One of these days you shall have a turn in the Park, I daresay; but you know papa is not fond of any changes."

Dorothy said no more; she turned away in silence, and quickly mounted the carpeted stairs. Her sisters laughingly gathered up their habits and swept away to the hall door, where the horses were waiting. Mabel observed, in passing, that she hoped Dorothy was not "going to be troublesome." These words reached the ears of the younger sister as she ran up-stairs, and brought a quick flush of mingled anger and pain to her cheek.

Mr. Templeton's large and commodious house in Belgravia was luxuriously furnished as far as the second floor. It was arranged after the fashion of most town houses. On the ground floor were entrance-hall, dining-room, and study; on the first floor was a suite of reception-rooms; on the second, four good bed-rooms

appropriated to his own use and that of his two elder daughters, with a spare guest-chamber when need for one arose. But though there were two more storeys to the house, the air of luxury and beauty that pervaded the lower rooms stopped short here; the staircase itself, which had been fine and wide, narrowed to smaller proportions after the second floor was passed; and the carpet was no longer soft and yielding to the foot, nor did palms or flowering shrubs adorn the turns and corners.

Dorothy, however, heeded nothing of this as she ran lightly up to her own little room upon the third floor. Here, at least, beauty blossomed out once more—beauty of a quaint, unconventional type; for Dorothy had a passionate love of the beautiful, and had lavished endless care and taste, and a good deal of money, upon this little domain of hers, which she had gradually transformed into a miniature museum of art-treasures. Gorgeous bits of needlework cunningly disposed lighted it up as with gleams of sunshine; choice etchings, engravings, or autotypes graced the walls; richly coloured bits of pottery (some really good, others only beautiful from their colour and shape) stood in quaint medley upon table and cabinet, together with odds and ends of brass and silver work, bits of wood-carving from Germany and Switzerland, and grotesque Oriental figures or models in china of beasts and birds—the gifts of her little half-brother and sister. The furniture was as mixed as the ornaments. There were two quaint-looking carved oak cabinets, a modern American walnut dressing-table with large swing-glass and brass handles, and some bamboo lounging-chairs with plenty of cushions. A well-stocked bookcase and a cottage piano completed the furniture, for the bed itself and other accessories of a sleeping-room stood in a little dressing-closet that opened out of the larger room and contained a hanging-cupboard for dresses. Dorothy liked "her room," as she called it, to be something more than a mere bed-chamber. She liked to treat it as a boudoir, and in summer most of her time was spent here in reading, music, or study. She was not much addicted to making friendships, but it was pleasant to feel that she had a place of her own, where she could see her own special friends if she wished to do so; and this little sunny south room, with its two curtained windows, and its bright array of treasured possessions all her own, was the pride and delight of her heart. On her last birthday, which, being her twenty-first, had been something rather more special than usual, she had got her father to give her a writing-table of American walnut to match the dressing-table. It stood in the corresponding window, and was still a source of pride and joy to her. Dreams of authorship had long been silently cherished within her, and she was seriously meditating the plot of a story that was to be the first stepping-stone to fame.

But no such pleasant thoughts of literary glory were in her head as she stood in the middle of her little room to-day, recalling, with flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes, and a sense of hot, angry irritation, the patronising airs of Claudia, and Mabel's mocking glances. She had a quick, warm temperament of her own, and she could not live altogether in her own dreamland; the realities of life were too strong, and her own nature was too practical and concrete. She knew she was not unreasonable in what she asked for herself, and she resented being treated like a child.

An artist would have found considerable pleasure in studying Dorothy's face and pose just then. Without being beautiful according to any received code or canon, there was something very attractive and piquant in the girl's bright, intelligent face, with its delicate, slightly *retroussé* type of feature, its large, dark, luminous eyes and rich damask colouring, that town breeding could not dim or pale. The head was small, and crowned with a mass of dusky wavy hair which could not be kept smooth and neat; the figure was slight and graceful, instinct with energy and animation. Dorothy was not short—she was fully up to medium height; but, being small-made and slight, was often taken for less. Claudia and Mabel, who were both somewhat taller, and altogether on a larger scale, were fond of calling her "little Dorothy," and speaking of her as a child; but there was nothing childish in either face or figure; both had attained the grace and dignity of early womanhood. The girl had been a good deal noticed and admired since she had come out, and perhaps it was this which had given to her something of the new sense of power that generally comes to a woman sooner or later, and is just a little bit intoxicating when it is new. But Dorothy's moments of passion and rebellion were quickly over, and as she put on her hat and gloves, and took up the little basket that always accompanied her when she went into her district, she already felt half ashamed of her sudden flush of anger.

By the time she reached her pretty room again every spark of vexation had been quenched. There is nothing like personal contact with those who are battling with the real hardships of life—the very struggle for existence itself, to teach us the comparative insignificance of our own petty troubles and woes. Dorothy's felt dwarfed into utter insignificance as she sat down in her pretty room after her walk, leaning back upon soft cushions, and seeing nothing but beauty and harmony around her. She almost wondered how she could ever have allowed herself to be vexed simply because her sisters kept the horses for their own exclusive use.

"What a little, little mind I must have," said the girl, half aloud, "to let such silly trifles as that annoy me! How I wish I could act a little more up to my own ideals!"

Dorothy had never been content to drift along the current of life in the easy fashion some girls do, especially when they have been brought up like Mr. Templeton's daughters. She had always had a loftier code of her own, higher ideals, more earnest aspirations, and a far more real hold upon those deeper truths that are so often accepted as a matter of course, without being in any practical way a light to the eyes and a guide to the steps.

Many years ago Dorothy had gravely asserted it as her opinion that every woman should have a vocation of her own. When pressed with derisive laughter to define what she meant by a vocation,

she had not been altogether successful in the attempt; but she made it clear that her idea of a vocation was something involving self-sacrifice, and somewhat, if not altogether, incompatible with the ordinary occupations of a fashionable young lady. She had never been permitted to forget this saying of hers, nor, for that matter, did she wish to. Only, as the phrase "Dorothy's Vocation" had come to be a favourite family by-word and jest, she often felt somewhat sensitive upon the subject, and resented the laugh always raised at her expense. Every disagreeable duty, as it turned up, was handed over to Dorothy as a part of her vocation, and, to do her justice, generally accepted as such, and performed in a praiseworthy spirit after the first sense of irritation had worn off. When the second Mrs. Templeton had died three years ago, leaving four little delicate children behind her, the youngest barely a year old, the elder sisters had impressed it upon Dorothy that it was undoubtedly her vocation to look after the motherless little ones; and she had gladly accepted the charge, supplementing the efforts of the daily nursery governess, and being to them something between mother, sister, and playfellow—a something that entirely won their hearts, and made Dorothy the sun and centre of their lives.

When the good rector of their parish had tried to enlist the sympathies of the Miss Templetons on behalf of the poor around them, of course it was upon Dorothy's shoulders that all the real work fell. It was so in a hundred little minor offices, and the girl was so used to be thus employed that it was seldom she rose in revolt. A strong conscientious wish to do right, and to make something more of her life than a mere vehicle for amusement, gave her energy and patience and forbearance, and on the whole Dorothy was very happy and little disposed to quarrel with her lot.

When she had cooled down from her hot walk, and had re-done her unruly hair, washed her hands, and put on a cool, pretty cotton dress, she left her room again, and the moment she put her foot outside the door, the close proximity of children was clearly indicated by the babble of childish voices. In fact, with the exception of Dorothy's own room, the whole of the third floor of the house was given up to nurseries, and the door of the schoolroom, or smaller of the two day-nurseries, was close to that of her own room.

Opening this door softly, Dorothy stepped across the threshold. Three out of the four children were sitting round a table, at which the nursery governess presided. They were pretty, gentle, delicate-looking children, with an essentially town-bred air. They did not look as if they would ever have energy to chase butterflies across sunny meadows, or run races along garden paths, or tumble about in the hay-fields, as country children do. Even six-year-old Winnie sat at her books with a demure air of quietude, almost absurd at her age; and the "baby-brother" Bernie, squatting in a corner over his toys, was still as a mouse at his games.

Bertie and Wilfred were saying their lessons to Miss Mansell the governess, an elderly woman with great experience of nursery discipline. She was very patient and painstaking, and Dorothy thoroughly liked and respected her, though she wished sometimes that she would infuse a little more life and merriment both into her teaching and into her little pupils.

Dorothy's advent at the close of lesson hours was always hailed with an outbreak of gladness as animated as anything these quiet children ever indulged in. To-day was "half-holiday" too, and Miss Mansell left at one o'clock, which meant that sister Dolly generally spent the afternoon with them and often took them to the Park.

To-day was to be a red-letter day in that nursery, for the children had been promised a visit to the Zoo the first fine warm Wednesday afternoon that came, and they saw by Dorothy's smiling face that the promise was to be made good this very same half-holiday.

It was kinder of the sister to take them than they could understand, for money was not so plentiful with Dorothy that she could organise a party like this without self-sacrifice, and she never appealed to her father, who disliked to be asked for money at odd times, though he gave his daughters a liberal allowance, which Claudia and Mabel supplemented by running bills, which he paid amongst housekeeping accounts without very much noticing the items. Dorothy never got into debt, and her charities crippled her resources to a considerable extent; nevertheless, the children were indulged by her with a treat from time to time, which the elder sister enjoyed as much as they did.

"Poor little dears!" she thought that day, as she brought them home, tired, but ecstatically happy with the pleasures of the afternoon, "if I did not take them out sometimes they would never go anywhere or see anything. It is so sad for little children to have no mother!"

CHAPTER II.—A COUNTRY COUSIN.

"WELL, I *do* call this tiresome!" exclaimed Mr. Templeton at luncheon-time a day or two later, looking up from an open letter.

"What, papa?"

"If there is a thing I hate, it is a crowd of poor relations fastening on to one and bothering one out of one's life, expecting to be introduced to one's friends, and to have the run of one's house! I do wish country bumpkins would stay where they are, without being determined to see London sights, and sponge on their unlucky relations there."

Mr. Templeton was an idle, fashionable, "about-town" man, addicted, from paucity of ideas, to outbursts of feeling, when things did not quite please him, out of all proportion to the subject-matter in hand. Claudia knew this, and asked what had happened without much anxiety.

"Happened? Why, this has happened: that a cousin of mine—or rather my mother's cousin she was, though a good bit younger than my mother, and a good bit older than me—has suddenly taken it into her head to come up to town with her family, and of course she expects some civilities from me. As a boy I knew her well; but I haven't seen her this thirty years. She went and married a man as poor as a church mouse, and I've never heard a word of her since. I only hope

she hasn't brought a whole tribe of needy children with her in the hope that I shall 'do something' for some of them. She 'has hopes of seeing something of me and mine.' People never want to see one unless they think there's something to be gained by it. I know the world!"

"What is the name of these people?"

"Seymour. I remember the marriage. She married rather late in life—the man, as I say, was as poor as a church mouse. Can't think what such people



"How I wish I could act a little more up to my ideals!"—*p.* 487.

want coming to town like millionaires! They've been living all their life in some little rustic hole nobody's ever heard of. No doubt she'll wear crinolines and poke-bonnets, and they'll all talk some horrid provincial dialect. And they expect us to introduce them in our set!"

"I don't see that we need do that," answered Claudia, who was used to her father's exaggerated way of viewing things, and who had now possessed herself of the letter. "Mrs. Seymour writes like a lady, and does not seem to expect any great things of us. I don't suppose they are as bad as you make out, if they are relations of ours; but of course country cousins are a fearful nuisance, hanging on to one through a London season. We must manage to give them the go-by quietly and politely; but there's no real difficulty about that, if one only goes the right way to work."

"Well, well, but what is the right way?" asked Mr. Templeton in a sort of nervous fidget. "What am I to say? What are we to do? If she doesn't get an answer of some kind to her letter soon, we shall have the whole house invaded by a crew of needy Seymours—ill-dressed provincial people one would blush to own—I know we shall!"

Claudia smiled in her serene way.

"I don't think we shall be invaded quite in that fashion, papa; but there is an easy way out of the difficulty. Dorothy can go and call at this place this afternoon, and explain how very busy you are, and all of us, at this time of year. She can say some civil things about hoping to meet sooner or later, but can avoid making any definite appointment. There is little danger of our being in when they return the call. Dorothy can show them some little civilities in the way of taking them about to see the sights, and so on. A little diplomacy goes a long way with unsophisticated people like that; and if they are so poor, they will not be staying long. If you leave matters in my hands, I will undertake that you shall not be troubled."

"It shall be Dorothy's vocation to look after the country cousins," cried Mabel, clapping her hands. It was Mabel's *rôle* to be girlish and giddy, as a sort of foil to the more stately Claudia. "It will be an office after her own heart. She will love playing the part of lady patroness to a whole crew of poor relations."

"Well, well, my dears, settle it your own way; only leave me in peace," answered Mr. Templeton in his nervous, irritable way. "I never did care for Selina Rivers—Selina Seymour she is now. She wasn't my style at the best of times, and will be less so than ever now. Be as civil as you like to her yourself, Dorothy, but don't you go and let us all in for a family intimacy. You understand?"

"Perfectly, papa," answered Dorothy, with a little flush in her cheek. "When would you like me to go?"

"Oh, the sooner the better, else we shall have them all here. Make it plain to them that we are in a perfect whirl of engagements, that it's really all but impossible to get a spare hour to oneself, and that we are out every night of our lives."

Dorothy's face had put on a look which made her sisters think it would be better to let her go on her errand without any farther hints or cautions. They knew how "foolish, unpractical, and unworldly-wise" their younger sister was, and that she was the more likely to take to people who were poor and insignificant than the well-to-do and successful. She was very well suited to the mission, for she was certain to be warm and cordial herself; yet she must know her father and sisters too well to attempt to force upon them an acquaintance they wished to repudiate. She had plenty of shrewd common sense, and no lack of tact when she chose to exert it. In this case she was likely to do so for the sake of sparing the feelings of the "poor relations."

Dorothy started willingly enough upon her errand. She was not in the least shy, and had no fear in the prospect of an encounter with her unknown kinsfolk, whilst the fact that they were poor and despised warmed her heart towards them better than anything else could have done; and she made up her mind that anything she could do to render pleasant their sojourn in town should not be lacking to them.

She did not know the name of the street in which they were lodging, but the quarter was good, and when she reached the place she saw at once that the house was fine and large. It was a private hotel, she discovered, at which they were staying, and it seemed to her from its aspect as if it could hardly be a very inexpensive place of resort. However, that was no business of hers, and in fact proved nothing.

She asked for Mrs. Seymour, "or any of the family," giving in her card at the same time. She was detained a few minutes in the hall whilst the messenger went to make inquiries, and was then taken up-stairs and ushered into a pleasant, spacious first-floor drawing-room. It was tenanted only by a tall, long-legged young man, who had evidently been reclining on the sofa, and who rose up as Dorothy appeared, and held out his hand.

"How good of you to come so soon, Miss Templeton! I am so sorry my mother is out; but she will be in very soon, in less than half an hour. I hope you will wait and see her. She will never forgive me if I let you go. I suppose I must introduce myself to you. I am your cousin, Ralph Seymour. Cousins should always be friends, should they not?"

"I don't know, I'm sure; I never had any," answered Dorothy promptly, something in the languid, half-humorous, half-nonchalant air and manner of this tall young man awaking within her an instinct that she should have to hold her own with him. "You're not my cousin at all, really; you're only," after a moment's rapid calculation, "you're only my second cousin once removed; we're not even the same generation. I don't call that a relationship at all."

His sleepy eyes were gleaming beneath their heavy lids.

"Now, that is what I call really unkind," he answered; "a sort of repudiation of country cousins which cuts deep—I assure you it does, and I am very sensitive on such points; I am indeed. I thought better of you from the promptitude of your visit, and from the kindness of your face. I thought you would be willing to solace the loneliness of an invalid by remaining here at least till my mother returns."

Dorothy's colour had flown up at the words "country cousins"—a fact not unobserved by the sharp eyes of the cousin in question. She sat down as he finished his speech, looking at him with more attention than she had vouchsafed before.

"I shall be pleased to wait and see Mrs. Seymour," she said, "especially as she will not be out long. Are *you* an invalid?"—with rather a sceptical look at the broad shoulders and long limbs of her companion.

"Very much so indeed," he answered, extending those same long limbs in a semi-recumbent posture upon the sofa. "It is mainly on my account that we have come up. My case is critical, you see."

"I don't see anything. You look well enough. What is the matter with you?"

"Well, that, of course, they don't absolutely tell me. I incline to the opinion that I am in the last stage of a decline."

Dorothy laughed heartlessly.

"You look like it!"

"Looks are proverbially deceptive in such cases. Some day, perhaps, you will hear the truth from others. Then you'll be sorry you laughed at me."

Unfeeling Dorothy only laughed again.

"I should not think you had any brothers and sisters, have you?" she asked with apparent irrelevancy.

"No; I occupy that touching position of an only child. *Fils unique*, you know."

"Very unique indeed, I should think! I guessed as much."

"May I ask why?"

"Oh, if you'd been one of a lot of brothers and sisters, you'd not have been allowed to get so lazy, or to give yourself such interesting airs. One gets stirred up, you know."

"You speak feelingly—from experience, I presume?"

"Oh, yes, I have plenty of experience. I have two sisters older than myself, and three little half-brothers and one sister ever so much younger. It's a great thing to be one of a family; it keeps the nonsense out of one."

Ralph's long, dark grey eyes were twinkling sleepily.

"So it would appear, indeed. Then I was wrong just now in addressing you as Miss Templeton?"

"Yes; I'm only Dorothy."

"I'm so glad! 'Only Dorothy' is much prettier than the other. I like cousins to be friendly. I'm only Ralph, you know."

"I did not say I was 'only Dorothy' to you."

"Pardon me, it was certainly to me you said you were 'only Dorothy.'"

"That's not a fair way of putting it."

"I'm so sorry; I thought it was particularly fair. I've a constitutional dislike to those clever people who are always splitting hairs, and trying to make a distinction without a difference."

"By which, I suppose, you mean me?"

"Not at all. I was trying to show you that I could under no circumstances suspect you for a moment of belonging to that objectionable class."

Dorothy felt that she wanted all her wits about her to hold her own with this country cousin. She began to entertain a shrewd doubt whether he was quite so countrified as she had been led to expect. He had an ease and a self-possession of manner that certainly had nothing of rusticity in it, and accent and intonation were perfectly refined, without the faintest trace of provincialism. Neither was there anything suggestive of the "poor relation" either in the young man himself or his surroundings. If the Seymours were poor in their country home, at any rate they intended to be comfortable during their visit to town. Ralph spoke as if they were fixtures at this private hotel, in which they evidently occupied the best rooms, and it appeared, by what he said, that they were to stay there some time.

"I hope you enjoyed yourself at the Zoo the other day," said the young man in a pause of the conversation. "You can't think how your presence added to my enjoyment. I was getting bored with the beasts till I fell in with your party. You know, country cousins always feel bound to go to the Zoo amongst the first sights. I practically joined you then; it was so pleasant to hear everything explained without the trouble of thinking!"

"I did not see you," said Dorothy.

"You were otherwise occupied, you see; and I was discreet in my admiration."

"I think you were very rude, following us about as you say you did."

"Natural affinity asserting itself unconsciously," was the cool reply. "Blood, you know, is proverbially thicker than water."

"I thought you were an invalid!"

"A little mild exercise on a warm day is not forbidden even to me. You need not look so severe; I assure you, I am quite harmless. Ah! and there is my mother's step; I told you she would not be long.—Mother, here is my cousin, Miss Dorothy Templeton, come to call upon you. We have been vowing an eternal friendship."

CHAPTER III.—MRS. SEYMOUR.

Dorothy fell in love with Mrs. Seymour at the first glance, as many less impulsive persons had done before her. She was a peculiarly sweet-looking old lady, who appeared older than her sixty years from the snowy whiteness of her abundant hair, and the perfect calm and peacefulness of the expression of her gentle face. She was in indoor dress when she entered the room—a plainly made but rich black satin, with fine old lace upon her head and round her neck and wrists. All was perfectly simple and in exquisite taste. Dorothy thought she had never seen a more striking or picturesque figure anywhere, and each movement and tone of the voice heightened the effect of the impression produced.

"My dear, this is very good of you. You do not know what a pleasure it is to look upon the face of one of your mother's children. She was a dear, dear friend of mine when we were both young together, though I was many years her senior. Do you know how *very* like her you are? And you have her name, too. My boy recognised you the other day at the Zoological Gardens from your likeness to a picture in my possession. He came and told me he was certain he had seen a Miss Templeton; and that prompted me to write to your father, for I really did not know before that he still lived in town. I am so glad to see you, my love. We are not very nearly related, but our family has so few branches still living that we must make the most of such kinsfolk as we have;" and she kissed Dorothy, and drew her gently to a seat beside her on the sofa. Ralph meantime had leisurely withdrawn; and when relieved from the consciousness of the keen scrutiny of those sleepy grey eyes, Dorothy was able to talk with greater ease, and to get through her task as ambassador without the same difficulty as she would have experienced in his presence. She explained how busy and how constantly out her father and sisters were at this time of year, and Mrs. Seymour met her more than half-way, saying in her gentle, graceful way that of course she could well understand it all; she never expected to see much of town friends during the busy months of the season; but that if Dorothy could spare time to come and see her sometimes, and go about with her a little, it would be a very great pleasure. To which advance Dorothy gladly and eagerly responded, for she was practically mistress of her own time, and was delighted to think of paying attentions to these slighted kinsfolk, and improving acquaintance with this sweet-faced old gentlewoman. She hoped Mrs. Seymour did not too clearly grasp the situation; at least, if she did so, she did not let it appear. As a matter of fact, she had a vivid recollection of Mr. Templeton's character and disposition, and was able to hazard a shrewd guess as to how matters really stood.

However, she did not let Dorothy see this, but encouraged her to talk of herself, and her home, and the children who were so much to her; and delighted the warm-hearted girl by suggesting that she should bring them all to tea there some day soon.

"Oh, how kind of you! They will so like it; and they have so few treats, poor little dears."

"We must try and give them some amongst us. Ralph will be delighted; he is so fond of children."

"*Is* he?"

"Yes; why should he not be?" asked the mother, with a little smile.

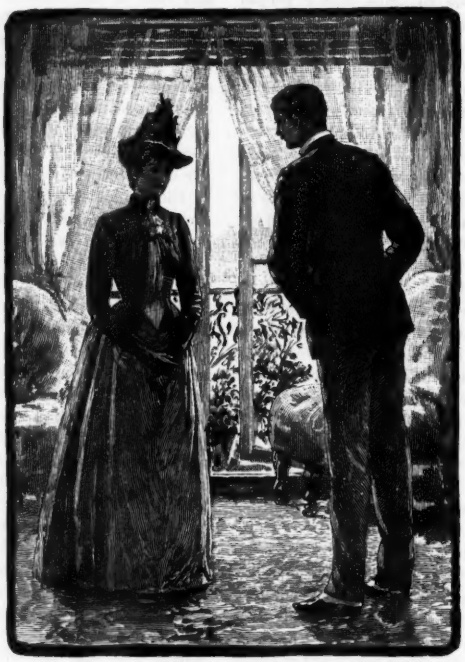
"Oh, I don't know; only young men generally think them a bore; and I thought he seemed rather lazy and sarcastic."

Mrs. Seymour smiled—a sort of proud, fond, happy smile, that spoke volumes in itself.

"Ralph does not quite do himself justice, but you will understand him better in time. He has no choice but to be lazy just now, poor boy."

"Is he ill, then?—I thought he was only shamming."

"That's what most people think, and what he likes them to think; that's why he puts on those injured airs to help the delusion. He is much better now, but still under doctor's rules. I made him come to town on purpose to consult a specialist about him. His orders are to take things very quietly for two or three months to come. That is why I mean to stay here. I can keep Ralph idle in town; but in the country it is almost impossible. Since his father's death he has had everything on his hands, and it seems impossible for him to be quiet."



"'How good of you to come so soon, Miss Templeton!'" —*p.* 490.

Dorothy did not know that Mr. Seymour was dead, and was glad to be enlightened. She had fancied that perhaps it was so, for Mrs. Seymour's dress, though not partaking of the character of weeds, had something in it suggestive of widowhood. To cover her momentary confusion she asked what was the matter with Ralph.

"Well, my dear, I always like telling the tale, because I am so proud of my boy, and because I think it was so characteristic of him, though he can't bear people to know, and turns it all into nonsense if he can. However, you shall hear it, at least, in the right of your cousinship, and I will tell it now; for if he comes back, you may be sure you will never hear the rights of the case. It was last Christmas—I shall never forget that awful night."

She paused, and Dorothy looked eagerly at her; she always liked to hear a story.

"Yes, my dear, it was last Christmas, and we were not spending it at home, but with some friends in the next county. Well, there had been a party on Christmas Eve—a young people's party, and the house was full of children—at least, the nursery wing was, and we were a large party altogether. In the dead of night an alarm of fire was raised. Ralph came to my room, and hurried me, half-dressed, down the stairs and out into the frosty night. He took care that I was warmly wrapped, however—he never loses his presence of mind—and I took no harm. But what a scene it was! all the fine old house in flames! And I was in terrible anxiety about Ralph, for I had an instinct that wherever the danger was greatest, he would certainly be in the thick of it. It was a fearful moment, making out in all the confusion whether all the people were safe, and it was still more terrible when a cry was raised that some children were still in the burning house, cut off past hope of rescue in the wing where the fire was raging most fiercely. We all rushed round to the extreme end of the west wing, and there, huddled up in the great staircase window, were five poor little mites, left behind in some inexplicable way in the hurried flight of nurses and children, everybody thinking in the wild confusion of the moment that somebody else had visited these particular rooms. The stairs were burnt through by this time; no ladders long enough could be found, and the children were too young and too terrified to attempt to open the window and jump down to us, as we frantically shouted to them to do. Their mother was by my side in the crowd below. I shall never forget her face of agony as she stood gazing up at the blazing pile."

Mrs. Seymour paused, but Dorothy did not speak; she felt as if she knew what was coming.

"Just then there was an excited shout, a sort of wild, breathless cheer. People were pointing and gesticulating, and soon we all saw why. There was a huge oak-tree growing near to this part of the house, and along one of its giant limbs a dark figure was crawling. We watched in breathless silence, for the feat about to be attempted was sufficiently perilous. The branch swayed and creaked, and the spring from it to an open window

many yards away could only be performed by a trained athlete. It was successfully accomplished, however. The figure sprang, caught the projecting sill with both hands, and after swinging in mid-air a moment in most perilous fashion, climbed into the burning house and vanished. The next moment the big end window was flung open, and we saw that Ralph was with the children. It was my boy who had risked his life to save them. He had a strong rope wound about him, and with it he let down the children one by one; but the fire was increasing so rapidly that he had not time to make good his own escape in that way. He had to dart back to the room from which he came and spring again into the tree. As it was, his clothes were all singed, and one arm and hand were slightly burned, but we did not know then, nor till long afterwards, that he had hurt himself any other way."

"And had he?"

"Yes, either in getting up or down, or perhaps in both, he had given himself a sprain; but he did not know it himself, and worked like a horse, getting things out of the other part of the house, giving orders, carrying weights, and not thinking one bit about himself. He wanted to keep out of the way of all the praise and admiration that was being lavished upon him, and I could hardly get him to let the mother thank him, though he consented to do so when I told him she would be miserable if he would not. We went home next day, but it was weeks before I found out there was anything wrong with Ralph, and then he only laughed at me and said strains were nothing, and that it would go off. It did not go off, however, until a sharp attack of inflammation warned him that he should not go on trifling too long; and since then he has been obliged to submit more or less to doctors' orders and take things very quietly. Sir William Gresham says he will do very well if he will be careful of himself for the next three months; but he is not to ride, or row, or play cricket, or even to walk very much; and that is why I want to keep him in town, where the inducements to do so are so much less. Some young men would be as cross as the proverbial bear with a sore head at being kept in leading-strings like this; but that isn't Ralph's way. He makes a sort of joke of it, and does as his mother tells him, just as he used when he was a tiny little fellow. I suppose every mother has her weakness where her children are concerned. I know my weakness is to think there is nobody in the world like my boy Ralph."

Ralph himself came back presently in the wake of the equipage for afternoon tea, and, taking possession of the tray, he began warming the cups and "fiddle-faddling" over the preparations with a deliberation and nicety that would have done credit to a complete old maid.

"I can't trust this kind of thing to my mother, you see, Dorothy," he said, looking across at the pair upon the sofa.—"It's all right, mother, I'm not taking a liberty; she told me herself she was to be 'only Dorothy.'—Women are always in a hurry over things, or else they get absorbed in conversation and get all abroad with the milk and sugar. We're old-fashioned people, and like sweet tea. You, I suppose, follow the new-fangled way, and take none? Ah! I thought as much. I have a remarkable gift of insight. My mother will tell you, if you don't believe me, that my intuitive perception of character is almost preternaturally acute. It's almost a misfortune, I think, to be so shrewd. One loses the pleasure of being taken by surprise, or of watching unexpected developments. It's a great gift—the power of analysis of character. You look sceptical, Dorothy, but I assure you it is, and you ought to know it. Some day I mean to write a pamphlet on the subject of—'Tea: With Sugar, and Without.' I always did yearn to see myself in print. Only if once I were to write a book and publish it, I should



"She encouraged her to talk of herself and her home."—*p.* 491.

spend the remainder of my natural life in reading it. I should not want to open another."

"My dear boy," remonstrated his mother gently, "what will Dorothy think of you?"

"Dorothy's measure of me is already taken, mother; I see it in her eyes. Some people, you know, have, like myself, a gift of reading characters by intuition. It is useless for me to try and deceive her; she knows too well what I am."

"And what is that?" asked Dorothy with spirit. "Pray let us have the definition."

"I leave that in your hands," he answered as he handed the bread-and-butter. "Doubtless you know best."

Dorothy laughed mischievously. "You seem to think I take a great interest in you, I must say," she remarked. "At present, on so slight an acquaintance, you only seem like an idle young man, very fond, like most of your race, of talking about yourself."

A smile of vivid amusement flickered in Ralph's eyes. He bowed gravely. "Admirably summed up. You could not have put it more clearly or tersely. You understand now why I long to spend my days in reading the products of my own marvellous genius."

Dorothy did not stay long after this; but she made many willing promises of future visits, and went home with the pleasant sense of having made a friend whose friendship would be well worth having. She had taken a great liking for Mrs. Seymour—which liking, she was sure, was reciprocal; and Ralph amused, if he disconcerted her a little. She was rather pleased, too, to have some friends somewhat exclusively her own; for she had discovered, as many younger sisters do, that friendships shared with their seniors are apt to turn out unsatisfactory. These people might be country cousins, and poor relations, according to her father's standard (Dorothy was not worldly-wise or experienced enough to know in what such a definition consisted); but, at least, they were pleasant and refined and educated, and that was all she cared about.

A few careless questions were asked at dinner-time with reference to the Seymours, but Dorothy had not much to say. Mrs. Seymour was "very nice," she affirmed, and quite understood about their being busy. She had hoped the children might come and see her, and Claudia felt that such a wish quite "stamped" her, though, of course, she could have no objection to the arrangement. An old lady willing to be put off with Dorothy and the children, must be a typical country cousin, and might safely be left to their society. The fact that the husband was dead, and that there was only one son, "a rustic lout, she supposed," was a distinct relief to Mr. Templeton. He could now wash his hands of the family very comfortably. He would just see his cousin once before she left; but as she had not a large needy family to bring up, there could be no reason for bestirring himself on her account. She could be very safely left in Dorothy's hands.

Dorothy smiled a little to herself as she contrasted her father's mental picture of the "rustic lout" with her own remembrance of Ralph's tall, well-made figure, by no means lacking in grace, his easy movements, refined intonation, and decidedly handsome face. However, it was not for her to sing this young man's praises, nor would anything she could say shake the preconceived ideas of her companions.

"Dorothy does not understand such things" was a regular family dictum. Sometimes in hearing it said of her, Dorothy was wont to declare at the bottom of her independent little heart that she was very glad she did not understand "that kind of thing."

(To be continued.)

THE SEVEN LEAVES OF THE VINE.

THOUGHTS UPON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF OUR LORD UPON THE CROSS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. WILLIAM ALEXANDER, D.D., D.C.L., LORD BISHOP OF DERRY AND RAPHOE.

THE SIXTH WORD FROM THE CROSS.

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished."—ST. JOHN xix. 30.

BEFORE this word was uttered it was formed and conceived in the heart of Christ—"Jesus, knowing that all things were now *finished*, that the Scripture might be accomplished." This, which is the most general and comprehensive of the seven utterances from the Cross, is thus vitally linked with that which is most special and human, and which rises most closely from physical suffering—"I thirst."

"It is finished."* *What* is finished? we reverently ask.

1. First, and most obviously, the earthly life under its human conditions.

An utterance equivalent to this comes from the lips of doomed or of dying men every day, and in every land. The most commonplace of the soldiers who stood nearest to the Cross, if asked by a rough comrade, or by some of the populace whose curiosity was stimulated, but who had failed to catch those few syllables, "What does the dying Galilean say?" would have replied, "He is only

* St. John xix. 28. The word here, as in ver. 30, is τετέλεσται. The change from the "*accomplished*" of ver. 28, A.V., to the "*finished*" of the R.V. is of first-rate importance and significance, and conveys to English readers a sense of the connection between the sixth word from the Cross and the marvellous glimpse into the Lord's soul in ver. 28, such as they did not before possess.

saying that he is just at the point of death—that all is over with him." *

But for us, who know something of it from the authentic record of the Gospels, what a life it was!

The Evangelists, of course, make no pretensions to give us a complete biography of Jesus Christ upon earth. No human pen, however marvellous, could have compassed the work. If they could, the result might not have been advantageous, on the whole, to the Church or to the world.† But this we do know. The Life whose fountain was in God—the Life, the eternal Life, which was with the Father—was manifested to us. That Life developed itself in a human existence, shrouded in silence all but unbroken for thirty years; for three years and a half working in sympathetic love, in teaching of exhaustless meaning, in an atmosphere of miracle, yet exposed to suffering and contradiction, and therefore the one Life of which He who lived it could say without presumption—"My meat is to be doing evermore, even mentally, the will of Him who sent Me, and so, when the time comes, being able to accomplish His work by one great crowning act."‡ "I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do." That one white life-page among the records of blurred and broken human existence is turned over. "It is finished."§

2. For those who believe in the vital connection of the Old Testament with the New, and in the *exegesis* of Apostles and Evangelists—not to say of Jesus Himself—there is a secret meaning which is suggested almost more instinctively, and which is certainly more prominent in the Evangelist's thought. The sixth word from the Cross, that all things in *Scripture* have now passed into accomplishment, that Scripture actually and essentially is "finished"—this, as we have already indicated, is pre-eminently the conception of St. John. Here, as so often in other instances, the fourth Evangelist ventures to read his Master's soul. "Jesus, *knowing* that all things are now finished, that the Scriptures might be accomplished, saith, I thirst. . . . When Jesus *therefore* had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished."‖ St. John looks into the heart of Scripture, and then into the heart of Christ.

It is profitable to look at this closely. All things which the law *required* were "finished" by Christ in His human life. He had "fulfilled all righteousness." All that was *prophesied*, too, of Christ, the centre of the New Testament, was also "finished." Line by line that lengthened epic, of which the Messiah was the centre, was written. Believers, in their zeal, may occasionally have written their own meaning in, and *forced* a Christian reference where it was not designed. But, after all deductions, the poem remains complete, and the image of the Hero can never be volatilised away by the ingenuity of critical objection. Here and there the hints may be ambiguous, and the interpretation obscure; but, ever and anon, someone arises, and "gives in song what he has learned in sorrow." David wails forth some anguish in the twenty-second Psalm, the like of which in its fulness none but One has ever known. Isaiah describes in vision the form which John saw upon Calvary. Or, varying the figure, we may call prophecy a picture growing upon the canvas stroke by stroke. Sometimes centuries elapse between one touch and the next, which could only be given by the hand of a heaven-born painter. Slowly, but surely, was the picture drawn, the crucifixion depicted: yet not merely the crucifixion, a single painting. High over the Cross is a living form that floats in glory. Round the representation of the Crucified are the likenesses of the Ascension and of the Judge upon His throne. And all this was shaped out, not on canvas or in stone, but in deathless words, and then expressed by the living God in human flesh in a human life. "All things that are written by the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son of Man."* *Prophecy* was "finished."

But this "finished" refers to a yet wider expansion of Scripture. All that was *typical* was now *realised*. The separate features of prophets, priests, kings, meet together and are centred in Him. One great passage in the Pentateuch brings together and summarises the different kind of sacrifices under the Law. The Nazarite's offerings were *four*—the burnt-offering, the sin-offering, the peace-offering, the meat-offering. "These four, taken together, represent the fourfold fulness of the one offering of Christ." His total and entire self-dedication answers to the first; His atonement fulfils the second; our admission to quiet communion with God is the realisation of the third; the representation of His death, and the communication of its benefits in a blessed feast, is one part of the fourth.† Thus, when His sacrifice draws to its completion, *type* and *sacrifice* are "finished."

Yet once again, all that was promised of spiritual and abiding import is "finished." The Old Testament is a book of promises. Some are of dim magnificence; others are homelier and tenderer, of a pathos which touches us to tears. All culminate in the promise of promises, "He that conquereth shall inherit all things."‡ Just as he who in youth and spirits walks the mountains some sunny day can say with exultation, "All the sunshine and the

* Τέλος ἔχει τὰ πάντα μοι. "All things are at end for me," says the dying man in a Greek drama.

† St. John xxi. 25.

‡ Such would seem to be the sense of ἵνα ποιῶ. . . καὶ τελειώσω (St. John iv. 34): to be doing continuously and every moment, so as to be able to consummate, when the time shall have come, by one crowning act.

§ St. John xvii. 4. ‖ St. John xix. 28–30.

* St. Luke xviii. 31. † Numbers vi. 13–18.

‡ There is, undoubtedly, greater authority for reading "shall inherit *these things*" (Apoc. xxi. 7). But the rendering of the A. V. (so dear to Luther among others) is really identical in meaning. The ταῦτα of ver 7 (if we must adopt it) is the equivalent of the πάντα of ver. 5: "I make *all things* new."

shadows, all the clouds and breezes, all the glory and the largeness of those mountain-ranges, all are mine." And those who walk with him are none the poorer for this splendid self-appropriation. Each of those who are with him has the whole sun, and all the sky, and all the mountains, for his enjoyment. None can say, "This is mine," so that others have no part in it." *Every* conqueror inherits the whole of the promise.* The promises are "finished," here and now, with the death of Jesus. "How many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the Yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us."† All, then, which the Law and Prophets promised is *finished*, because it is in substance *obtained*, as the blossoms fall when the fruit is formed.

Once more: Things which were tolerated (imperfectness, littlenesses, lower moral ideals acquiesced in for want of a higher principle of spiritual life, rites burdensome and of dark meaning) are abrogated by the general elevation imparted by the great sacrifice. All that was temporary and accidental in the old religion is "finished," and man enters into the perfect and eternal.

In short, the human life of the Perfect Man is "finished." And with it all is done which the Law required: all fulfilled which the prophets foretold: all realised which the types shadowed: all obtained which God promised.

But even yet we are very far from having exhausted the unfathomable word.

It takes in the whole history of the world. The Cross is the central dividing point of history. The course of the ages, the chronology of the human race, is summed up in Christ, and finds its demarcation in two letters—B.C. or A.D. All the past leads up to it; all the future proceeds from it. The crisis of history is, in a sense, finished.

The sixth word is yet more deeply true for the Church. A few seconds, and all will be over. The foundations were now laid; He saw the whole temple completed to the topmost spire—

". . . from the rock as if by magic grown,
Eternal, silent, beautiful, alone."

Over against it might be the gates of Hades; but within it and above it were light and peace. The "It is finished" of the new creation is the counterpart of the "It was so" in the story of the old creation.

And yet again, the sixth word comprises the creed of the Church, of all true believers. We hear of two creeds in very different quarters. One is a creed ever elaborating itself, ever growing by a self-evolving process of accretion, ever branching out into new dogmatic subtleties. Another is a creed ever subtracting from itself, so spiritual that by degrees it shall at last subtilise itself away, and by virtue of extreme tenuity cease to exist. Such is the new Christianity, from which every dogmatic element is eliminated: in which altruism is substituted for charity, and an idea usurps the place of the living Christ. But with Jesus yielding up His spirit on the Cross, the creed also is finished, and the theology of the precious blood established for ever.

Let us ever remember that in two thoughts our salvation is complete: Christ *for* us, and Christ in us. But if the first is perfect, the second must ever be imperfect. It is one of the grandest propositions of Augustine that "between the righteousness which justifies and the righteousness wrought in us by that justification there is all the width of the difference between the immortal and mortal, the Divine and the human, the perfect and the imperfect."* There is but one perfect Worker, but one perfect work. Those who have read the Psalms most subtly and deeply have found a real link of connection between the last word of the Passion-Psalm ("He hath done it"§) and the sixth utterance from the Cross. We might with profit hear oftener than we do the old watchword of Evangelical Christians half a century ago—"Christ's finished work."

* See Hengstenberg's beautiful commentary on this text. "On the Revelation," vol. ii., 327. The fundamental passage is St. Matt. xix. 29. † 2 Cor. i. 19, 20.

* This is a paraphrase of one immortal sentence in S. Augustin. Confes. xii. 20. § Psalm xxii. 31.

THE FIFTY THOUSAND VICTIMS OF CHARLES V.

A NEW BOOK OF MARTYRS.—III.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., LL.D., ETC. ETC.

"DURING the single reign of Charles V. more than fifty thousand persons accused of having read prohibited books, of having on a certain day eaten meat, or of having entered into the bonds of marriage in defiance of canonical prohibition, were beheaded, drowned, hung, buried alive, or burnt, or suffered death in other forms."

So writes Merle D'Aubigné, in his fragment on the Reformation in the Netherlands, on the authority of Scultetus, a Protestant historian of the seventeenth century. Merle D'Aubigné does not seem to have known that a writer of much greater fame estimated the number much higher. Grotius, in his "Annals," says "not less than a hundred thousand;" while Navigero, the Venetian envoy, estimated the victims in the provinces of Holland and Friesland alone at thirty thousand, and this in 1546, ten years

before the abdication of Charles, and five years before the promulgation of that ghastly edict of his in 1550.*

The blood of fifty thousand martyrs on one man's hands! Fancy their united voices calling from under the altar, "How long, O Lord, holy and true!" And yet Charles V. has not an infamous reputation. We do not shudder at his name as we shudder at that of his son, Philip II. He has been often spoken of as a fairly respectable ruler. Yet, for the death of these fifty thousand men, nothing could be said but that their religious views stood in the way of his ambition.

It was in the Netherlands that the greater part of this slaughter occurred. The people of the Netherlands had long been eminent for their industry, their skill in the arts, their independence and love of country. The fame of their school of painting rivalled that of Italy. They were to a large degree self-governed. Their spirit of independence stood in the way of Charles, who sought to be as absolute a ruler in the Low Countries as he was in Austria and in Spain. With cool deliberation he determined that as the prevalence of Reformed views would make it more difficult to establish an absolute government, all who held them, or showed any tendency towards them, should be simply rooted out of the country. It did not seem feasible to banish them all; they were therefore drowned, hanged, burnt, or buried alive. The people were firm, and their spirit seemed to rise with their oppressions. To cow them, some illustrious victim was, from time to time, made an example of, or some new form of cruelty was devised. To the horror and indignation of the people, the Spanish Inquisition was at last introduced by Charles into the Netherlands, with all its fearful atrocities. The dismal work begun by him was continued by his son Philip, and by Cardinal Grenvelle and the



"The martyr besought him to come forward."—*p. 500.*

* See Motley's "Rise of the Dutch Republic," Part I., chap. ii.

Duke of Alva. What was the result? The best part of the country achieved its independence, and in the Seven Provinces the rule of this family of murderers came for ever to an end.

An early convert to the views of Luther was one Henry Mollerus, of the town of Zutphen, a monk of the Augustinian order, usually known as Henry Zutphen. He had been with Luther at Wittenberg, and had been profoundly impressed by Scriptural views of sin and grace. In applying for his degree of Bachelor of Theology, he had maintained some views that startled the old theologians. More remarkable than the views themselves was the fervent spirit with which they were maintained. "Christ is at once the Servant and the Master of the law. He it is Who, while sinking under the burden of sin, takes it away and casts it far from us, and destroys it. He is at once the medium of death, and the medium through which death is destroyed. He is the captive of hell, and yet it is He who bursts open its gates."

Settling for a time at Antwerp, Zutphen became a right earnest and very popular preacher. In the monastery of the Augustinians he never ceased to urge the monks to draw from the Scriptures the treasure that had enriched himself. High and low, learned and unlearned, crowded to hear him. All Antwerp hung upon his lips.

Need we say that such a man was marked out for punishment? The inquisitor, Van der Hulst, had prepared in Brussels the prison where he was to be confined. Zutphen was arrested, and when accused by the agents of the Inquisition, he replied with dauntless courage.

But his time had not come yet. After sunset, the people of Antwerp assembled in great force round the convent, burst open the doors, penetrated to his prison, carried him out, and concealed him in the house of a friend. On his finding his way to his native Zutphen, the ecclesiastical authorities summoned him before them, and demanded why he came there. "Art thou come hither to preach?" they asked him.

"With all my heart, if you will let me," said Zutphen. They drove him from the place, and he went to Bremen. There, for a time, he preached with great power and success. The Church party demanded his arrest, but the magistrates said that they had never heard anything from his lips but the pure Gospel, and they would give him up only to a legal tribunal. But on the day after the Feast of the Conception, a fanatical mob—very different from the people of Antwerp—assailed him, pulled him from his bed, dragged him almost naked over ice and snow, struck him a blow with a club, and then burnt him.*

Another early martyr—who was also of the clerical order, a youth of great ability and scholarly power—was John van Bakker, of the University of Utrecht. In the course of his studies the light of Divine truth flashed with overwhelming brightness into his soul. Unable to keep it under a bushel, he fell under suspicion. His father, who was a churchwarden in a neighbouring town, was greatly alarmed, and summoned him home.

* The circumstances of his death are somewhat differently recorded by one of the historians of the period.

Louvain had then a high reputation for orthodoxy, and Bakker was sent there; but he fell under the influence of Erasmus, and became more dangerous than ever.

After a taste of imprisonment in his native town, he was set at liberty, and hastened to Wittenberg, where he was confirmed in the faith. Returning to Holland, he was ordered to spend three years at Rome, that the poison of heresy might be worn out of his system. Instead of going thither, he traversed Holland, preaching fearlessly. His old father followed him with trembling yet admiring interest, marvelling at his zeal, enjoying his preaching, but terrified for the result.

About this time (1523) many converted priests were bearing an interesting testimony against the practice of celibacy by entering into marriage, and John van Bakker was one of them. When he married, he threw off all tokens of the priesthood, working for his living by manual labour, but preaching in private houses wherever he got the chance. Then, hearing that a papal emissary was preaching indulgences at his native town of Woerden, he hastened thither, and, in opposition to all such delusive falsehoods, proclaimed the grace of Christ for the forgiveness of sins, to the great joy and relief of many anxious souls.

But such bold proceedings could not be overlooked. Complaint was made to the Viceroy, or "Governess" of the Netherlands, a sister of the Emperor, and Bakker was committed to prison at the Hague. The news fell on his father like a thunderbolt. The brave young preacher surmised what he had to expect. His reputation for learning was such that doctors and inquisitors had to be brought from Louvain to meet him. An Inquisitorial Court was constituted, and the young preacher, who was only twenty-seven (1525), was summoned before it.

For many days the process of questioning him went on; but he apologised for nothing, withdrew nothing. He stood up for the Scriptures as the only authority; he knew of no testimony in their favour but that of themselves, and that of the Holy Spirit, who inwardly convinces of the truths which they teach. As Bakker would make no confession in any ordinary place, they bethought them of a niche in the wall where penitents were wont to be examined; the priest in his questions to him exhausted his list of sins. But one answer only would he ever give: "I confess freely before God that I am a most miserable sinner, and thereby most worthy of the curse and of eternal death; but at the same time I hope, and even feel assured, that through and for the sake of Jesus Christ my Lord and only Saviour, I shall at last obtain eternal blessedness."

One other resource remained: to get his father to urge him to recant.

"He is dear to me," said the father, "and he has never given me any pain; yet I am prepared, after the example of Abraham, to offer him up to God."

At last the day of his execution came. Passing a prison where some of his friends were confined for the faith, he called to them that he was about to die, but exhorted them to be of good courage.

Immediately they struck up the *Te Deum*, and continued singing songs of praise. The martyr went up to the stake, placed round his neck the rope with which he was to be strangled before being burnt, and exclaimed joyfully, "O death, where is thy sting!" A moment after, he added, "Lord Jesus, forgive them, and remember me, O Son of God." In a few minutes more his spirit was with his Lord.

But to be strangled before being burned was a comparatively easy mode of death. As the persecution went on, and the inveteracy of the heresy appeared, more awful forms of death were devised.

Conspicuous among these was that of being buried alive. And horrible to tell, it was the mode of death that was usually appointed for women, including even high-born ladies. As it was expressed, they were sentenced "to the pit."

Jean Crespin, the John Foxe of France, author of a voluminous "Histoire des Martyrs," * has given us a painfully vivid description of this mode of punishment in the case of a woman of Tournay, whose husband had given way, but who herself maintained her faith with admirable constancy. She defied death and torture alike. Her sentence was to be buried alive. Marching through the streets, she ceased not to exhort the people and to pray for her persecutors, and in passing the Tower where her husband was confined, she called loudly to him, "Farewell, Adrian; I am going to another marriage."

When she came to the scaffold and saw the hole dug in the ground, and the cruel preparations for her death, she asked, "Is this the *pâté* you have prepared for me?" alluding to the hollow piece of wood on which her body was to be placed, as in a *pâté*. It was in the form of a coffin, large enough for a full-grown person, and to secure the body there were three cross-bars of iron, under which the victim had to lie. Some force had to be used by the executioner to get her properly under the bars. A rope was so placed as to tighten round her neck as the executioner shovelled in the earth. When all was ready, nothing was seen but her face, calmly raised to God in prayer. In this awful manner was this saint of God sent home to her Lord.

These executions of women were sometimes witnessed by their friends. Antoinette van Roesmals, of Louvain, was a friend of John Alasco, and of Don Francisco de Enzinas, a nobleman of distinguished family. In 1543 she was condemned to the pit. Gudule, her darling daughter, would not be separated from her. She insisted on seeing the sacrifice of her mother. She was prevailed upon to stand at a little distance, where she might see without being seen.

As her mother passed, she gazed at her as if her whole soul was in her look. With fixed eye she watched the progress of the execution; but when the earth began to be shovelled upon her mother, the poor child gave way, the fountains of her tears burst, and she filled the air with her shrieks and lamentations. She ran about the streets of the town as if she had lost her reason. She plucked her hair and tore her face, in utter distraction and misery.

* A new edition of this work, edited by Daniel Benoit, is now being issued by the "Société des Livres Religieux" of Toulouse.

The whole period of Charles's reign on to the middle of the century was marked by tragedies of the like kind up and down the country, sometimes very numerous. At Limburg, in 1532, a godly family, consisting of father, mother, two daughters, and their husbands, were all zealous for the Gospel. Some emissaries of the Emperor, having heard of them, entered their house, and the whole family were condemned to be burnt at the same fire. While they were being led to execution, the whole six it is said, felt a kind of holy transport, and shouted for joy. Any momentary weakness felt by some of them was got over by their singing psalms together: "This God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our Guide, even unto death." They reached the place of execution, and breathed their last, calling on the name of Jesus. In the same chariot of fire they went to heaven together.

These, however, were but the beginning of sorrows. The work was not advancing fast enough. In the year 1550 Charles issued a fearful edict, virtually setting up the Inquisition, and placing the lives and liberties of the people in its cruel hands. He said that though he had been very zealous for the faith, and had issued severe decrees against heretics, the pestilence seemed only to spread the more. The new edict declared it unlawful for anyone to have, buy, or distribute the books of Luther, Œcolampadius, Zwingle, Bucer, Calvin, and the rest of them; to possess any picture ridiculing the Virgin or the saints; to deface or injure any image of these; to hold any conventicle in his house for preaching heresy; to dispute privately or publicly on controverted passages of Scripture, unless he were a theologian. Persons convicted of any of these offences were to be punished capitally, but with this distinction—if they abandoned their error, the men were only to be slain with the sword, the women only buried alive; but if they remained obstinate, they were to be burnt, and in both cases to forfeit all their goods, and their wills were to be invalid. All suspected persons were to be immediately reported to the Inquisitor, who received the most ample power to proceed against not only the people, but even the magistrates, in the most summary manner. To intercede for persons suspected or proscribed was to share their guilt.

Gerdesius, one of the chief historians of the time, says emphatically that nothing was more detestable in the eyes of the people in this revolting edict than the words Inquisition or Inquisitor; they felt, when the Inquisition was set up, as if their lives and liberties were utterly wrecked. In some places a little relief was promised, particularly at Antwerp, a most flourishing port, full of Protestants, native and foreign. The magistrates felt that an edict like that, rigidly executed, would simply ruin their city, and on their earnest entreaty it was promised that its rigour should be abated.

But in many another place it was carried out to the bitter end. New modes of death were devised, one of the most popular with the inquisitors being to tie head and heels of the heretics together and drown them in a tub of water.

Amid the endless executions that followed the promulgation of this edict, one thing often attracted

notice: that even the awful death of being burned alive seemed to lose its terrors for many. They would go singing to the stake, and continue to sing after the flames were kindled. On one occasion, when the executioner was slinking behind to light the fire, the martyr besought him to come forward, for he had no fear of the flames. Was it not as if the miracle on the plain of Dura was repeated: as if One like unto the Son of Man appeared with His servants in the midst of the fire, fulfilling the promise, "When thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burned, neither shall flame kindle upon thee"?

THE NEW WEDDING-RING.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.

PART II.

"I NEEDN'T trouble you, my dear, with what is called the 'summing-up' of the judge. He quietly picked each speech to pieces as if he were picking a lobster or a walnut. You know a lobster is very twisty-about inside, and so is a walnut; and he went through every letter by itself just as a man eats one shrimp at a time—only when folk eat shrimps they nip off the head and tail and take only the middle. But the heads and tails, the beginnings and endings of these letters, were sometimes the most important part of them; so he went through them one by one, then the jury retired and took me with them. The old fellow who sat in the corner, and was foreman, said—'She must get something—five hundred pounds.'—'Give the poor girl one thousand pounds,' said one of the young men.—'What did you say, sir?' said the foreman, in a stern voice; but the young man didn't say it again. But there was another of the jurors who did speak, and he wouldn't be put down. Those two dashes had evidently taken possession of his mind, and he too went in for the one thousand pounds. He even went so far as to point his finger at the foreman in a warning kind of way, and said—'Mr. Foreman, remember what counsel said about those two dashes.' But the foreman said—'We don't go by what counsel says, but by our own common sense. Don't you know, sir, that counsel must talk? But if the other gentlemen of the jury will agree, rather than be kept here for three or four hours, I'll split the difference with you, and say seven-fifty.' This the obstinate little man accepted under the pressure of half a dozen of his fellow-jurymen who took him in hand. And I came back into court, I suppose people would say, *triumphant;* but I didn't feel triumphant at all, nor have I ever since looked with any satisfaction on that phase of my life.

"Dear me! how did I come to be telling you all this? I don't talk about this often, because I consider it a painful and almost a shameful episode in my life; besides which, I feel deeply for the poor girl. I never think of her now, and of the bitterness with which she relinquished me at the last, without inward pangs, almost of remorse I might say, at having anything to do with such a transaction; although, in truth, as you will see in a moment, I couldn't help myself. That is one of the troubles of us wedding-rings: we must often be parties to what we don't approve of; we must bring innocent people into misery by their association with those who do wrong. Ah! my dear, I've had the bed, I may say, pulled from under me, and I've been almost thrown out into the street, because I was on the finger of the wife of what they called a 'betting-man.' I've held the handkerchief many a time to the eyes from which scalding tears ran down—enough to burn a hole through canvas, much more cambric—when the ear that has heard the words of courting had to listen to those of swearing. But why should I damp your young life? I hope you may never know such things."

"But I want to know about the end of that affair in, what did you call it? 'breach of something,' I think."

"Yes, my dear—'breach of promise of marriage.' Well, the end of the story is this. There were damages, as you know, seven hundred and fifty pounds, and there were the law costs, no end beside; but as to 'damages,' why, the poor girl really suffered no worldly damage at all—at least, her gain in losing the man was much greater than her loss in not getting him. She would have been damaged with a vengeance if she had got him, for he was a thorough vagabond, and would have broken her heart in earnest if she had married him. When women have an escape, I wish they'd feel they have had an escape, and that they would not keep picking and pecking at what has gone, or the memory of it. A good thing has happened to them, and they ought to be thankful for it; but there's a wonderful tenacity, my dear, in woman's love. 'T is terribly hard to make her let go. Well, there are two sides to everything. 'T is often well for men that it *is* so hard to make them let go. I don't know what many a man would do if woman's love had not the grip it has; but you see, my dear,

their affections are everything with them. Their heart, I might say, is their all in all. And so love holds on, and holds out, through thick and thin; and that's how many a man has been saved who might otherwise have been lost."

"But what became of the poor girl, and of yourself?"

"Well, my dear, the poor child would never have come into court at all, if things had been according to her wish. She'd have rather pined away in secret, hugging me to the end; but her Pa—her Pa, my dear—was a man whose only idea was



"He even went so far as to point his finger at the foreman."—*p.* 500.

money. He believed that hearts could be cashed up as well as tinned meat, or anything else; and he cashed up his child's. It was he who brought her into court. When she was there she said as little as she could, and, even so, many a bitter hour did she spend at even having said so much."

"And the ring. What became of that?"

"Of me, you mean.

"I was sent off, my dear, with those same old teeth and some other pieces of gold by 'Pa,' when he was acting as executor for an old lady who died; and there I remained, for I am afraid to say how long, with all that rubbish in the jeweller's window. I am now out in the world again. I don't know what will become of me, I'm sure, when I'm off my present job; but as likely as not I'll be melted up, and in what shape I'll come out again I'm sure I don't know. Perhaps I'll come out in diamonds; it might be as a keeper; for all I know, I shall be a wedding-ring—perhaps beginning life again as foolish as you are, and with as much to learn as you have. I suppose one's memory will not survive being melted up—at least, it would not be strange if it did not; but 'tis no use troubling myself until the time comes. But you wanted to know what became of the young lady! Well, I'm very pleased to be able to give you a good account of her. Poor girl, she made a fool of herself in getting engaged head-over-heels, as one might say—as she did; but that is all that can be said against her. She had a true, loving heart, and more's the pity that it should have been trifled with as it was; but, my dear, if there's such a thing as hearts being broken, there is also such a thing as hearts being mended; and there's many a heart so neatly repaired that you wouldn't know it had ever been broken—or, I may say, 'cracked,' for no really broken heart has ever been mended since the world began. Bad cracks, very bad cracks, have been got all right, some of them with rivets and some with lasting cement; but what's *broken* is destroyed. I'll tell you what happened to her. An honest fellow who had admired her, and loved her, before that scamp came in the way, but who had not the handsome face or artful ways of that vagabond—who is now in penal servitude for life—that good fellow in course of time was appreciated, then liked, then loved, and now the cracked heart is well mended; indeed, you wouldn't know that anything had happened to it. 'Tis wonderful how women grow into love when a man

is worth loving; and I wouldn't undertake to say, if Sophonisba's husband died, that she wouldn't have a broken heart. I wouldn't undertake to say anything about any woman for certain, but I will say 'as likely as not.'"

"And the little blue silk bag?"

"It went one fine morning, my dear, into the fire—it was the very morning that the paper told of Edwin's being sent into penal servitude for life—and went off, part of it, in heat and smoke, into the air; perhaps some of it is in that cloud that is over your head; and some of it was carted out in the ashes by the dustman, and where it is now it would be a wise man could tell: perhaps 't is in a head of cabbage, or an onion, or a carrot, or something without much poetry in it. You see, it had a good turn at poetry; 't is only fair that it should take a turn at prose now—and cabbages, and onions, and carrots, I call 'prose'—good prose, no doubt, but 'prose' still. Sophonisba is on a good foundation now; people—young silly girls, I mean—may sneer at it as much as they like, but let me tell you, as an old experienced wedding-ring, there 's nothing like a good foundation for matrimony, as well as for everything else. What has to endure for a life shouldn't be settled off all in a moment. It 's not dolls' houses, but real houses, which have to be built, and every house will get its shakings and its trials; and so 't is well to know on what they 're built. 'T is well for man to know it, and 't is well for woman to know it too—a woman 's none the less a pretty flower because she has a root, and she 'll last ever so much longer too. Talking of a pretty flower, and of the subject of beauty, and people's marrying for it and for it alone, as is very often the case [I see your lady has a very pretty face—I hope she wasn't married for that and that alone; I don't mind it as what one might call an 'ingredient,' but I don't go beyond that, my dear]—well, talking of that, let me tell you what the good Doctor whom I once sat under said in his sermon. I remember it well, for it made a great impression on me at the time; and by the way—the fidgety and irreverent way—in which a lot of hands moved about when he said it, I think he must have been touching up some wedding-rings in the congregation, or, rather, some people who wore the rings; perhaps the rings gave them a pinch, as much as to say to them, 'Do you hear that?' The Doctor was touching up the people who marry only for money or for beauty, or for the two of them, no doubt, if they can manage to get both; and he said, 'Now hear, brethren, the words of an old divine—hear Bishop Jeremy Taylor, one of the great and learned and eloquent of his day:—"It is the unhappy chance of many men, finding many inconveniences upon the mountains of single life, they descend into the valleys of marriage to refresh their troubles, and there they enter into fetters, and are bound to sorrow by the cords of a man's or a woman's peevishness; and the worst of the evil is that they have to thank their own follies, for they fell into the snare by entering an improper way. Christ and the Church were no ingredients in their choice, but, as the Indian women enter into folly for the price of an elephant and think their crime warrantable, so do men and women change their liberty for a rich fortune, and show themselves to be less than money, by overvaluing that to all the content and wise felicity of their lives; and when they have counted the money and their sorrows together, how willingly would they buy with the loss of all that money modesty or sweet nature to their relative! The odd thousand pounds would be gladly allowed in good nature and fair manners."'

"There you see, little one, he touched them upon what has been the ruin of many a married life to both men and women, and what has made many of us poor innocent wedding-rings, who are capable of and willing for such great things, nothing whatever but instruments of misery, galling worse than the link of many a fetter. Our weight on the finger has been as heavy as its weight has been on the leg.

"But the Doctor gave them a few more lines from the good old divine. This time he showed what trouble we wedding-rings get into, and what trouble we bind people down to for many a long year when they marry for beauty. No offence, my dear, for I see your lady has a pretty face; may she keep it long, and may her husband never dim her eye, or furrow her brow, or blanch her cheek. But ah! how often do the blushes of youth become the blotches of age, and the dimples of youth become the wrinkles of age; but hear what the old gentleman, I mean the old divine, said—'As very a fool is he who chooses for beauty principally; it is an ill bond of affections to tie two hearts together by a little thread of red and white. And they can love no longer than until the next ague comes, and they are fond of each other but at the chance of fancy, or the small-pox, or care, or time, or anything that can destroy a pretty flower.' You see, my dear, I was an attentive listener, and my memory is very good for anything concerning myself; and now I have given you the benefit of it, and much good may it do you."

"You *do* seem to me to know a great deal," said the new wedding-ring. "I hope I may never know as much as you do. And I don't think I ever shall. My owner and her husband are so devoted to each other that not even an earthquake would separate them; they'd both tumble in together somehow, you may be sure of that. Why, the wonder is that I am here at all just now—he's with her morning, noon, and night, and I don't think he 'll ever leave her for a minute if he can help it."

"Let me tell you, my dear," said the sober old ring, "what I saw one day in a shop window. I saw two pictures on one sheet; one was called 'Before Marriage,' and the other 'After.' I'm not sure whether it specified the time, but I shouldn't mind doing that myself. Say, now, three months, and that's because I'm not cynical, but good-natured;

that will be a good long spell. What do you think 'Before Marriage' was? Why, it was the picture of a lady and gentleman out walking: the lady was getting over a stile, and the gentleman was helping her ever so gallantly; 'twas quite a pretty sight. 'Twas enough to drive all the girls who saw it to the nearest jeweller's shop for one of us, if only they could get someone to put us on the right finger, and in the right way. But ah! my dear, ah! I'm almost ashamed to tell you what the other picture was—it was called 'After Marriage.' Will you believe it? it was the same lady and gentleman, and she was getting over a stile this time, too; but—but it was by herself; and the gentleman—yes, my dear—he was walking on before by himself, too, smoking a cigar; and I tell you what it is, between ourselves, there's many a six months' bride deserted for a cigar. The fact is, though you and I are real gold, marriage itself, what we represent, is often only gilt. Now, we are intended to show that rubbing only means brightening; the rubs of the world and of life ought to make marriage (which should be at least 18-carat) shine all the more. Instead of that a great deal of marriage is only pinchbeck; a very little rubbing—yes, even a little time itself, without the rubbing—wears off whatever precious metal is on the outside, and the bare stuff appears beneath."

"Oh, shocking!" said the little shiner; "none of us in the satin-lined tray ever heard anything of this kind; if I were to go back to them now they would not believe it."

"Very likely not, my dear; people as they go on in life have to believe a good many things which they did not think possible before. I hope you will never have to believe as much as I do, but you'll have to believe a good deal, nevertheless. I know a good bit from my own experience, and a good bit from the experience of others."

"You must have been a great gossip in your day," said the new wedding-ring.

"No, my dear. I know you don't mean to give offence, and my rule in life has been never to take offence where none was meant. I have only kept my ears open, and there's no harm in that, unless it be to listen to evil about your neighbours. People will talk, and, to those who can hear them, *things* will talk, as you and I are talking and listening now; and during the six months that I had to spend in a pawn office I learned a good deal. We were all of us more or less old stagers there—companions in humiliation, or misfortune, as the case might be—none of us were brand-new like you. We had all seen more or less of the world, and had had more or less sad experience of it. We all felt we were in the last place where wedding-rings ought to be found—in the pawn office!"

"Do tell me about some of them, old girl."

"I don't know whether you call me 'old *girl*' from my present position or not; but let that pass. Don't you see that this old gentleman has moved his foot? Perhaps he's waking; and he'll move his hand next, and if he gives symptoms of rousing up, you'll find that I shall have to be off like a shot. Where is the use in beginning stories which may never end? But I'll just tell you who was there. We were all huddled up together—each, no doubt, with our own number on us, but still no distinction was made as to who we were, or whence we came. The same fate befell us that does all that comes into the pawn-shop. Ugh! I shudder even now when I think of my sojourn there. I didn't so much mind being with those old teeth and their gold frame in the jeweller's. They told me that they once belonged to a great preacher, and they used often to tell me things that he said; but that pawn office! I'll never forget it as long as I live. May I go into the melting-pot, or any burning fiery furnace, I don't care what, so long as I don't return to that abominable place again. Not but that 'tis useful in its way. 'Tis the way it is abused that makes me hate the thought of it, and whatever 'tis a place for, it should not be for such as we—sacred wedding-rings.

"One of my companions there said to me one day, 'I wonder if those gamblers and those racing-and betting-men ever think of the miseries they inflict on the poor women they marry. When I was first put on a girl's finger, the poor thing expected to have a safe and comfortable home. Her husband was a clerk in the City, in a good situation, and there was no earthly reason for her having any anxiety, above the little odds and ends of trouble which come to all married folk. All went well with them for three years, and a happier pair you would not wish to see. Their little home was a kind of Paradise in its way. Cheap—no doubt cheap—were most of its little ornaments, but they were tasteful; and as to comfort, there was everything that could be desired. I think my wearer's husband had about four hundred pounds a year, and as his position was one of great trust, he was likely to rise. Indeed, the vision floated across the mind of himself and his wife that some day he might be in the firm, for the present junior partner, with one thousand two hundred pounds a year, had risen to that post from having been a clerk in the house. My wearer went to church every Sunday, and her husband went with her; and in course of time there were two little children—a boy and girl—all the variety that the circumstances of the case would allow of. That wife used to sing all day long, except when she was chirping with one of the babies, and chirping is a kind of singing, you know—anyhow, it isn't a kind of crying. My wearer used to say to her husband, looking at me all the time, "Walter, I think when Paradise was broken up, some of the bits must have been left behind; and I think we have a bit of it here."

"'But ah! if there are any bits of Paradise in the world, I'm sure there's forbidden fruit in every one of them; and that there's a serpent in every one of them too, and every one of them is a subtle serpent



"When the ear that has heard the words of courting has to listen to those of swearing."—*p.* 500.

with an oily tongue; and often he beguiles not only women but men, and the men without the instrumentality of the women at all—not only without it, but against it. I'm sure it is very seldom that a man is made a gambler by his wife.

"'All had gone on well with my folk for a long time, when one day my wearer's husband brought home a beautiful clock for the mantelpiece. For the first time in his life her husband would not tell her what a thing cost, for the first time in his life he kept anything as a secret; he would not tell her how much he gave for the clock. But the clock brought no pleasure with it. A thing brings true pleasure into a house when husband and wife share it. A red herring—with the head and *its* half for one of them, and its tail and *its* half for the other—would have given them more pleasure than that clock did, or ever could do, when it thus belonged as I might say to one alone. Now wedding-rings, as no doubt you know from your own experience, abominate secrets; and the secrecy about that clock soon began to create a feeling of discomfort, and then suspicion crept in. The wife knew how all the money was portioned out; and she knew that there were no funds available for an expensive clock like that, and she began to feel very uncomfortable. And this discomfort was not diminished by her husband's evidently not being as much at his ease as he used to be. There was something now in the home about which they could not talk, there was a dead fly in the apothecary's ointment, the bloom was rubbed off the little home; and with the bloom off the little home went the bloom off the wife's cheek; for you know, when there's a canker eating at the heart, the colour will alter on the leaf.

"'And the incoming of some other things made matters worse and worse. Every fresh thing brought its own unhappiness with it; but when it came to the husband's announcing that he thought the present little house too small, and most of the things in it shabby, the climax was reached, and my poor wearer fell ill.

"'Now, don't you think that her husband did not care for her, for he did; and sorely he grieved when he found that she was really ill, and when he further found from her own lips the only cause of her illness was that the confidence between them had been destroyed, he felt a truly miserable man.

"'Now, poor Walter Seymour had entered on the downward path. He had been snared into it by the desire to get this and that for that very wife and home which he was now really breaking up. It is hard to take only one step down-hill; and, having taken one, my wearer's husband was driven to take more. Had he only made a clean breast of it now all would have been well, the evil might have been stopped, and the little home might have been again what it had been, or, at least, as nearly as

possible ; but Walter Seymour had not the courage to say at once how he had got the extra money ; he told his wife a lie. He said that the clerks had all a chance to buy some shares in an undertaking in which the firm was engaged, and that he had sold his at a high premium, and made a couple of hundred pounds.

"'"And why not have told me, dear? who would rejoice so much in your having any prosperity as your wife?" She believed it all. She did not believe that *her* Walter could be capable of a lie at all, much more of a lie intended to deceive *her*. So she rejoiced in the clock, and rejoiced in the new piano, and rejoiced in all that the good luck had brought ; and all the roses seemed as though they would come back to her cheeks again.

"'But there was no longer any rejoicing in Walter Seymour's heart. True, he did not stand condemned by anyone else in the world, but he was convicted and condemned by himself. And soon the irritation of his spirit began to show itself in his manner, and home and wife were not to him what they used to be. He took to absenting himself from the once-loved little home, and when he was there his presence did not contribute much sunshine to it. But this course was not destined to be a long one. One night Walter Seymour did not return home at all. His poor little wife sat up for him all that night, and, weary as she was, had breakfast ready for him *if* he should come home, or rather, *when* he should come home ; for whatever had kept him, or wherever he had been, she had no doubt of his soon being back to her. But ah ! instead of her husband, she encountered, when she ran to the door, a couple of strange-looking men. They had come to take possession under a bill of sale, and the poor young wife and the two small children had to leave, and face the world as best they could. The cards had turned against Walter Seymour, the horses had run against him, and the dice had turned up against him. No wonder if these outside things went against the man, when he had gone against himself. And the poor little woman saw him no more until she saw him as a prisoner, committed for trial on the charge of embezzling five hundred pounds of his employers'. He had hoped —the old story!—that with this, luck would turn for him, and he could repay it before it was missed ; but luck went the other way, and landed him there.

"'On her clothes and her few trinkets the poor thing lived for a while, and the last I know of her is that she pawned me to buy some food for one of the children, who was dying. She kissed me over and over again as if I were a lover, and looked at me and wept over me again and again before she wrapped me up in the bit of silver-paper (would you believe it, she would not put me into a bit of brown?) in which I made my horrid journey here.'

"There were rings there from all sorts of people, and brought there under all sorts of circumstances. I can't tell you about them now. That old gent has moved the other leg, and I'm sure he'll soon brisk up. But will you believe it, there was one came there owing to a paltry dinner. Yes ! the poor woman who would rather have starved herself than have parted with that ring for anything but absolute bread, pawned me that she might be able to buy a rump-steak and oyster sauce for a selfish wretch that she had the misfortune to call husband. He gave her no money to buy it with, but as he left the house, he said to her in a voice very quiet indeed—quite a meek kind of voice, but one she



"She wept over me again and again."

well understood—'Mind you have a good dinner for me at six when I come home.' She knew what that voice meant; meant to her and her little child, whom she loved better than herself. 'I had to be pawned to buy the rump-steak and oyster sauce which the fellow gobbled. And it may be very wrong to say it, but if it had choked him, I should have said, "And serve him right."

"Now, my dear, I have told you enough, not, I hope, to take the brightness out of you, but to make you think a little, and be careful, and not suppose that everything will go right with you as you imagine. I make great allowance for your being perky, because you're inexperienced and young, and, so to speak, intoxicated. At present you're moon-blind—the honeymoon is on you still. I wouldn't shorten it by a day, only remember that there are other moons besides honeymoons. Remember there is such a thing as blind eyes being opened. Remember that there are what my old Rev. Dr. used to call in church 'the changes and chances of this mortal life.'"

"Well," said the little shiner, "who'd have ever thought of having all that before one, when one embarked upon what I heard the minister say was 'the holy estate of matrimony!'"

"And so it is, my dear."

"But, from what you say, it seems to have many troubles, and that's not what I call being 'holy.'"

"Ah! that's because you did not sit under Dr. Bunce. He'd have taught you that 'tis very hard to be holy without having trouble; but we won't go into that now."

"Well, everyone need not be the same. My wearer and her husband mean to be happy all their lives. They mean to love one another until they're a hundred and twenty, if they live so long; and she'll be 'duck' and he'll be 'duck' up to the very end."

"And pretty tough old birds, I should say; but I shan't quarrel with the toughness if they continue 'ducks' at all. A hundred and twenty," said the old wedding-ring to herself. "Well, all I say is, if I had anything to do with them then, I should hope they'd be stewed, or they would be tough."

"Now, old lady, we mean to have a jolly time of it, and if you don't mind telling me—giving me a wrinkle; I think I heard a man here call such information a 'straight tip'—if you don't mind giving me that straight tip so that my lady and husband should continue 'ducks' to the end, I shall feel obliged to you for ever and ever."

"In the first place, my dear, your lady and gentleman must not, either of them, think the other perfection. A great deal of trouble in married life comes that way. She must not think him the wis*est*, brav*est*, gentl*est*, nobl*est* being on the face of the earth, a man made to order for herself, a man only fit to be put on a pedestal for the rest of the world to look up at and admire. Now, do you know I sat opposite him at the dinner-table for a couple of days, and I watched him very closely, and I heard him say two or three foolish things his wife thought very wise; but I knew all about the subject he was speaking on, and I can tell you in confidence that in two sentences he contrived to make three mistakes. I don't think, either, that he was very pleased at there being but one little slice of cucumber left on the dish when it came round to him. I observed that instead of taking it and saying to himself, 'What does it matter in ten minutes' time, or for the matter of that in one?' he gave his left shoulder a little hitch, and one corner of his mouth turned a little bit down. I didn't like so much to be made of a little slice of cucumber, and I said to myself, 'There's a spice of temper there; let the young lassie look out.' There's seed in that cucumber, my dear, that will develop, I'm afraid, or *may* develop, into something of much more consequence than a cucumber, or a vegetable-marrow, or, for the matter of that, a pumpkin, which is much bigger still. I don't mean to say that your gentleman will come out in anywise bad, or worse than others. I only mean to say that the sooner his wife believes him after all to be only flesh and blood, and like the rest of mankind, the happier will she be.

"And as to the man, people say women are foolish, silly creatures. Well! I'm sure if anyone calls the woman six, I'll call the man half a dozen; they're one just as bad as the other. There's your gentleman at, I might almost say, this very moment, telling your lady that she's the loveliest girl in the world. He says she's the dear*est*, sweet*est*, *most* unselfish creature in the world. He thinks she plays and sings better than anyone in the world. Mind, my dear, in the *world*. Let us be thankful he did not say in the sun, moon, and stars, and comets too. I believe if he thought there were anything like men and women in the tails of these fiery flying creatures, he'd go in for her beating all of them too. But at this present moment there's a far more beautiful girl in the Hydro, and he'll see in the world, which is much bigger than the Hydro, many more; and he *will* see it too. And after a few months' time he'll find that there are plenty who can sing and play as well as, and better than, she can; and unless his love for her—her very self—is strong enough to bear all this disillusioning, he, and perhaps she, will come to grief. Do you know, my dear, what I call life? I'm told philosophers and doctors have all had their say on this matter, and I believe a very tough one they've found it; but according to my experience, I should say 'Life is a process of disillusioning.' There, my dear, you didn't think you'd meet with a philosopher when you came out this morning. I almost wish I weren't a philosopher—in some things I'm sure I'd be happier—but we become what circumstances make us—and that's what circumstances have made me. I don't mind people having to come down a little—that is expected—for people don't generally go courting, and to the hymeneal

altar, in spectacles; but 'tis the great flops I object to—that 's like being hanged, my dear, when everything gives way under you of a sudden. Now, you and your gentleman, don't be expecting too much of each other. Believe a bit in the 'ordinary,' and believe that there 's a great deal that 's excellent in the ordinary. That 's one of the secrets of happiness in married life—not to expect perfection—to know that you 're not perfect yourself, and not to expect another to be so. I don't object to a little varnish between man and wife—just a little, judiciously applied with a light brush; but I like the bottle not to be used up all at once. Life may be long, and the bottle may be wanted all through—a *little* oil, and a *little* varnish, just the least touch in life: a little is better than too much—too much oil clogs, and too much varnish cracks.

"And there 's each being thoughtful for the other. For want of a little thought, many a wedding-ring has cut, as it were, the wearer's finger to the bone. Many a wedding-ring has been heavier than a ton of lead. Men must make allowances for women *as women*, if they want to be happy themselves, and to make their wives happy; and women must make allowances for men, and for men *as men*. They each have their own troubles and their own needs, and very often the one does not understand, and cannot understand, the needs of the other. Men have their own troubles and worries, and women have theirs; let each be assured of that as regards the other, and act accordingly. It will be appreciated—don't be afraid of that.

"Beware of naggledom, my dear. The man that will stand being nagged at is a saint, and saints are not as plentiful as blackberries in the world. There 's male nagging, my dear, as well as female—male grumbling and never being pleased; and folks who expect to come out as 'duck' at the end of one hundred and twenty years would, after eighty or ninety years' nagging, make a poor figure in a matrimonial poultry show. If the man had been grumbling and the woman nagging all that time, they 'd look like two moulting birds, and not like two well-established, healthy fowl. Each to be the other's help, each the other's blessing; each to hope to be with the other for ever and ever, and so to live here that they may be fit for being together there—that, little one, that 's the way——"

But here a wretched insect, something of the nature of a midge, stung me through my stocking, and up went my leg with a sudden and tremendous jerk. In an instant Miss Popplethwaite, who had all along been prepared to flee at a moment's notice, sprang from her seat and fled. She had not presence of mind enough to brandish her protecting ring in my face, and dare me to do my worst. She left the Hydro that night. If I ever meet her again I shall apologise; perhaps, if I get to know more of her, I may propose; I don't know, I 'm sure—strange things happen in life. And my little bridal friend! After the first small start, all her trouble was lest I had been hurt, and she wanted to bind my leg round with her pocket-handkerchief. Blessings on her kindly head, and heart, and hand, and what shone on it,

THE NEW WEDDING-RING!

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL SIXTY YEARS AGO.

WHEN staying, last summer, in a remote Devonshire village, I chanced to make the acquaintance and to gain the friendship of an old man who had lately been added to the list of "bedliers" in the place.

He had worked hard and without intermission all his life, and at threescore years and ten his strength had suddenly failed, and there he lay in his little room, waiting patiently for the end. I had many interesting chats with old Hugh, for he was keenly intelligent, though his life had been spent within a radius of ten miles in perhaps the most secluded corner of England. Sixty years ago Hugh had been for some years at work as a farm-boy; and the chief excitement and almost only pleasure in his unchildlike life was the Sunday-school. For to learn how to read and write was Hugh's great ambition, and in the Sunday-school he found his only opportunity. At eight o'clock on Sunday morning the scholars assembled in the Rectory barn, the teacher being the Rector's daughter. A reading and spelling lesson from the Bible began the labours of the day of rest; then followed the writing lesson. A square wooden frame and a small pointed stick were given to each child; the frame was filled with a layer of fine, smooth sand, and the alphabet (no one aspired to words) was traced on it with the pointed stick. These studies lasted from eight to eleven o'clock, when morning service began. After the service, Hugh had a walk of a mile to dinner, which must have been a hasty meal, for at one o'clock the Rectory barn was again filled, and two hours were devoted to religious teaching. Service at three o'clock followed; but even this was not the end—there was still another half-hour to be spent in the barn, when a sort of *résumé* of the day's proceedings was held. That must have been a very weary little boy who



THE SCHOOL IN THE RECTORY BARN.

tramped home in the dusk to take off the Sunday jacket, and to milk cows and "tend" pigs before supper and bed ended the day.

However, this hardly earned education is a great boon to Hugh now, for reading is his great pleasure and only occupation. I offered, one day, to read to him parts of a well-known work, and found that he was already acquainted with that English classic. "Farmer Barrow lent it to me one time when he'd got a cow bad, and I was sitting up at nights with it. I got on a good way, but I never finished 'un. That cow, her got well too soon."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

MAY 19.—THE LORD'S SUPPER.

To read—St. Mark xiv. 12—26. *Golden Text—St. Luke xxii.* 19.

THE PREPARATION. (12—16.) Last heard of Christ at Bethany, at house of Simon; anointed by Mary on Tuesday before Crucifixion. No record of His doing anything next day, Wednesday. Probably spent it in prayer and retirement at Martha's house. Now comes Thursday, first day of feast of unleavened bread—day for killing Passover lamb. The disciples ask Christ for orders. Notice the minute directions:—

(*a*) Two disciples (St. Peter and St. John) are to go to Jerusalem.

(*b*) They would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water.

(*c*) They must follow him into the house he enters.

(*d*) They must arrange for an "upper room"—guest-chamber.

(*e*) They must make all the needful preparations.

N.B.—How would they know the man? Because unusual sight, as women always drew water. Remind of Rebekah, Rachel, woman of Samaria, etc.

What were the preparations required?

(*a*) *A lamb*, without blemish, taken on the tenth day (Ex. xii. 3, 5), *i.e.*, the day of Christ's triumphal

entry into Jerusalem: type of Christ, the innocent victim.

(*b*) *Bitter herbs* for the sauce (Ex. xii. 8), type of Christ's sufferings.

(*c*) *Wine*, ready for mixing with water. (Psalm cxvi. 13.)

(*d*) *Cakes* of unleavened bread. (Ex. xii. 15.)

The disciples obeyed at once, and all was made ready.

Why did Christ eat the Passover?

Because, as a Jew, He fulfilled all requirements of the Law.

Because He was about to show Himself as the true Paschal Lamb.

II. THE PASSOVER FEAST. (17—21.) Picture the feast—

(*a*) Christ and disciples reclining on couches arranged three sides of a square.

(*b*) Four cups of wine, blessed and passed round at intervals.

(*c*) Bitter herbs, dipped in sauce and eaten with unleavened bread.

(*d*) Flesh of the lamb eaten.

(*e*) Psalms cxiii.—cxviii. (the Great Halleluia) sung.

Other Gospels tell of dispute as to who was greatest (St. Luke xxii. 24), of His washing disciples' feet (St. John xiii. 1—11), and His long discourse (St. John xiv.—xvi.).

Notice the following points—

1. Judas was present—after bargaining the day before to betray Christ—showing his hypocrisy.

2. Christ warned him—gave him a last chance of repentance—showing His divine mercy.

LESSON. Be not high-minded, but fear.

III. THE LORD'S SUPPER. (22—26.) Christ, having eaten His last Jewish feast, now appoints a new Christian feast for His followers. Notice:—

1. The lamb not mentioned, because He, the Lamb of God, superseded it.

2. Bread and wine ordained as outward symbols of His body and blood—bread broken (1 Cor. xi. 24), as His body was on the cross; wine poured out, as His blood was shed.

3. Passover and Lord's Supper have much in common—

	PASSOVER.	LORD'S SUPPER.
(*a*)	Was memorial of deliverance from death of first-born.	Deliverance from sin and death of all God's people.
(*b*)	Looked forward to death of Christ.	Looks back to Christ's death. (Golden Text.)
(*c*)	Was a feast of thanksgiving.	Is a feast of thanksgiving.
(*d*)	Partaken of by all Jews.	Partaken of by all Christians.

LESSON. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.

MAY 26.—JESUS BETRAYED.

To read—St. Mark xiv. 43—54. *Golden Text—St. Luke xvii.* 48.

I. THE FALSE DISCIPLE. (43—46.) Two hours only since Judas had left supper-table—had gone to chief priests, told them now was good chance to take Christ prisoner; collected an armed band, hurried them out of the city to the Garden of Gethsemane, was followed by crowd eager to see what was going on. Picture the scene—

(*a*) Christ, just risen from prayer, talking to three chosen disciples. (Ver. 41.)

(*b*) Other eight disciples coming forward to see.

(*c*) Olive-trees shading light of Paschal moon.

(*d*) Officers and soldiers advance, led by Judas.

(*e*) Christ comes forward—is kissed by Judas.

(*f*) Soldiers take Christ prisoner.

What led Judas thus to betray Christ?

(*a*) *Covetousness*—love of money, the root of all evil. (1 Tim. vi. 10.)

This led him to join Christ at first, hoping for worldly advancement.

(*b*) *Hatred*—the natural enmity of evil to good.

Why were the chief priests so anxious to secure Christ?

Because of His winning over the people, and thus lessening their power—in one word, *envy*, leading to hatred and malice.

II. THE BOLD DISCIPLE. (47—50.) Had Christ no friend there?

One disciple drew a sword in his defence. Who was he?

St. Peter (*see* St. John xviii. 10), one of the three best loved.

Had often shown eagerness of love towards Jesus.

(*a*) *In deed*—walked on sea to meet Him. (St. Matt. xiv. 29.)

(*b*) *In word*—declared he would die for Him. (St. John xiii. 37.)

So now he eagerly tries to prevent Christ's arrest.

Was he right or wrong? What did his conduct show?

(*a*) *Rashness*—provoking murder or arrest of all the disciples.

(*b*) *Self-confidence*—thinking himself wiser than Christ, Who submitted.

(*c*) *Unbelief*—forgetting Christ's divine power. (*See* St. Matt. xxvi. 53.)

Not allowed to fight, what did he do next? Joined all the disciples in flight. Did not stay to comfort Christ by their presence, but left Him alone, as He had foretold. (St. John xvi. 32.) What did this show?

(*d*) *Cowardice*—the beginning of his denial so soon to follow.

(*e*) *Selfishness*—thinking of his own safety, not of Christ's comfort. What did all this arise from?

(*a*) *Want of watching.* Christ had warned him of his fault (St. Matt. xvi. 23), bidden him watch in the garden, but he fell asleep. (Ver. 37.)

(*b*) *Want of prayer.* Did not ask counsel of God—trusted his own heart, which showed folly. (Prov. xxviii. 26.)

III. THE TIMID DISCIPLE. (51—52.) His name unknown—perhaps St. Mark himself.

He followed Christ when led off as prisoner—showing *sympathy.*

He risked something for Christ—nearly made prisoner—showing *zeal.*

He fled from the soldiers—showing *prudence.*

Which of these three disciples are we like?

XUM

JUNE 2ND.—JESUS BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

To read—St. Mark xiv. 53—72. *Golden Text—St. John xv.* 25.

I. THE PRISONER INSIDE. (53—65.) Christ led to the Palace of the High Priest.

Council of 70 elders (called Sanhedrim) hastily assembled.

Notice the different points about this trial—

(*a*) *The judge*—Caiaphas, the high priest.

(*b*) *The tribunal*—Court of the Sanhedrim, had power of life and death.

(*c*) *The charge*—at first none definite could be found, as the witnesses contradicted each other. Then two fresh witnesses came forward with distinct charge of *blasphemy against the temple.*

(*d*) *The evidence*—false, for Christ's words had been perverted and their meaning changed. (Compare ver. 58 with St. John ii. 19.)

(*e*) *The defence*—Christ answered nothing.

At last the judge himself questions the prisoner. At first gets no answer.

Then puts an oath to Him. (St. Matt. xxvi. 63.) Demands in the name of God that He shall say who He is. Now at last Christ speaks. He says plainly, "I am the Son of God."

He gives a sign—He shall come with clouds and be seen by all.

(*f*) *The verdict*—guilty of blasphemy against God on His own confession.

(*g*) *The sentence*—death; according to Jewish law. (Lev. xxiv. 16.)

(*h*) *The prisoner*—Christ is handed over to the brutal soldiers. What is done to Him?

His *hands*, which had raised the dead, are bound.

His *lips*, which had calmed the seas, are struck.

His *eyes*, which beamed with pity, are blindfolded. (St. Luke xxii. 64.)

His *body*, which went about doing good, is bound.

Yet through all behaved with meekness, patience, forbearance—reviled not again. (1 St. Pet. ii. 23.)

Truly Christ set us an example. Are we following it?

II. THE DISCIPLE OUTSIDE. (66—72.) Turn to the disciples.

All had forsaken Him and fled away for safety.

Two, St. Peter and St. John, turned back and followed to see the trial.

St. John entered first, then brought in St. Peter. (St. John xviii. 15, 16.)

St. Peter joins the servants, and warms himself at the fire in the courtyard. He joins in the talk going on.

A maid comes out—recognises him—accuses him of belonging to Jesus.

First denial. "I do not understand you."

Afraid of being discovered, tries to slip away into the porch. (St. Matt. xxvi. 71.)

The cock crows, but he does not notice it.

Now two or three see him and challenge him.

Second denial, with an oath. "I do not know the man." (St. Matt. xxvi. 72.)

An hour passes. (St. Luke xxii. 59.) He joins the party round the fire again.

His peculiar accent noticed—is detected as a Galilean.

Third denial, with oaths and curses, "I know not this man."

The cock crows second time. Christ turns and looks at him. (St. Luke xxii. 61.)

He remembers Christ's warning words—rushes out and weeps abundantly. What led him thus to deny Christ?

(*a*) *Self-confidence* — trusted himself instead of looking to God.

(*b*) *Fear of man* made him ashamed of Jesus.

What sort of a look did Christ cast on him?

(*a*) *A look of remembrance*—reminding him of His warning.

(*b*) *A look of sorrow*—that he of all should deny Him.

(*c*) *A look of love*—yearning for him to repent.

So he wept—not tears of remorse, but repentance. Was forgiven and restored to his office.

Do we never grieve Christ—deny Him—are ashamed to be known as His?

Christ is the same forgiving Saviour now to those who truly mourn for sin.

JUNE 9TH.—JESUS BEFORE PILATE.

To read—St. Mark xv. 1—20. *Golden Text—St. John xix.* 6.

I. CHRIST TRIED. (1—15.) What a night of pain and suffering for Christ! Think what He had gone through—

(*a*) The agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.

(*b*) The betrayal by Judas.

(*c*) The desertion by all the disciples.

(*d*) The denial by St. Peter.

(*e*) The trial before Caiaphas.

(*f*) The ill-treatment by the soldiers.

Now at early dawn without food or rest He is hurried off to Pilate.

Punishment of blasphemy was death (Lev. xxiv. 16), but Jews being under dominion of Romans, He must be taken to Roman court of justice.

(*a*) *The Judge*, Pontius Pilate—governor of all Syria. Present at Jerusalem to keep order at the feast when large crowds assembled.

(*b*) *The charge*—made by chief priests. What were these many things! (See St. Luke xxiii. 2.)

1. Stirring up the people, *i.e.*, making a seditious uproar.

2. Making Himself king.

3. Forbidding to pay tribute to Cæsar, Roman emperor.

(*c*) *The defence.* Christ answered not a word. Why! Were these charges true, or false?

The people *had* thronged about Him when He came to Jerusalem. (St. Matt. xxi. 19.)

The people *did* want to make Him king—but He refused. (St. John vi. 15.)

He distinctly told them to pay tribute to Cæsar.

He knew the charges were false, yet He answered nothing. Was willing to be condemned and to die—to give His life a ransom for many.

(*d*) *The proposal.* Pilate delays giving sentence. Proposes to people to ask release of Jesus, according to custom to release one at the Passover.

Contrast Barabbas and Jesus.

XUM

Barabbas.	Jesus.
Had made insurrection.	Had been man of peace.
Was guilty.	Was guiltless.
Was set free.	Was given up to die.

(*c*) *The verdict.* Innocent. Done no evil. Yet given up to death to please the people.

See the motives of the different people.

Chief priests—full of envy and malice against Christ.

People—weak, easily led to cry, "Crucify!"

Pilate—from fear of man does awful wrong.

II. Christ Mocked. (16—20.) What did Christ have to bear?

Pain—The crown of thorns on His head.

Ridicule—mockingly hailed as king.

Shame—spit on in contempt.

"For us men and for our salvation Christ came down from heaven."

Shall His sufferings for us be in vain?

SOME LITTLE-KNOWN BIBLES.—II.

BY THE REV. S. A. SWAINE.

IN copies of the various versions of the Bible in English the collection in Bristol is very rich. Here is to be seen a copy of the first edition of Miles Coverdale's Bible, published in 1535. There are only eight others in existence, and consequently its value is considerable. Where this book was printed is not certainly known. Several places have been mentioned as having given birth to it, including Frankfort, Cologne, and Zürich, the last-named having been regarded by Westcott, Eadie, and other scholars as the most likely. Mr. Henry Stevens, however, in "The Bibles in the Caxton Exhibition," has established the fact, before unknown, that a certain Van Meteren, of Antwerp, was connected with Coverdale in the translation of the Scriptures. A passage is cited from *La Vie et la Mort de l'honorable et renommé Historien Emanuel de Meteren*, printed at the end of *L'Histoire des Paysbas d'Emanuel de Meteren, La Haye*, 1618, as follows:—"He had learned in his youth the art of printing, and was endowed with the knowledge of several languages and other good sciences, so that he understood so well to distinguish light from darkness that he was at pains and very zealous at Antwerp towards the translation of the English Bible, and employed for that purpose a certain learned scholar, called Miles Coverdale, which he did for the advancement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in England." This does not absolutely prove that the first edition of Coverdale was printed at Antwerp, but it renders it probable that such was the case. The copy of the second edition, published in 1537, is the rarest and most valuable Bible in the collection. It was "imprynted in Southwark for James Nicholson," and was the first folio Bible printed in England. Unfortunately, this copy is not quite perfect, but there is a perfect copy, I believe, in Lincoln Cathedral, the only perfect one in existence. Lea Wilson gives date for it, 1536. This is obviously a mistake, and is accounted for by his saying that in his copy "the title and prolegomena are wanting."

The copy of "The Byble, which is all the Holy Scripture, in whych are contained the Olde and Newe Testament truly and purely translated into Englysh by Thomas Matthew" (1537), has on a fly-leaf, apparently in the handwriting of Dr. Gifford, the following memoranda:—"This edition has Tyndal's Notes, but wants all the prologes but that to the Apocrypha, and that to the Romans; the edition of 1551 has them all. This probably is the first edition, and that described in Lewis's Hist., page 105, Note (d), the second, printed abroad for Grafton and Whitchurch. See ye beginning of the Prophets, which has the first letters of their names flourished capitals. On the second side of fol. 32, Pt. ii., is written *The Curse of ye False Prophets* in a hand like Ab. Cranmer's. . . . Mr. Lewis, in a marginal note, takes notice that this Bible is said to be a second edition of Coverdale's Bible, prepared by John Rogers, and suspects it was printed at Marbeck, in ye Dutchy of Wittemberg, where Rogers was superintendent, and from thence sometimes called Rogers's Bible, which seems very probable from ye initials of it, in ye End of the Exhortation, in flourished capitals, I. R. As to ye name of Thomas Matthews, it seems a fictitious one (sais Lewis, pag. 111), since ye Translation, according to the edition, was made by several hands; therefore seems this name to have been thought of, as being the name of neither, and under which ye Editor chose to appear." The John Rogers referred to was the martyr who was the first to suffer under Mary. The conclusion of Mombert, in his "Handbook of the English Versions of the Bible," is that he was "unquestionably the editor of this Bible." Nothing is said in the book itself as to the place where it was printed; but there are considerations which tend to show that Lewis's supposition, referred to in the preceding memoranda, is correct. For example, the types are German, and Rogers, it is well known, was living at Wittenberg in 1537.

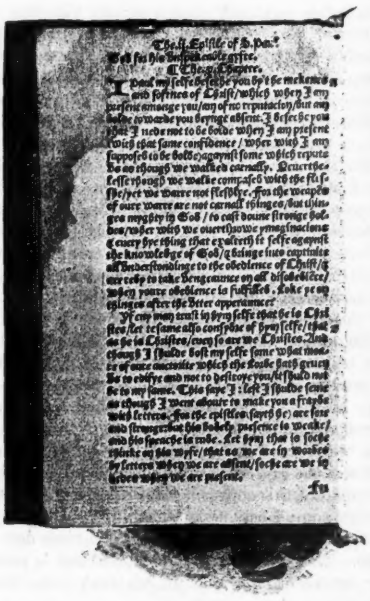
"The Bible in Englyshe, that is to say, the content of all the holy scrypture, both of ye olde and newe testament, truly translated after the veryte of the Hebrue and Greke textes, by ye dylygent studye of dyverse excellent learned men, expert in the forsayde tongues. Printed by Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch. *Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.*" This is a folio, and is of the date 1539.



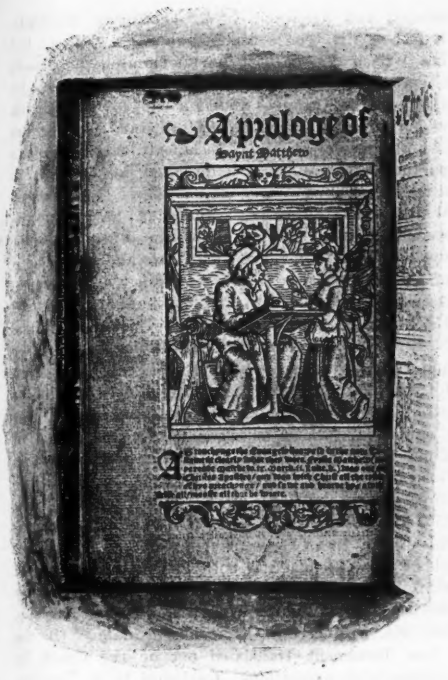
COVERDALE, SECOND EDITION, 1537.

It is an undoubted copy of the first edition of Cranmer's, or the Great Bible. The work was commenced by Coverdale and Grafton, under the patronage, and by the instruction, of Thomas Cromwell, in Paris in the spring of 1538. In December of that year, however, an edict of the Inquisitor-General was issued through Le Tellier, the scribe of the Holy Office, stopping the progress of the work, and citing the printers to appear before the Inquisitor's court. Coverdale and his associates at once fled, leaving behind them all their plant and printed sheets. The latter were condemned to be burnt, but eventually were purchased by a haberdasher, as waste paper, "to lay caps in," and thus "four great dry vats full" were saved and presently exported to England, where the work was brought to completion, and published in April, 1539. A very elaborate border, said to have been designed by Holbein, encloses the title. The king, Henry VIII., in a declaration, appointed this version of the Scriptures "to be read by all curates," and charged the said curates to instruct their flocks that it was "the only and straight mean to know the goodness and benefits of God towards us, and the true duty of every Christian man to serve Him accordingly." There were seven editions of the Great Bible published during the reign of Henry VIII., and Bristol is fortunate enough to possess copies of six out of the seven editions. In the copies of the fifth and sixth editions a blank space is noticeable in the middle of the title-page. Thereby hangs a tale. In earlier editions it was occupied with the arms of Cromwell, then Chancellor. When at length Cromwell lost the royal favour, "Bluff King Hal," with that revengefulness of disposition which he could sometimes display, ordered these emblems to be expunged. The collection contains copies of nine later editions of Cranmer's Bible, bringing the number of editions up to sixteen.

Space will permit me to notice neither the Bibles which appeared between the end of the reign of Henry VIII. and the appearance of the Authorised Version in the reign of James I.—such as the "Genevan" and "Bishop's" Bible, etc.—nor the numerous copies of editions of the Authorised Version, which the collection contains. It would not be right, however, to omit to state that there are here two copies of the Authorised Version published in 1611, called the first edition, but differing the one from the other in almost every page, thus proving that there were two editions that year. There are no two such books in any library in England, with the exception of the British Museum and the library of Mr. Fry. Of New Testaments, in addition to the exceedingly valuable copy of the first edition of Tyndale's New Testament, described in the first article, copies of several subsequent editions are preserved here. There is a copy of the duodecimo edition, "imprinted at Antwerp by Marten Emperour, Anno MDXXXIIIJ." The prologue to the "Epistle of Paule to the Romayns" is subscribed W. T. (William Tyndale). There is also a copy of what has been called the "Pirated Tyndale." Inserted in the beginning is a note by Mr. Francis Fry, in which he says, "The Testament in the Baptist College, called the pirated Tyndale, 4to, 1534, by Dr. Gifford, I have identified to be by T. Petit, 1548. I



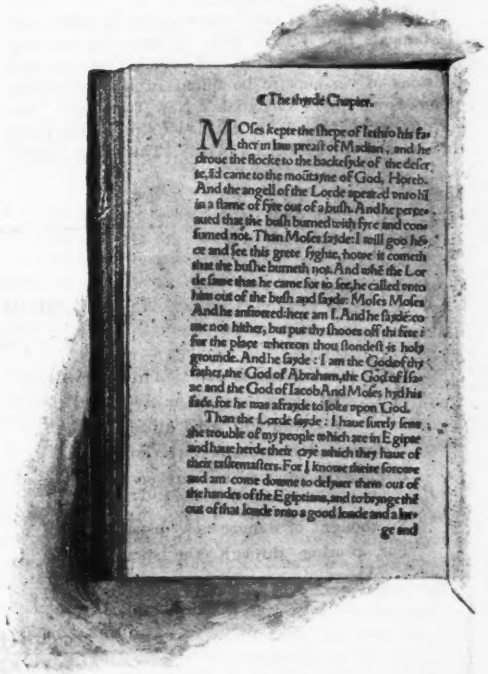
TYNDALE (1534), CONTAINING THE "DROLL ERROR."



COVERDALE, 1538.

have an imperfect copy of the same. In Lincoln Coll., Oxford, is also a copy nearly perfect. . . . The New Testament, by Petit, has not been known to exist, though Herbert states there was such a Testament." The discovery here recorded is very interesting, rendered the more so by the fact that, apparently, Mr. Fry knew of no copy of this pirated Tyndale by Petit but the three he mentions.

Here, too, is a copy of the 1536 edition, 4to, bearing the title, "The Newe Testament, yet once agayne corrected by Willyam Tyndale; whereunto is added a necessarye Table; wherein easely and lightelye may be foũde any storye contaynd in the foure Euangelistes, and in the Actes of the Apostles;" as also a copy of the edition containing the "droll error" which Lea Wilson has pointed out in 2 Cor. x.—"Let hym that is foche think on his wyfe," instead of "Let him that is such think on this wise," as it is in the two other similar editions. Of "THE NEWE TESTAMENT of oure Saueour Jesus Christ, translated by M. Wil. Tyndall," etc., ascribed to the year 1549, Lea Wilson says, "I believe the volume to be much earlier than 1549, and printed in Antwerp, or in Holland, but probably put forth by Day about this period. . . . It is altogether a handsome book, printed on a thick paper, but it is deplorably filled with typographical errors, and others of a more serious description." Dr. Gifford thought it must have been printed "in or about the year 1534." Besides these there are in the collection copies of six later editions of Tyndale's Testament, and a copy of Tyndale's Pentateuch, which is exceedingly rare. Demaus, in his "William Tyndale: a Contribution to the Early History of the English Bible," says of this book, "What first strikes the reader on glancing at the volume is the peculiarity of its typography. The Book of Genesis is printed in the customary black letter of the period; Exodus and Leviticus are in Roman letter; Numbers is in the same black letter as Genesis; and in Deuteronomy we have once again the Roman letter, as in Exodus. At the end of Genesis is the colophon, 'Printed at Marlborow in the year 1530;' but there is no other note of time, place, or printer throughout the volume." This copy answers to Demaus's description exactly, except as regards Genesis, which is printed not in black letter, but in Roman. An explanation can be easily given. The copy of Genesis, as contained in this volume, bears the following on the title-page:—"The firste Boke of Moses, called Genesis, Newly Correctyd and Amendyd by W. T., MDXXXIIII." So that this Genesis did not belong to the first edition. Whether there was a *complete* second edition of the Pentateuch issued by Tyndale is, I believe, an unsettled point; but here is proof that there was a second edition of the first book. The other four books are unquestionably of the first impression. At the request of Dr. Mombert, of America—whose reprint of Tyndale's Pentateuch is, perhaps, barely known in this country—Dr. Culross, the esteemed principal of the college at Bristol, has


¶ The thyrde Chapter.

MOses kepte the shepe of Iethro his father in law preast of Madian, and he droue the flocke to the backeſyde of the deſert, and came to the mountayne of God, Horeb. And the angell of the Lorde apeared vnto hi in a flame of fyre out of a bush. And he perceaued that the bush burned with fyre and consumed not. Than Moſes sayde: I will goo hẽce and see this greate syghte, howe it cometh that the bushe burneth not. And whẽ the Lorde sawe that he came for to see, he called vnto him out of the bush and sayde: Moſes Moſes. And he answered: here am I. And he sayde: come not hither, but put thy shooes off thy fete: for the place whereon thou stondeſt is holy grounde. And he sayde: I am the Godeof thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Iacob. And Moſes hyd his face, for he was afrayde to loke vpon God.

Than the Lorde sayde: I haue surely seen the trouble of my people which are in Egipte and haue herde their crye which they haue of their taskemasters. For I knowe their sorowe and am come downe to deliuer them out of the handes of the Egiptians, and to bringe them out of that lande vnto a good lande and a large and

TYNDALE'S PENTATEUCH, FIRST EDITION.

carefully collated them with advance sheets sent for the purpose, word by word and comma by comma, and finds the agreement so exact that no reasonable doubt can be entertained. As to the place where it was printed, Demaus says: "The Book of Numbers evidently proceeded from the same press as Genesis; but it has been suggested, as a possible explanation of the piebald appearance of the volume, that the other three books were printed somewhere else than Marburg. If future investigation shall succeed in clearing up the obscurity that hangs over Tyndale's movements in 1529 and 1530, we shall probably be able to explain perfectly this patched typography of his Pentateuch; meantime, however, as the result of a very careful examination, we feel convinced that all five books were printed by Hans Luft at Marburg. The ornamental title-pages prefixed to the books are the same throughout, and are unquestionably Hans Luft's. What is technically called the 'forme' is the same; and in the books in Roman letter we observe the same water-marks and the same wire lines which are found in those in black letter, which no one doubts to have been printed at Marburg." Whether they all proceeded from the same press or not, it is probable, in face of the facts just stated, that the books appeared one by one at short intervals—that is, that the Pentateuch was published in parts, and that they were not bound together till the last had appeared. The probability is increased, when we remember that this appears to have been the way in which Tyndale began to publish his translation of the New Testament.

I have devoted so much space to the Tyndale New Testaments that I have little to spare for noticing the many other interesting and valuable versions and editions of versions to be found in this collection. There is a copy of Coverdale's New Testament, "imprinted at Antwerpe by Matthew Crom, in the yeare of oure Lorde MDXXXVIII." This is a neatly printed and handsome book, containing woodcuts. It has usually been considered the first edition; but Lea Wilson doubts it, believing himself to possess a copy of an edition published about 1535. Side by side with this may be found a copy of the edition which appeared in the following year. Near it are two volumes of the New Testament, with Erasmus's paraphrase thereupon, "enpriented at London, in flete strete, at the signe of the sunne, by Edwarde Whitchurche;" the first volume in 1548, and the second in 1549. Passing over some others, we come upon a "New Testament, with Notes and Expositions of the darke places: C. Barker, London." It is an octavo, and has no date, but the binding is figured 1568. An inscribed note reads—"This is a singular N. T.; the text is Bishop's translation. The Preface and Pith are the same as A. B. Parker's, in the first fol. edition. Lives of the Evangelists. Arguments before the Epistles and the greatest part of the Chapters, and Notes at the ends of them; Order of Times following the Acts, and Tables of Epistles and Gospels at ye ende of all, are ye same as in Jugge's three quarto editions of K. Edwd. ye VI., List 1552-53-54; all which are ye same collection as this—June 19th, 1780. A. Gifford." A postscript adds, "The Calendar has both Paul and Barnabas in black letters, which some of Jugge's want. Whether this book is mentioned by Lewis, p. 263, or Ames, p. 363, 365, is uncertain, as it has no date." Of the "New Testament, translated out of the Greek by J. Beza, with expositions; Englished by L. Tomson, London, 1596," I simply note that it has "a concordance containing the principal words and matters comprehended herein."

Of copies of the Scriptures in foreign languages—many of these being translations made by Baptist missionaries, from the illustrious Carey to contemporary translators—there are no fewer than three hundred and fifteen copies in the Bristol College library.

CLOSE HOME AT LAST!

CLOSE home at last! After long days
Of travailing o'er many ways,
Ocean and wind alike his foes,
How glad the mariner who knows
Home's dawning on his anxious gaze!

No thought of danger now dismays,
For, peering through the spray and haze,
He sees the harbour light that glows
Close home, at last!

So, too, when health no longer stays,
When limbs that fail, strength that decays,
Tell life's long journey nears its close,
Trustful may we await repose,
Rejoicing in Heaven's guiding rays,
Close home at last!

GEORGE WEATHERLY.

GOD, NATURE, AND EXPERIENCE.

BY THE REV. A. BOYD CARPENTER, M.A.

(PSALM LXXXIX. 13.)

THE Hebrew conception of Nature was essentially religious. It connected God with all the phenomena of the material world, and made everything alive with His immediate presence. Hence everything became doubly wonderful, beautiful, and instructive. Men read Nature as God's writing, with reverence, awe, and love. The thunder was God speaking, the uttering of His voice—and that a mighty voice; the lightning was His wrath burning like fire—the flashing of the sword-blade of the Almighty as it leaped from its scabbard or gleamed girded on His thigh; the earthquake was the tread of advancing Deity under Whose feet the earth trembled and shook; the dark, thick gathering clouds were the awful pavilion which shrouded Jehovah as He came floating on the wings of the wind; while the hurricane that bowed the trees, parted the thick bushes, and drove the helpless stubble before it, was the blasting of the breath of His nostrils.

Nor was this felt only in the sterner and more striking phenomena of Nature. Every place, every object, every phase of the natural world, was thus connected with God, and each thing stood as God had made it, bearing to the poet's eye and heart the moulding impress of God's hand.

The rivers were the rivers of God. The waving fields of corn were what He had provided for men; and the landscape in its varying aspects reflected the many-sided mind of God, and rejoiced in His sustaining presence and purpose. "The north and the south Thou hast created them; Tabor and Hermon shout for joy in Thy name."

But now another way of regarding the natural world has arisen; and the poetic and religious find a rival in the scientific. All the phenomena of the world can be accounted for by natural causes. The whole universe opens out as one vast system of natural laws and natural forces: the whole uniting with regularity and harmony in one vast organism. Clouds are but piles of "water-dust." Thunder is the explosion of clouds charged with electricity—lightning, the quivering of particles in rapid motion, and winds are natural forces following natural laws.

But because we thus find a natural explanation for all phenomena, and the reign of law to be supreme throughout the universe, must we cast aside the old Hebrew faith in God, refuse to use its terms, and substitute natural force for God?

Let us briefly consider the question as to whether to-day there is less room and less need for this faith in God than in the days of old.

I.—GOD AND NATURE.

1. THE modern conception of the world does not dispense with faith in God. The vastness and regularity of Nature are sometimes hastily assumed to be sufficient to account for the seen and all that is contained within it. It is implied that when men had smaller conceptions of the earth they could more easily believe in a Creator, but that now Nature appears capable of standing alone, and as possessing powers which are capable of taking the place once occupied in the thoughts of men by God. But the need of a creator is as great; and the more wonderful the world and all that lies within it appear, the more reason is there to believe in a creating mind and power. Trace back as far as we may, through long reaches of cause and effect, and we are forced at length to some point of beginning; and the hypothesis of a Creator is at least as reasonable, and indeed more so, than a self-created and self-ordering universe. As the past history of the globe rises before our minds, and we see it progressing from stage to stage until at length man, with mind and heart, rises as the chief flower and fruit of this growth, two hypotheses suggest themselves: one that the greater has thus sprung from the less, and that once-dead matter has given birth to life and mind and morals, or that these have sprung from, and all the causes of their development have found their origin in, a great creative Mind and energising Will. We have at least as much right to this latter explanation as to the other. The fact, therefore, of the order and vastness of the universe does not dispense with the old faith in God.

But the Psalmist believed not only in a Creator, a far-back Originator of all things, but in One who was actively engaged in the world of the present. In cloud and thunder, storm and rain, sunshine and fruit, he loved to see the signs of the active presence of God. Has the unveiled order and natural explanation of the world driven this active presence into the past, and confined our conception of Deity to a First Cause, long since withdrawn from the play and development of life; and caused us to regard the world like a huge clock, which has been wound up and then left to work by itself? What has been said with regard to the origin of the world may likewise be said with regard to its growth and sustenance. We speak of the reign of law: law is, however, but the convenient term whereby to describe the method and persistent process of Nature's operations. And what lies at the root of this method? what sustains this persistence? What is that force behind Nature which operates as much now as in the past? Is there not a wonder here as well as in the organisation of the world? We see Power in operation throughout all space; holding up the little as well as the great, and carrying

all things forward with triumphant persistence. We see mind in active operation. At least, we see just that class of operations which in every instance of human activity we would unhesitatingly ascribe to the action of mind. And we see Care: care for the needs of all living creatures: the care which seems to be pushing all on to accomplishment of some great and noble end, towards which they are continually ascending. Here, therefore, not only in a dim far-off past as an Originator, but now—now, in all the wondrous life and order, and power and beauty of the world about us, lying at the root of all phenomena, moving in all force, holding all things together, and working through the ceaseless processes of law, is "a Power, not ourselves," which is continually "making" for that which is higher and better. To the eye of faith all the operations of Nature, great and small, are God's. His hand, His presence, His power, His wisdom, His goodness, lie at the root, and He is the life and soul of everything. And we who draw from the earth all these physical supplies, and much more than the physical, may lift up our hearts and minds in grateful adoration to Him who has given such power unto Nature.

2. Nor need the presence of law chill our hearts or diminish our gratitude. Law rests upon the Law-giver and Law-sustainer. It is His way of acting, and as such we may gratefully accept it. In the very prevalence and persistence of law lies goodness and care. In all God's dealings with man He does not dispense with man's co-operation. Idleness forms no part of His plans for His children. It is through effort, contrivance, occupation, that God promotes the happiness, the growth, and the well-being of man. And because He cares for us and would draw us on to something, more and more does He lay on us the necessity for co-operation. Now, it is just the presence of law which gives man the things necessary for this successful co-operation. For, in the first place, law thus governing all things is the ground of certainty to man. How could man act with assurance if the forces of to-day varied with to-morrow, and what had been true yesterday proved untrue to-day? It is the certainty of law which encourages man to lay his plans for the future, and on this ground does God invite him to labour and provide. It is, in the second place, by law that man gains power over the world. Finding out the secrets of Nature and turning to account her laws, man acquires power to use her to his own advantage. Through knowledge of and obedience to Nature does man make her his servant. Law, therefore, instead of being an evidence of God's neglect of man, is a provision directed towards man's well-being; and what may at first sight appear to be a hard aspect of Nature turns out to be a friendly arrangement.

3. The grandeur of this knowledge of God. Instead, therefore, of being discouraged in the worship of God by the revelation which Nature is thus giving us, a grander conception of God's power and wisdom is really being presented to us. We may have to change some of the notions as to how God acts, but the mode of His action will only thus grow in grandeur. Vastness, order, certainty, these will enhance the awe and reverence with which we contemplate Him. If to the Psalmist of old the heavens declared the glory of God and the firmament showed His handiwork, how much more will the greatness and power, the unity and the marvellous contrivance which fill the universe, and embrace all things, and reach out into immeasurable space, fill our hearts and minds with an awe-inspiring reverence for Him in Whom all things live and move and have their being? Learning from law how the Creator would have us live, presumptuous carelessness will find no longer a place in our hearts, but all our acts, and all our thoughts, and all our desires will be regulated in accordance with those Divine laws which are at once the conditions of our well-being and the expression of our Father's will.

4. But the more the vastness and wonder of the natural world are thus opened out to us, the more will there appear a moral necessity for this faith in God. The increased vastness of the conception of the universe, and the ever opening up of fresh glimpses into the wonderful operations in the natural world—the ever-widening conception of life thus revealed showing us that we are parts of a stupendous whole—the rolling back of the circle of the known only to display vaster fields of the unexplored and unknown, that are lost to view in the illimitable environment, will have a twofold tendency on man's conception of himself.

(*a*) A sense of smallness. Already has our earth, which men once thought to be the centre of the universe, receded into comparative insignificance before the revelation of greater worlds, and suns, and systems with which space has been found to teem. But when from the globe we pass in thought to the individual who occupies so small a spot on it, the sense of man's insignificance may well be forced upon him. If the Psalmist, gazing with unscientific eye upon the heavens, exclaims, "What is man that Thou regardest him?" we, to whom the heavens have a more awful significance, may well feel as if we were nothing. Then comes the temptation to despise ourselves and our fellow-men, and to abandon all work for our own improvement and for that of others. Now, what will save us from this unwholesome self-depreciation? Man may fall back upon himself, and comparing heart and mind with the physical universe, claim for himself a greatness that belongs not to sun, or planet, or system. But this very greatness will make him feel all the more the disproportion between him and the vastness of the forces whereby he is surrounded. What shall lift him out of this comparative insignificance? His faith in God—the connecting of all these things with God—the sense that behind all these is God, Author, Sustainer, Ruler, and yet that God is his Father. Child of God, thy Father made

them all, and rules in the vast expanse of space, with its countless millions of radiant worlds. All are His, and He is everywhere; and He is thine, and thou art His! "If thou goest up into heaven, He is there; if thou goest down into the depths, He is there. If thou takest the wings of the morning, and dwellest in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall His hand lead thee, and His right hand uphold thee." The sense of insignificance vanishes, and we stand as children looking across the threshold of our Father's world. The things which it contains are great, but He who made them is greater; and greater, too, are we his children—greater by the power of thought that even now grasps much, and which, in a far-off future, shall penetrate the infinite mysteries of being—greater by that relationship which lifts us above the great hills and vast plains of earth, the mass of heaving waters rolling far as eye can reach, the stars studding the skies, and all the forces of the universe; and makes us feel great in the midst of greatness.

> "His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
> And the resplendent streams, his to enjoy
> With a propriety that none can feel
> But who can lift to Heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
> And smiling, say, 'My Father made them all.'"

(*b*) Sense of incompletion. Great as the discoveries may be, we are but removing the boundary-line a little further back, and finding an ever-widening circle of unexplored regions beyond. The greatest scholars feel how much vaster is the unexplored than the explored. Every fresh discovery is the revelation of something more to be discovered. Thus, as years roll by and discovery follows discovery, there opens out further and further the depth of the undiscovered, and along with the joy of discovery will grow the passion for more, and the pain that life gives so short an opportunity for investigation. The hunger for knowledge is but only whetted tenfold as death draws nigh. Even as life closes there comes the shadow of disappointment, and the feeling of how incomplete are all the results attained. What shall take the sting out of this unsatisfied hunger, and fill life with the promise of satisfaction? Faith in God. Thence will spring the hope of fuller knowledge hereafter. And patiently and hopefully, with the smile of a child to whom the father is about to reveal some long-promised secret, does the believer in God sink into the grave, to pass out into the land of light beyond.

Thus this mighty faith in God, this Christian faith, such as Christ taught when He too connected God's love and presence with all, is good for us as ever for Hebrew poet of old. It makes the whole world beautiful, and all its various parts, bathing them in the Divine Light which comes not and goes not as summer's transient beam, but rests as a mellow light, as the reflection of the Father's face upon all—the soft sunny south, the colder rugged north, the gentle verdure-clad Tabor, the lofty snow-peaked Hermon, and every phase of Nature's thousand moods, as having a place and work in the great community of Nature.

II.—GOD IN EXPERIENCE.

But in the outward world of Nature men have not unfitly found types and illustrations of their daily experience. Nature often reflects the life and experiences of man. The changing seasons harmonise with the different stages of man's life, as it passes from the spring of childhood to the winter of old age. And man's heart craves, and man needs the presence of God, not only in connection with the physical world about him, but also in connection with those changes and chances of this mortal life which he must encounter.

1. Thus man has his north and his south, his Tabor and his Hermon, in those different experiences through which he must pass. Thus, for example, we have our days spent as it were in the soft, genial south—days of ease, when life is reposing peacefully. We dwell in the very south of life's love and peace, and fold our hands or pluck the flowers, and know scarce a care. The days mostly of childhood and youth are these. But there comes a change. The days come when we must quit the quiet south, and go on our way to the greyer skies and colder and more rugged north. Then, instead of ease, plenty, pleasure, stern duty calls us to brave hard and difficult tasks. And life's day becomes full of toil, and endurance, and effort. Then comes change; our toil is rewarded, and we rise a little above the level of general life. We ascend the slope of the Tabor whose sides are clad with verdure to the summit. Success, wealth, exaltation, have become ours. But another change comes over our life; the chill of misfortune steals over us—when our life must pass beyond the toil and stir, when the cold of winter settles in our hearts, when we pass out into a loneliness where the din of voices cannot follow us, we are ascending the Hermon, where weakness, affliction, and death come to sever us from our fellow-men and the rich pastures lying below.

2. How shall we meet these experiences? Life's pathway lies before us, and walk it we must. A voice comes, saying, "Arise, and walk through the land." How shall we enter upon our journey? How contemplate the different phases of life's experience? Shall we take these things as only the accidents or the inevitables of life: deadening our feelings against pain and disappointment if peace does not always abide with us, and taking rest and joy just as they come? Shall we regard all life and life's changes without faith in God, dreaming away our life as if ease and plenty had no other meaning than idleness? Shall we rejoice in success as our own, as something to separate us from others? Shall we indulge in unavailing complaints of the toil and disappointments of life, or, hardening our hearts, pretend that we feel them not?

3. Shall we bring our faith in God into life? Say of our south and north, our Tabor and our Hermon, "Oh God, Thou hast created them, they shall shout for

joy in Thy name!' Take up the old Hebrew faith, made more pure and exalted in Christ, and be ready to say, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" And recognise all changes as parts of God's varying discipline, and see in them the hand of the Father as He moulds His children's characters by them.

4. This faith will teach us to recognise the rest and joy of peaceful days as of God. And God will be to us the Author of joy, and comfort, and peace. And with this view will come a healthy conception of God and His relation towards us—God, the Author of joy: God, Who likes to see His creatures happy! How that thought will help to dissipate many a cold, dark, and forbidding notion of God, such as too often has made our religion a gloomy thing! Once grasp that happier view, and religion will become a crown of light which will shine to the end of life. It will have its bearing on our darker experiences. From the child's heart, the feeling that God desires His children to be happy will help to clear away much of the bitterness of the after trials that assail us.

5. Rising from that faith in God's kindness and will that His children should be happy will come the feeling that the change to the colder and less genial north must have some connection with that very kindness. He has made the north as well as the south: the rougher phases of life are His: His to develope man's patience, and courage, and powers towards that happiness which consists in strength and activity and lofty character more than in ease and pleasure. Duty's stern call means the growth of that power wherein lies the condition of true happiness. Nor is that all. There are others in the world, and God's desire for man's happiness reaches to these. And these same efforts and duties are for them. And so, under the magic touch of that Divine faith, the rugged north, the hard toil and effort and patience and duty, become beautiful.

6. Prosperity. Lifted up above our fellows, and surrounded by the rich verdure of success, we shall find that it is this faith in God which alone can preserve us and make our prosperity a real blessing—the faith that God has given us this success: that it is His. It will drive out the spirit of pride, supplant the spirit of selfishness, and send us forth as the ministers and stewards of God, to use our substance and our advantages for His glory in the well-being of our fellow-men.

7. Disappointment: Loss: Death. These are the things which separate us from our fellow-men: experiences which the spirit must feel in that isolation and loneliness wherein the sympathy of our best and dearest cannot follow us. And the question is, How shall we meet them? Shall they be to us occasions of falling or of rising: valleys of the shadow of death, or mountain slopes leading us to higher eternal things? It is faith in God that will determine. Then in that hour of loneliness will come, more fully felt, the Divine Presence: as earthly things fail, all the great Eternal realities show themselves like stars in the silent heavens. A change will pass over our hearts and souls, and as we leave the world below we shall climb heavenward, and the hour of death will be the Hermon of God and the Mount of Transfiguration.

THE VICAR'S DAUGHTER.

THE STORY OF A VILLAGE HEROINE.

"He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."

EDITH CALVERLEY was pondering these words—which had formed the text of her father's sermon that morning—as she sat on a grassy bank in the Vicarage garden, tying up the flowers she had been gathering. It was a glorious afternoon early in June. The old red-brick house, with its gables and diamond-paned windows, seemed to bask in the sunlight that lay like liquid gold on the garden walks and flower-beds.

The thick leaves twinkled and laughed softly in the breeze. The hills were blue against the lustrous blue of the sky. The ordinary sounds of village life were hushed—that indescribable "Sunday feeling" was in the air, which seems to breathe of rest and peace. The very wind came into the garden on tip-toe, and did not flirt as openly as usual with the tall ranks of stately lilies and the opening roses. The very brook that babbled near by had another, deeper music in its tone. The peace and beauty of it all touched Edith with a vague sense of contrast to the solemn and stern words she was musing over. Sacrifice, hardship, constant renunciation of self—and those things self holds most desirable—surely all this was implied by the expression, "loseth his life"?

"*All that a man hath will he give for his life.*" But those who would follow Jesus closely must be ready to sacrifice life itself at His call, for His sake—for love's sake. Not for fame, nor glory, nor reward; not for applause, not of self-will, but simply at His call, and for His sake.

The girl's bright face grew grave as such thoughts as these passed through her mind. Life was a very happy thing to her. No shadow of grief or pain

had crossed it as yet. She had a happy home. She had health, though a certain weakness of the heart forbade any great exertion. She was beloved by the villagers, amongst whom she had grown up, and the future stretched before her still more full of love and joy. For another love than that of father and mother, dear as was their love, had found an entrance to Edith's heart. The Rev. Hugh Somers, Mr. Calverley's faithful friend and curate, had been at first simply attracted by the girl's bright face. More intimate knowledge of her had deepened that attraction, till the young man's highest earthly hope was to make her his wife. They were not yet formally engaged, but each instinctively read the other's heart. Each loved and was beloved. Each trusted and was trusted in return. As yet, this was all-sufficient. Surely, mused Edith, there *must* be something amiss in a life so brimful of happiness?

Presently Mr. Calverley came into the garden on his way to the Sunday-school, and, hastily putting her flowers into a basket, Edith passed with him through the little rose-bowered wicket into the lane, at the end of which the church tower could be seen among the trees.

"Father!" said Edith, breaking the silence—for Mr. Calverley was a man of few words—"I am afraid that I am finding my life!—don't you think so?"

"Are you loving it better than God, child?" asked the Vicar, a tender light coming into his eyes as they rested on the girl's downcast face.

"I—I hope not! oh, I *hope* not! Only—I'm so happy, father! My life seems just as calm and sunny as this June day! I haven't a trouble in the world, but"—with a half-smile ending in a sigh—"the Wests!"

"Well, dear, and your happiness now is God's gift to you. Take it, and bless Him for it!"

"I do bless Him for it, but," still dissatisfied, "I am not in any sense losing my life, and—and—*Jesus* spoke those words, father!"

"Love God best, child. Put Him first."

"Is that all?"

The Vicar smiled slightly at the disappointment evident in Edith's tones. Then a sudden moisture clouded his keen gaze.

"All? Aye, *all!*" he said solemnly.

"But—but I thought——"

"Our Lord did not mean to inculcate soul-suicide, but soul-surrender. '*Do all to the glory of God.*' In your home-life, in your cottage-visiting, in your Sunday-school teaching, you can lose your life, for Christ's sake. Answer His call, in these—as you think them—little things, and He will give you grace to answer it for any sacrifice He may require from you, child."

Little did the Vicar think when that call should come, nor how it should be answered!

It has been said that Edith Calverley was beloved by the villagers, amongst whom she had been born; but there was one family that, until lately, had repelled all her advances. This was the "trouble" to which the girl alluded. For, even now, she was only rarely permitted to enter the cottage, and then on sufferance.

Three years ago, a widower named Thomas West, with his five children—two of whom, the eldest boy and girl, were considerably older than the other three—had come to Aidan village. Here he had been born and bred, but had gone out into the world to seek his fortune. He had found a wife, but not a fortune, and on the death of his father—who followed the time-honoured occupation of a blacksmith—was glad to return to his native place and the old smithy.

He lived in one of the prettiest of the red-walled, quaint-windowed cottages that peeped from the trees on each side of the road.

The little garden was bright with flowers. The stone steps leading to the door were always clean. The interior of the cottage was as neat and clean as possible. For Lucy West, the blacksmith's eighteen-year-old daughter, was quite a notable little housewife, keeping herself and the three pretty children, to whom she was like a mother, just as clean and wholesome-looking as the house.

Edith Calverley had hastened to call on this model family, but found no admittance.

"May I not come in?" she had asked, reddening slightly when Miss Lucy interviewed her through the nearly closed door. Lucy blushed, too, as she replied briefly to the effect that "father wouldn't like it;" and, on being further pressed, that he said he "would have no fine-spoken good folk in his house; he wanted nought of them, and they wanted nought of him! so let 'em keep away!"

At length, however, a sort of truce was proclaimed. Edith loved children dearly, and soon, by kind words and smiles, won the wild hearts of the little Wests. A present of a curly-haired doll to Winnie—the youngest child and darling of the family—softened the father's animosity to such an extent, that he told Lucy he "didn't care if she asked Miss Calverley inside next time she came."

"Mind you, I don't want her a-ferreting about and a-giving of you tracks, Lucy! I know what parsons' folks are, and I'll have none of 'em lording it over me. But our Winnie likes this girl, and so she may come in a bit, now and again."

"If you once let her get in, you'll have her allus here!" grumbled Jim, the eldest son, who, like so many of the working men of the present day, was a freethinker, and proud of the freedom which was really only the result of ignorance; "and then we'll have no more peace!"

But, in spite of this dissentient voice, the Vicar's daughter was granted an entrance, and even surly Jim was constrained to allow that "she warn't bad," when, coming in one day, he found her seated by the fire with Winnie on her knee, and was somehow led to enter into conversation with her. "She don't talk down at a chap; she reckernises him as a ekal," he said, as an excuse for his weakness.

* * * * * *

When school was over, Mr. Calverley remained to speak to one of the teachers, so Edith walked away alone. Presently, steps came hurrying after her, and a well-known voice brought the light to her eyes, the swift colour to her cheeks.

"The Vicar has kindly asked me to tea," said Mr.

Somers, his own eyes very bright; "so I hope you will give me that half-hour's talk in the garden that you have promised me so long. It is the very afternoon for a garden, and a nice, restful talk."

Edith looked from her companion's face to the flowers she was carrying, and her heart sank a little.

"I was going to see the Wests," she said; "Mr. West and Jim are generally at home on Sunday afternoon, and I gathered these flowers on purpose for Lucy."

"Must you go?" asked Mr. Somers disappointedly, "just this special Sunday afternoon, Edith?" The girl hesitated. Almost she had said, "I will not go," it would be so sweet to sit with Hugh among the roses! But then, had she not been offering her life afresh to God the very moment before Mr. Somers joined her? Had she not felt that He called her to this very work? Her father's words, "Answer His call in these—as you think them—little things," had she not resolved to obey? Yes, and she would obey! Her eyes cleared. Smiling half-playfully at her lover's clouded face, she said brightly, "I must, because I ought!"

"I will not say another word, then," he said, smiling back—for to Hugh Somers, a duty was a necessity—"except God speed you on your errand! Some day, perhaps, the Wests will admit me, or at any rate the Vicar. I suppose I dare not venture to accompany you now? No! well, you must do your best to open the door wide enough, you know!"

"So your fine-gentleman parson wouldn't come in, eh?"

This was Mr. West's greeting, as Miss Calverley took the chair proffered by Lucy, and the children pressed round her.

The question issued from a cloud of smoke, through which the forms of the questioner and his son—in the easy undress of shirt-sleeves and waistcoats—glimmered indistinctly. Each was smoking a pipe, and showed his superiority by continuing to smoke in the lady's presence.

"Mr. Somers would have liked to come in, but he thought you would consider it an intrusion," Edith replied, smiling and colouring faintly. The father and son laughed rudely.

"Parson 's got a bit o' sense, then—he knows when he ain't welcome, and that 's more than most of 'em knows. No, I'll have no sky-pilots here—a pretending to steer a ship they know nought about, to a port as they knows less on!"

"Fellers as never soils their white 'ands," struck in Jim, "and as don't know what work is!"

"I know a parson," said Edith, the red deepening in her face, but her eyes steady, "who was called to see a poor man dying of small-pox in its worst form. Nobody would go near the man; there was nobody to nurse him. When he was well he had never let an opportunity slip of insulting that 'parson'; he had been an idler, a swearer, all that is bad, and in his illness all his comrades forsook him. The clergyman went to him, stayed with him, fed him, nursed him till he died, and laid out the poor corpse with his own hands. He did it, of course, at the risk of his life. He was used to such risks. The work of every true 'parson' comprises such risks. But I suppose you would call all that 'play,' Jim?"

"All I can say is, I never met with no such a parson," declared Mr. West, in tones that plainly meant, "and I don't believe there's such a one living!"

"No! but you might meet this very one if you like," Edith said, smiling away the tears that stood in her eyes; "for it was Mr. Somers who nursed the man! Mr. Somers, the 'fine gentleman' you won't have anything to do with!"

"Lor, miss! he 's a real good gentleman!" declared Lucy, with enthusiasm, "and as nice a——"

"Not so quick, Lucy! Not so quick, wench!" said Mr. West, raising a big hand that was certainly soiled enough. "Seeing 's believing, to my mind. Women"—with lordly contempt—"is allus ready to believe any tale as any soft-spoken chap likes to tell 'em. They haven't sense to know that the softer-spoken he is, the more sure to lie. And I 'll tell you what, miss," bringing the hand on to his knee with a resounding slap, "I don't believe in your fine parsons, nor yet in their lies, nor in ne'er a one of your goody-goody folk. What does they do?" putting aside his pipe in his excitement. "Goes about with tracks, frightens the women and poor sick folk till they dussn't say their souls is their own. They have fine homes and fine clothes. They 're gentlefolks. They never knowed hunger or thirst; never heerd their children crying for bread. They try to make slaves o' free-born men. They reckon to foller One Who was a working-man; Who they tell on as laying down His life for the world. I tell you, I never see one o' the lot as 'ud take any real trouble for the sake of Him as they sets up, let alone risk their lives!"

"But I would give my life for Him!" said Edith, very low, her voice trembling, her eyes shining half with excitement, half with the fervour of the resolve which every one of the blacksmith's words seemed to make more deep, more earnest. "And I am sure my father would; and I have told you about Mr. Somers. Oh, I know we are always failing and falling; but still we try to follow Him, and we *do* love Him."

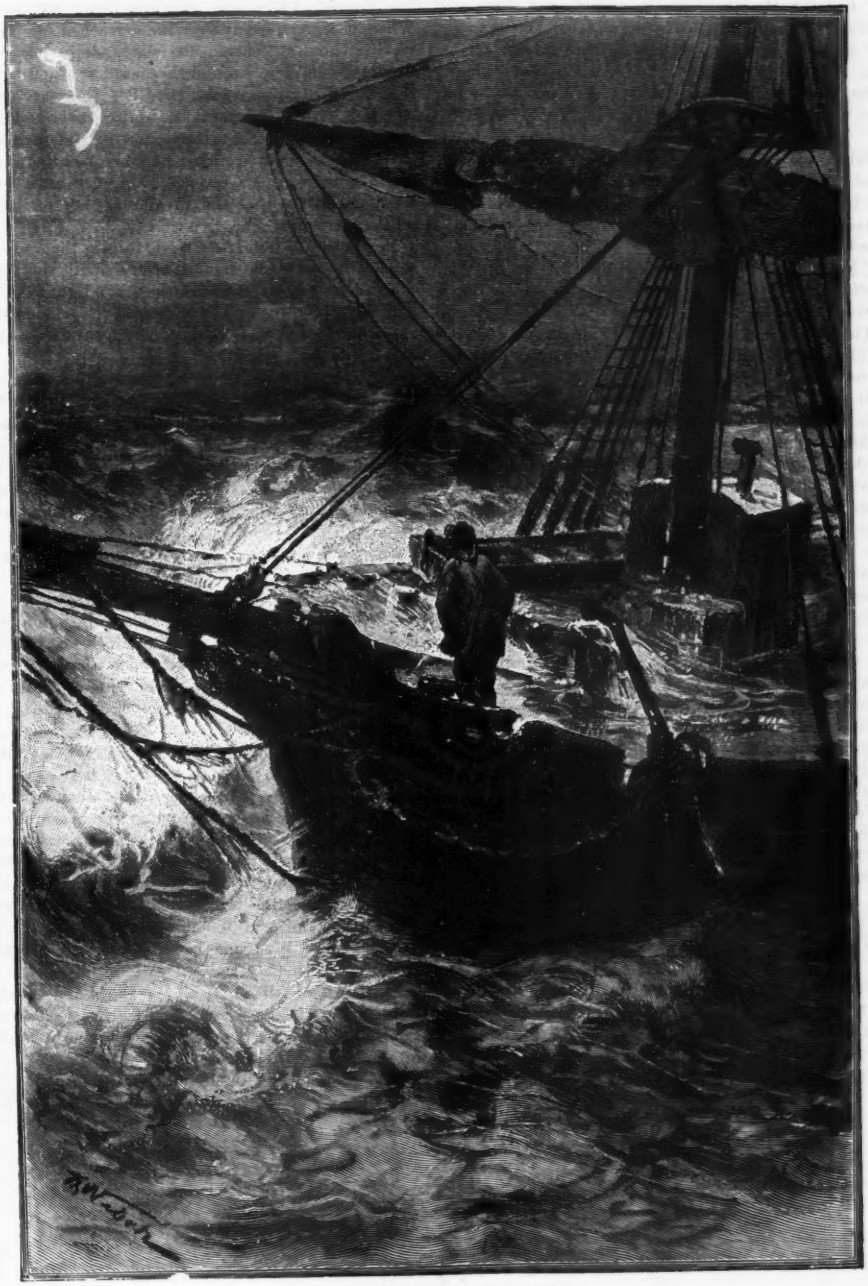
"So do I!" whispered little Winnie, who had climbed on to Edith's lap; "'cause He loves children, He does; you telled me about it!"

"Well, well; it 's easy to talk," concluded the blacksmith; "but a ha'porth o' haction is worth a pound o' talk. I 'll tell you what, missie: when I sees some o' them grand hactions as you folks can tell us plenty o' long yarns about—eh, Jim?—why, then I 'll maybe take passage with one o' them sky-pilots myself! I can't say no fairer nor that!"

And Edith left the two men laughing loudly at the absurdity of the idea, while Lucy and the children followed their visitor out.

"Missie," said Winnie, in her pretty child's voice, when Miss Calverley paused at the foot of the steps to say good-bye, "I 'spects when Jesus was a little boy—as little as me—some lady gave *Him* a dolly to play with?"

"I daresay He had something to play with," replied Edith, laying her hand tenderly on the dimpled arm that clasped its curly haired treasure so fondly.



"CLOSE HOME AT LAST!"

See p. 514.

"Yes; but a dolly?" insisted the child.

"Yes, dear—perhaps," said Edith, rather at a loss.

"I wisht He was little now, I'd give Him my dolly!" Winnie said, half-tearfully.

"Even that child would lose her life for His sake," was Edith's thought, as she walked slowly away. "May He give me grace that I may not be found less ready!"

* * * * * *

Edith Calverley had just parted from her lover. The words had been spoken which knit her life to his for ever, and the girl's heart was brimful of happiness as she passed down the village street homewards.

"My Hugh! there's nobody like him in all the world! And to think that he should care for me! O God, make me worthy of him!"

The prayer had scarcely left her lips when a shrill childish shriek—a shriek of unmistakable agony or terror—arrested her steps.

It was repeated again and again. All the bright colour left Edith's face as she ran up the steps to the Wests' cottage, whence the cries proceeded. What could be the matter? Was little Winnie coming to any harm? Hastily bursting open the door, her heart seemed to cease beating as she saw what looked like a pillar of flame moving towards her, shrieking as it came. In one moment the meaning of it flashed across her mind—Winnie had been left at home alone, and had somehow caught fire.

In the same moment all the sweetness and beauty, the dear desirableness of life swept over her. As the drowning see all the past pictured before them in a second of time, so there flashed across this girl's vision her happy past, the happier future she had dreamed of; and as it flashed across her, some voice within seemed to cry, "You can't save the child, you will only lose your life too. Go outside and call for help!"

For less than the fraction of a second Edith paused, with her hand grasping the latch of the door.

"*For My sake!*"

Did somebody speak the words aloud? Edith did not know. She only knew that they rang in her heart like a trumpet-call to battle, and that choice was no longer possible. The Master commanded, nay, did but entreat—it was enough.

It takes a long time to write all this, but, in reality, the battle was fought and won during the brief space it had taken Winnie West to run across the cottage floor—her light frock blazing round her—to her angel of deliverance.

There was neither carpet nor tablecloth at hand; nothing by means of which Edith might extinguish the flames. There was but one thing left to do. When poor, terrified little Winnie reached her, Edith received her—all burning as she was—in her arms. Folding them closely round the small, writhing figure, that in its torture would have fled from her again, she fell with it to the floor—rolling over and over, with a spasmodic effort, thus crushing out the fierce, fiery tongues that scorched her own face and throat and hands, as if in revenge. One cry alone burst from the girl's lips—one involuntary cry for help—"Lord, save us!"

Never will Winifred West forget that cry of imploring faith and agony. Never will she forget how, even as it was uttered, she saw a light as of joy and victory in the eyes that seemed for a moment to smile on her and then to close, as the child's eyes also closed.

"We went to sleep," said Winnie afterwards.

Thus it was that Jim West, who had followed Miss Calverley down the village street five minutes later, found the two.

With scorched flesh and smouldering garments, and yet not dangerously injured by the fire, the young girl and the child lay clasped in each other's arms on the rough floor—"asleep."

But from that sleep one of them would awake, in this world, never again!

* * * * * *

"Died from the effects of shock acting on a weak heart," was the doctor's verdict. His voice trembled a little as he uttered it. It was such a bright young life, so useful, so necessary, to be thus suddenly cut off! Surely Winnie West had been more easily spared!

And so thought most people. But Edith's father and her lover—the two who loved her best—were not amongst these. In all the anguish of such a terrible bereavement, the peace of loving submission to—of full acquiescence in—the will of God, was theirs. They were amongst the "noble few" who hold themselves always ready to lose life—aye, and that which is dearer than life—at His call, and for His sake, Whose they are, and Whom they serve.

Old Thomas West and his son Jim were the first-fruits of Edith Calverley's devotion.

In all Aidan village, in all Westshire, indeed, there cannot now be seen a more God-fearing, God-serving family than that which was once the one "trouble" of the Vicar's daughter.
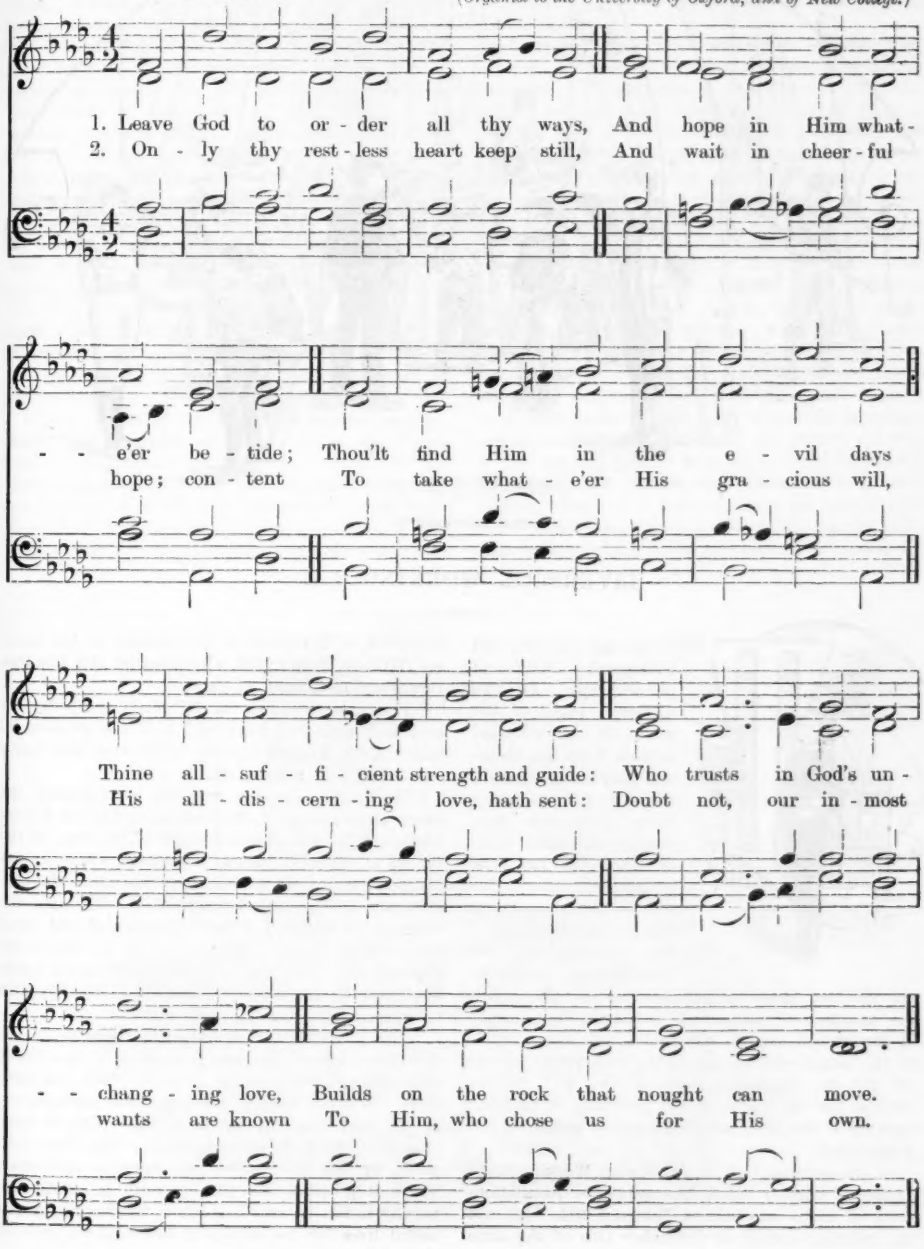
And has she not found the life she lost?

S. W.

"Leave God to order all thy ways."

Words by G. NEUMARK, 1653.

Music by JAMES TAYLOR, B.Mus.
(Organist to the University of Oxford, and of New College.)





THE GYMNASIUM.

LIVERPOOL WORKING LADS.



THIS is an age of active and widespread Christian philanthropy. In the wide-read pages of the press, in the effectual appeals from ten thousand pulpits, irrespective of creeds and denominations, there are constantly increasing signs of one cardinal fact—the practical outcome in this nineteenth century of the sublime teaching of the Sermon on the Mount—that, surely as the daytime succeeds the darkness of the night, the kingdom of the poor is at hand. Not merely in the lifeless marble—the cold tablet on the walls of the sacred edifice—but in the endowment of the cot for the Children's Hospital, the gift of the lifeboat for the rescue of the perishing, is the dear memory of the loved and lost tenderly enshrined and perpetuated.

In the entrance-hall of the Gordon Working Lads' Institute, Stanley Road, Liverpool—the foundation-stone of which was laid on February 27th, 1886, and the building opened on December 11th of the same year—there is the following inscription :—

"This Institute has been erected by William Cliff, merchant, of Liverpool, to the memory of his eldest son, William Frater Cliff, who departed this life 18th December, 1853, aged 11 years.

"Although so young, he felt deep sympathy for poor and neglected boys, and took the greatest interest in the Ragged Schools which were then being established for their benefit.

"The Institute is also intended to perpetuate the name and memory of Major-General Charles George Gordon, R.E., who devoted much of his time to the benefit of destitute lads at Gravesend, where he was stationed from 1865 to 1869, superintending the construction of the new defences of the Thames; and where he established a Boys' Home, and did other philanthropic work. He was killed at Khartoum, January 26th, 1885, aged fifty-two years, in his heroic but unsuccessful attempt to rescue the Egyptian garrison, which perished with him.

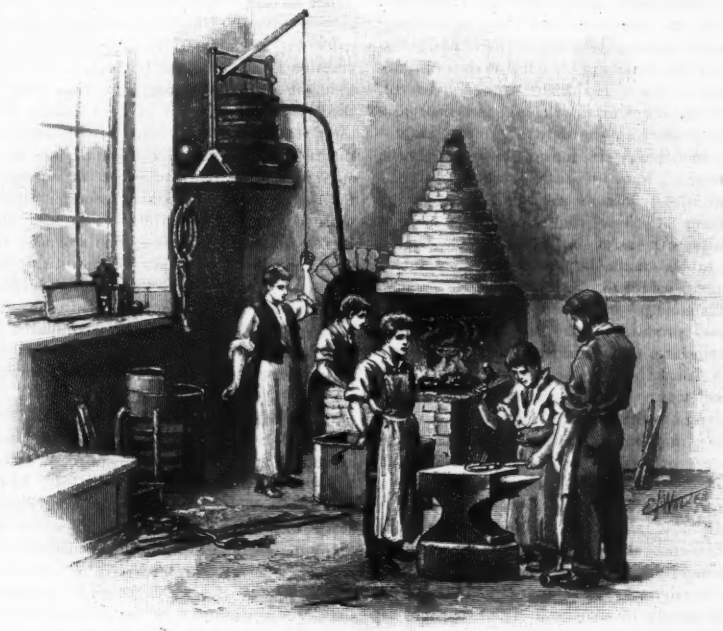
"This Institute, erected for the benefit of the Working Lads of Liverpool, is therefore a suitable monument of what was so noble in youth and manhood. It is the hope of the donor that the members of the Institute will use it in the spirit of these examples which it commemorates; that they will profit by the instruction and harmless recreation which it provides, and thereby form in youth such worthy habits as may help them to live happy and useful lives for the service of God and the good of their fellow-men."

The good and self-sacrificing work carried on at

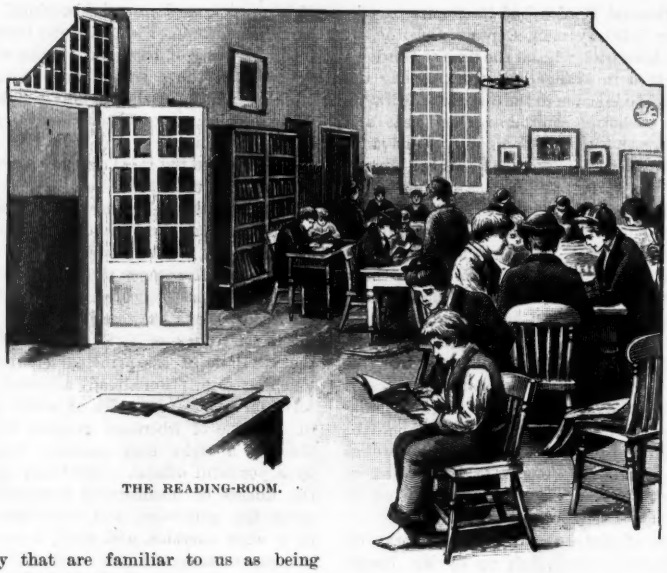
Gravesend by General Gordon had its counterpart in that of another military man, Captain Osborne, of the North Fort, Liverpool, who, at the time of Gordon's death, was engaged in evangelistic work among the poor and crowded population in the district of Miranda Road. Captain Osborne considered this great and mournful occasion a fitting opportunity to advance the claims of his special mission. Powerful appeals were made in the daily press, and a committee of leading gentlemen were got together, with the ultimate result of subscriptions being raised to the amount of nearly £3,000. It was at this stage that Mr. Cliff—already favourably known to the Northern metropolis as the munificent donor of the building and offices of the Liverpool Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; and also the palatial Home for Aged Mariners at Seacombe, Cheshire—came forward with his generous offer to erect the present structure at his own expense, on the single stipulation that the subscriptions already raised should be further augmented to £4,000, this sum to serve as an endowment fund, the income to be devoted to the expenses of carrying on the proposed work of the Institute.

In the course of duty, Captain Osborne was removed, and the reins were taken up by Mr. Joseph Cunningham, a resident in Stanley Road, and the present Superintendent of the Institute, who, like his predecessor in the field, had been for many years engaged in endeavouring—in hired premises—to help forward and instruct the destitute and ignorant youth of his own immediate neighbourhood. Mr. Cunningham's contingent of scholars was thus the nucleus of the great army of boys and youths who now nightly assemble in the corridors and rooms of the noble building, which, in the highest and best meaning of the expression, may be briefly described as a veritable Palace of Delight.

According to the third annual report, issued in May, 1888, no less than 3,000 lads have been admitted as members, with an average attendance of 300 per night; and a short description, derived from a personal visit, of the social, recreative, physical, and educational advantages provided by the Institute for these otherwise neglected waifs and strays of the Liverpool streets, may perhaps prove not uninteresting to the readers of The Quiver. First pausing in the vestibule of the principal entrance, to read the touching inscription already adverted to, which is set forth on a massive tablet of white marble, encased in a frame of Aberdeen granite, the visitor passes through a light iron gateway, which is guarded by a youthful official, whose duty it is to examine the tickets of membership presented by the applicants for admission, and thereupon finds himself in a wide corridor, and amid a number of bright and eager faces. At the south end of this corridor is the reading-room. This is a large and lofty apartment, with picture-hung walls, and brilliantly lighted. The ten or a dozen tables are strewn with the current papers, periodicals, and illustrated journals, among which it is satisfactory to notice the



THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP.



THE READING-ROOM.

covers of many that are familiar to us as being among the best of their class.

There is always a goodly array of students assembled here, each table having its circle of absorbed readers. A well-fitted bookcase, situated by the doorway, is in the charge of two boys "on duty" as librarians, and volumes are issued to applicants on deposit of their tickets of membership. This plan is both simple and effective. The tickets remain with the librarians until the books are returned, and thus defaulting borrowers would necessarily forfeit their passports of admission to the Institute—a contingency which, it is gratifying to learn, has hitherto never arisen. Opening from the corridor on the ground floor are various rooms devoted to the debating clubs, ambulance classes, instruction in music, drawing, shorthand, wood-carving, brass repoussé work, plumbing, etc. There are also a joiner's shop and a smithy.

In the former of these the Superintendent exhibited several specimens of carpentry—stools, boxes, benches, and tables—made by the boys, and pointed with pardonable pride to a step-ladder, of really superior workmanship—strong, light, and graceful—the unassisted production of a lad of fifteen. In the smithy the glare of the forge, fanned into fierce flame by the huge bellows, revealed a scene of picturesque activity. Here a number of chains, staples, fire-tongs, coal-chisels, washers, rings, S-links, and other implements of the blacksmith's art, were shown, all of which had been manufactured by the pupils of this special branch of industry, who are trained three nights in the week under the voluntary tuition of an expert in the employ of a well-known Liverpool firm. The grimy countenance, honest and honourable as it may be, engendered by the toil at the anvil, naturally suggests the desirability of a plentiful supply of soap and water. There is a large and commodious lavatory, with a bath-room adjoining thereto, also on the ground floor. This is extensively patronised. The aphorism, "Cleanliness is next to godliness," is certainly approved of in the Institute, judging from the unmistakable evidence of the faces of the numerous inmates.

The gymnasium—without doubt the most popular resort in the whole building—deserves more than a passing glance, though unfortunately this is all that space will permit. It is invariably thronged, and as practice tends to make perfect, it is not surprising that the young athletes from this Institute earned the high commendation of Lord Charles Beresford for their remarkable proficiency in the assault-at-arms at the recent Liverpool Exhibition. The area for muscular recreation, however, becoming somewhat confined for the crowds who nightly assemble there, Mr. Cliff, with customary liberality, gave last year another £1,000 to cover the cost of the site and the erection of a building (immediately adjoining the Institute) of a more commodious gymnasium, which was opened on the 27th of October last by the Right Hon. the Earl of Meath. Leaving this animated and joyous hurly-burly, with its conflicting attractions of dumb-bell performances, club-exercises, somersault-throwing, and marvellous evolutions on the horizontal and parallel bars, and passing once more into the comparative stillness of the corridor, the visitor, after ascending a handsome stone staircase, embellished by a beautiful picture in oils, entitled "Evening"—the gift of Mrs. P. H. Rathbone—and lighted by five stained-glass windows, next enters the concert-hall, a room of noble dimensions, capable of seating 800 persons without crushing or inconvenience. It is here that the Cliff Brigade perform military drill, under direction of an accomplished instructor, entertainments and concerts, in which the Gordon Minstrels—a band of lads formed by the personal

efforts of Mr. Cunningham—play a prominent part, are given in this hall, which on Saturday nights is often completely filled with pleased spectators, many of whom are the friends and parents of the youthful *artistes*. These are attractions that bid fair to outrival the contaminating influences of the streets, and to fill the boyish heart with a strong and manly purpose, and a laudable ambition to excel, even in the teeth of "low birth and iron fortune."

A sentence or two must conclude this paper. Sunday evening services, a savings-bank, and an employment agency; picnics, cricket, and rounders in the summer, weekly entertainments in the winter—all these advantages are procurable at the Gordon Working Lads' Institute. And the charge for membership is *only one penny per week!* To such a noble and philanthropic enterprise, conducted on such unsectarian, broad, and Christian lines, we wish a hearty "God-speed." And for the encouragement of those who cheerfully and voluntarily give their leisure-time to the instruction of these destitute boys, opening for them the gates of knowledge, teaching them the principles of the higher life, may the words of the Saviour come with new and inspiring significance, "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

RICHARD HOLLAND.

MISS HILARY'S SUITORS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WILFUL YOUNG WOMAN," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

ANOTHER winter, long and chill, another spring, coy with its sunshine, fitful with its showers, came and passed. Summer reigned once more, baking all the greenery out of the little garden at Park Villa, and making a midday oven of Hilary's small dormitory under the tiles; where in fresh, early morning, when the dusky sparrows woke her with their chirping, and at late cool night, when the rest of the house was asleep, she would be up there alone reading away her hours of wakefulness.

She was not ill, and to her own self she would never admit she was not fairly happy, but under outward calm was hidden perpetual unquiet, something that had to be stamped down by constant effort, that could only be lulled by work; and this medicine Hilary taught herself hungrily to seek rather than to shrink from, as she would have done in her days of *dolce far niente*.

There was plenty at hand—as there generally is in this world for those who want it. The district where Park Villa stood was new, running out into a network of poor habitations. Few of the better class so much as set a foot in these regions, and the rising generation thereabouts were becoming a Sabbath scourge to the neighbourhood. Help was asked of the St. Johns to aid in catching some of these lawless little savages, and teach them a better way to keep the first day of the week than by playing hop-scotch on the pavement and slanging every decent passer-by. Hilary had no five-pound notes, as once she would have carelessly given, to oil the wheels of this undertaking, so with a good deal of alarm at her own presumption she gave herself instead, was "cheeked" and sworn at and lied to by her hopeful scholars, taught by roughest experience what degradation dwells in town slums, taught, too, as pity took her to some of her pale pupils' homes, what long-suffering and uncomplaining patience sometimes dwells there side by side with blackest vice, and went home often wondering, had Netley filth and sin in it like that? Then how little she knew of it, or might perhaps ever have known? "Ah!" quelling the pang of renunciation, "he whom Aunt Phil left it to was fitter than I to have it. What is, is best."

Then, just at the end of the winter, small Philippa fell ill with some long, dragging malady that left her ailing for weeks. Poor Mrs. St. John used to cry every day over the doctor's dissatisfied report, and hang weeping and very untidy over the child till she would be fretfully bidden to "keep away, please, mamma: you worry me so: let Hilary come." And the mother would retire to oranges and romances on her sofa down-stairs, while her step-daughter, growing skilful in an art she had never suspected herself of possessing, nursed Philippa with quiet step and cheerful voice, and grew willingly into being the slave of the invalid, who was exacting if not affectionate.

This state of things lasted till summer was at its height, and furnished Hilary with reasonable excuse for refusing Sylvia Dasent's repeated invitations to Mosswick; and, meanwhile, every hour that Philippa set her free, Hilary filled close with other occupations. Perhaps there was some pathetic hope in all this that she might make herself needful to her father's family, that they might want to keep her among them presently. At any rate, she never spared herself when she could be of use to one of them, and they all accepted her services without the slightest hesitation. Frances, the dunce, came daily to her step-sister to get her lessons stamped upon her stupid little brain now sharper Philippa was no longer by to shield her from bad marks. Will, a comical copy of his father, was for ever bringing her roughly scrawled-out plans

and sections when he discovered she had a talent for drawing to scale. Bertie, getting duller and duller as the June of his examination approached, drew on her aid for all his papers before he submitted them to Mr. Bevis; for that gentleman, he said, was getting harder on him as the critical time drew nigh. "And now you're set fast with Philippa up-stairs he rags me awfully of an evening," grumbled Bertie; "for he's got a temper, and no mistake, has Mr. Bevis."

Possibly; but Mr. Bevis was, at any rate, showing himself friendly to the lad, and Hilary was trying—how much against the grain she scarcely realised yet—to believe him worthy of all gratitude and respect; she was trying very hard indeed to like him. A sense of honour, an innate generosity bade her now defend him.

"I think you should remember, Bertie," she said, "that Mr. Bevis is very good to help you at all. You ought to be too thankful to him to resent any little crossness on his part."

"Ugh!" growled the boy. "My belief is he only came here pretending it was for me, when all he wanted was to be with you. I don't fancy he's helped me so mightily. He said the other day we had been going on wrong tracks the last six months, and now he expects me to hark back and make it all up in six weeks" (curiously enough, a notion of this had entered Hilary's mind when she had last listened to an evening's fruitless coaching); "and as for being thankful, I'm sick of that song. There was the pater shaking hands with Mr. Bevis in the passage the other night, after they had been talking ever so long in the back room. 'I never can be grateful enough for this temporaneous—no, temporary—something or another,' says he; and, whatever it was, he was kowtowing to Bevis no end. And then there's mother; he was talking with her the other night, just before you came down, and she broke out to the same tune, looking as pleased as anything, which was a blessing; for she'd been crying like a waterfall all day, because the doctor wanted his bill settled up. 'Oh! Mr. Bevis,' said she, 'how can I thank you enough?' and she was preaching away to you afterwards about what a liberal man he was, and thought I to myself, 'Ah! just you ask the fellows up at the office, or Mrs. Larkins down at his lodgings, and hear if they don't say he's as mean as old boots, for all he shows up so fine among us.'"

"Oh, Bertie, hush!" cried Hilary. She could not blaze into anger with the boy as she would have done had she loved the man he maligned. She could only wince under the dread he was speaking the truth, and the wistful pain in her dark eyes made the boy ashamed of what he had blurted out.

"Oh, never mind, Hilary. He knows how to be nice when he likes, and of course he'll always be so to you; for I suppose," philosophised Bertie, "a man must be awfully nice to a girl if the girl is awfully fond of him."

Poor Hilary blushed uncomfortably. Not all her sense of what ought to be could make that accusation of affection palatable. Rather did it feel like a slur which she must shake off.

"Please," she said, "don't speak of me so, Bertie. I—I'm not——"

"Awfully fond of him?" repeated the lad, mischievously; it was great fun to see Hilary drooping those long eyelashes of hers in such confusion. "Well, now, when you write to him and begin, 'My own, own dearest,' I should have thought you were."

"Bertie! I do nothing of the sort. I have never written to Mr. Bevis—except——"

"Ah—ha!" laughed Bertie.

"Except one day last week, when he had not been for three nights, and papa asked me to send him word he wanted particularly to see him."

"Ah! that's the note he was reading then, Miss Hilary. He'd eyes and ears for nothing else, and never heard me knock before I went into his room, but was staring away at his love-lines spread out on his desk till I was close to him, and actually couldn't help seeing the top words. Then I burst out laughing, and then up he jumped and pocketed his letter in a twinkling; and what's more, he gave it to me for opening his door before he shouted 'Come in.' He spoke English to me in capital letters that time, I can tell you!"

"Wh—a—t?" said Hilary.

"Well, used strong language, if you prefer that expression," said her brother, "till I stopped him by saying there was no such great harm done by my seeing half a dozen words in my sister's writing. Then he cooled down and said it was of no consequence, but I was to keep dark about his taking your letter to the office at all, or else—or else——"

In point of fact, Mr. Bevis had emphasised his commands to Bertie on that point by allusion to a good many office shortcomings of the lad's—slipping in at late hours, reading the illustrated papers instead of law volumes, and scamping his work generally: sins held *in terrorem* over the culprit's head, to be reported to Mr. Milroy if the younger lawyer were displeased by his junior. These sins Bertie shirked mentioning, and now finished lamely—

"Or else, you know, you mightn't like it, Hilary. There, now, that's enough. I won't plague you any more."

With this the boy darted off, sufficiently confused himself to leave his step-sister under the impression he had been inventing most of his tale for the youthful joy of teasing her. His bit of nonsense faded fast out of her mind, the more readily as just now her attention was continually being attracted to new departures in her family that marked some change she could not understand.

For months her father and Mr. Bevis had been on the most confidential terms. Each evening's chat in the back room seemed to increase their mutual affability. For a considerable time Mr. St. John had been growing more and more important, making a vast show of being greatly occupied by correspondence, betaking himself once more to the club with his head held higher than ever; throwing out hints that fortunes were not all locked up in land, there were plenty to be had in wider spheres for those who had originality enough to seek and secure them.

When Hilary's father pocketed her April cheque



"Searched it through for some weak link."—*p* 534.

from Mr. Milroy he remarked, blandly, that it was a pain to him, with his temperament, to accept that trifling payment for her residence with him; as soon as he had put his household on the footing to which, by their birth and name, they were entitled, he should be delighted to let her keep this small sum for pocket money, and that time—well, he wouldn't fix the date, but it might be closer than some suspected.

These little vauntings filled the air prophetically all the spring through. Mr. Bevis appeared to comprehend and share Mr. St. John's expectations, whatever they were, though Hilary once or twice caught an expression on his features, when her father was more pompous than usual, that almost suggested a doubt of his perfect sincerity. The elder man was by turns affectionate and patronising to the younger; never tired of lauding him in his daughter's hearing—making, as it were, already a son of him by various familiarities the other met most willingly.

"Order my cab for to-morrow," said Mr. St. John to Mr. Bevis, as he left one evening in June, "and come to meet the down train at eight. I shall have plenty to tell you after our meeting at noon;" and the arrangement was promptly agreed to, though with one of the looks that mystified Hilary. Mr. St. John had taken of late frequent journeys to town armed with bundles of drafts, plans, and memoranda in his own writing. Lately these journeys had developed in grandeur. They began with the business-like economy of third class, quickly ran through the modest respectability of second to the full-blown splendour of first, with a cab to and from the station, and for the

last few weeks half a dozen magazines, or fruit, or books, or whatever had taken the traveller's fancy in town.

This state of promissory affluence lasted till about midsummer. Then there came a lull. Mr. St. John ceased his journeys for ten days, and after that followed a week when letters poured in by every post for Algernon St. John, Esq., which made that gentleman terribly short-tempered with everyone about him. Even a coolness seemed to rise between him and Mr. Bevis, for their voices were heard issuing on one occasion from the back room in something very like wrangling, and slangy Bertie carried word up to his sister that there was "another jolly row downstairs."

Herbert had a row on his own account before the month was out. He, too, paid a visit to town, for his preliminary examination, and thereat, as was shown by the list issued the very day he so worried Hilary, he was most ignominiously plucked. Upon this Mr. Milroy wrote civilly but firmly to Mr. St. John representing that it was perfectly useless trying to force the boy into a profession for which he'd neither taste nor ability, and that having given him a chance simply through his connection with their former client, Miss Humphreys, he must now decline receiving him in the office, where he was of no use, and only wasting his time.

Bertie could have yelped with joy at his freedom had not his father been so harsh upon his failure.

"Young fool!" said he; "with Bevis married to your sister your future would have been safe. Now, you've not only disgraced me, but thrown another beggar on my hands."

Like all people of exaggerated suavity, such as he was fond of affecting, Mr. St. John took little pains to control his speech when he was put out, and this summer upset seemed something very serious. By a swift change of attitude Mr. St. John was now almost servile to Mr. Bevis, his fine assumption of paternal patronage all merged in waitful dependence, apparently, on the younger man's advice.

What it all meant, Hilary, frightened and anxious, could not imagine. Her father, unusually civil to her, most positively repelled the slightest attempt at questioning. Mrs. St. John shut herself up in her bedroom, and cried incessantly, refusing to disclose all reason for her tears. And through that curious fortnight Mr. Bevis steadily—stealthily, perhaps, would be the more correct word—advanced his addresses towards Hilary. Harassed with those business conclaves with her father, he would come forth most tenderly polite, most sedulously attentive to her, seeking her side, claiming a place by her at the late meal no one seemed to want but himself and voracious Bertie, talking to her even of the weather in suggestive whispers; and finally, one evening before he left, begging for five minutes alone with her for a purpose not to be mistaken.

"Surely," he said, his voice lowered persuasively, "you will grant me this. I have never till now overstepped the bounds you set me more than a year ago. I have given you time to take me or dismiss me. You have not been cruel enough to do the last. I want you to tell me now when shall be the supremely happy hour that you will do the first."

At this Hilary's heart stood still. Her tongue seemed tied. She had known this moment must come, had striven to tutor herself to meet it, and yet had hoped against hope to escape it. She drew her fingers from his clasp of ownership, and shrank away from him into the bow window. "Not to-night, please," she said. He bowed with a little shrug of the shoulders, as if always deferring to her wishes. "Then I will wait another day," he said, and going across the room, shook hands with Mr. St. John and his wife; to them adding significantly, "I shall be in to-morrow evening to arrange—everything. You will give me a good word where you know I want it, I feel sure." And with this he went away, looking, as he felt, very safe on that score.

An ominous silence followed his departure for half a minute, broken by the master of the house—

"Bertie, be off to bed. And now"—the boy being gone—"Hilary, come here. I've just one thing to say to you about Mr. Bevis. Let him have no shilly-shallying when he asks you to fix the time of your marriage, for that marriage is the only thing that stands between us and ruin!"

CHAPTER XX.

"RUIN!" faltered Hilary, coming slowly forward, a dread fastening on all her nerves, as of one who watches helpless some huge, resistless wave of fate draw nigher and nigher: "what do you mean, father? What can you mean?"

"The plain fact, as I plainly state it," he doggedly returned.—"Maria, leave off crying. A sea of tears won't wash the truth away.—Sit down, Hilary; it's always advisable to spare one's strength when possible."

Taking his, for once, sensible advice the more readily as she was shaking so much she could hardly stand, Hilary drew a chair near her stepmother and waited with dark, questioning eyes for her father to go on. Then, with his very gloomiest aspect—for he felt the blacker he could paint this very bad business the likelier he was to drive his daughter on to extricating him—Mr. St. John proceeded:—

"Possibly you may have observed that I've been very closely occupied during the last few months—overwhelmed with business, indeed—business entered upon quite in violation of my natural tastes, for I've always hated the commercial in every shape; but, quite against my constitutional promptings, I involved myself in this simply to find food for my large, dependent family, of whom you have the misfortune to make one."

There was no contradicting this, but Hilary was so sore with constantly hearing the assertion coupled with reproach, that now she gave a little weary cry at the reiteration. Mr. St. John, remembering it was his part to mollify his daughter, hastened to soothe her.

"But misfortunes, my love, are beyond our control sometimes. I assure you I was only defining the situation, not intending to vex you. Now to go on. In an untimely hour I determined to embark one of

my er—little floating ideas on the er—h'm—sea of speculation, so to speak; to crystallise a pretty dream of my own in the vulgar crucible of trade, and—how it's happened I really can't tell—it has not come out the gem I fondly hoped it would."

"But it ought, for your dear papa has such a genius for clever things," cried Mrs. St. John—faithful even through failure to her fixed idea of her spouse's infallibility.

"I formed," continued Mr. St. John, "or I lent my name—which of course carries weight in the world where it is known—to assist in forming a company whose object it was to float this child of my invention——"

"It wasn't the Smokeless Chimneys, Hilary," said her stepmother, mournfully shaking her head, "nor yet that clever Well, nor the beautiful Padded Lift. I believe they would have answered. But it was something for feeding cattle; altogether beneath your dear papa, I always did say."

"—— this child of my invention on the world," pursued the gentleman, ignoring the interruption. "To make of it a golden argosy, and er—and—er——"

"It didn't do it," said Mrs. St. John, with simple straightforwardness for which Hilary blessed her.

"But why, then," said the girl, threading her way back through the maze of her father's tall talk to the vital point of interest, "why does this hurt us so? Did you give anything else besides your name, papa? Did you give money? Or how is it you can be ruined?"

"Unhappily, my dear, I did give money. A great deal for me——"

"Because, you see," interpolated his wife innocently, "we really had not got *any*."

"Then where," asked Hilary, tenfold more confused, "where did it come from?"

Beat about the bush where his own folly and conceit were concerned Mr. St. John always would. Now he went on grandiloquently—

"Assured of the value of my patent, and positively compelled to back this confidence with cash before I could expect the public to believe in it, I actually—entirely with the intention of benefiting my family—felt myself bound to accept loans which were most handsomely placed at my disposal. When, therefore, I wanted a few hundreds to start with, and a few more to carry the business on, I—I——"

"Borrowed it of Mr. Bevis," said Mrs. St. John, valiantly helping her husband over the fence he had the grace to shy at.

At this a flood of cruel light rushed in on Hilary.

"Borrowed it of him, father!" she stammered. "Oh, how could you!"

There was such horror, such repugnance in her pale face, her father put on the defensive instantly.

"What more natural, I may say more proper, than for me to do so, if he was willing to lend?" he exclaimed. "Mr. Bevis for a year past has been growing more assured of close relationship to us. By never rejecting him of course you have led him on, and he was ready to associate his interests with ours. He has done so most handsomely, knowing, as he always pointed out, that what advantaged us advantaged you, and desiring to do that above all things. He is behaving superbly; the pains he has taken to see me through this vile business is incredible. I feel myself and all belonging to me positively in his hands. And when I say that, my love"—suddenly softening his excited tones—"I mean in yours also, for on you depends now Mr. Bevis's course of action."

She knew too well what he was driving at, but tried to stave it off.

"Father, you have money somewhere, have you not? Or mamma has. Cannot Mr. Bevis be paid now with that?"

"Pshaw!" Mr. St. John made an ironically hopeless gesture. "Your mamma here had a few thousands when we married, some of it tied up to her, some not. And what was not has—well, evaporated in the necessaries of existence; it got spent in a time when I looked for help from you in the future as certain. Now perhaps you can see how you have damaged all our prospects by throwing away the grand prize of your youth. Positively we have not enough income left to keep a home over our heads. To save my life I could not lay hands on a shilling to recoup Mr. Bevis. He can sell me up if he chooses, and"—glancing contemptuously around—"perhaps my household gods divided among him and other creditors might give them eighteenpence in the pound. But he will do nothing of the sort, Hilary, if you are reasonable. He has planned otherwise and excellently for all of us."

"How?" said Hilary faintly.

"He suggests we should take an opening that has been offered us more than once. Your mamma has a brother in New South Wales: a very practical man, without children of his own. He has often urged our taking our family there and allowing them to work, as a St. John could not possibly do in England. It has often, my dear"—this *par parenthèse*—"annoyed me to see you dusting this room. I trust you will soon be placed out of reach of these menial acts. Your brothers, you see, have no talents for professions. Emigration would be good for them. For their sakes your mother is willing to go. For hers and theirs I consent to sacrifice myself. Mr. Bevis generously agrees to wait repayment of his due till—till—till we have saved money out yonder. We are prepared to write our intentions to Sydney, wind up everything here, and sail from England by the 1st of October."

"And—I—father?"

"You, my dear girl, must prepare for the ceremony which is the keystone of our project, and make up your mind to marry Mr. Bevis—say, by your birthday."

"Father, I can't."

The girl's voice rang out with fear and pain. Mrs. St. John took her hand coaxingly.

"Oh, Hilary, he is such a nice man—so kind! Fancy, when I was so wretched, I hadn't the money for Dr. Brand's bill, he gave it to me in a moment; he's paid heaps of things for me, and seemed to forget them all in the most gentlemanly way. I am sure you will be fond of him soon."

"Oh, not yet," cried Hilary, her face, without a vestige of colour upon it, turned imploringly on her father,

"'Yet' does not signify either this week or this month," he said, assuming a jaunty air of persuasion; "merely give your promise to—your lover"—the girl turned as cold as ice—"that your wedding shall be when I say, then he will put everything in train for our voyage to Australia; he will even give his very last hundred or two to help to start the boys, and send us off clear. He's a personable fellow enough, devoted to you. If, even, you are not over head and ears in love with him, for pity's sake, Hilary, don't let any idiotic romance plunge us all into misery and poverty. Come, you must let me tell him you agree to what he asks."

"If I don't?" she said slowly.

"If—you—don't," repeated Mr. St. John, "why, Mr. Bevis tells me distinctly that what he offers to do is as a relative *only*. Checked in that, he can put a claim in upon our paltry income that will make us beggars. Then the boys might sweep crossings for aught I could do to help them. I should be bankrupt and disgraced, and as I said at first, we should be ruined. That's all!"

"No, it's not," sobbed Mrs. St. John; "for Philippa would die. How could I get things she ought to have? And a voyage in the autumn might make her strong and well again; Dr. Brand says so. Oh, Hilary, I thought you did care for Philippa; don't help to kill her!"



"She laid a cheque upon the table."—*p.* 536.

Hilary covered her face with her hands, and tried to think rationally. She could not—girl as she was, and daughter to the selfish man who was ever ready to bargain her away for his own advantage—she could not judge fairly the right or wrong of the road before her. Such a weight of interest seemed balanced against—what? Why, just herself—an entity of no value to anyone but the man who hemmed her about with such tangible proofs of his regard, she was bound by every law of gratitude to requite him as he desired. Upon her hung the prospects of her father's children—the life, perhaps, of one. In that bitter moment she almost wished she had been dead rather than have the choice so cast upon her. But life, God only knew how long, lay stretched before her, and she must do the best she could with it—the best she could for others; then, for herself, there might be peace at the end somehow.

She looked up, her young face very set and grey. "It must be as you wish," she said, "only," as both hearers broke out into relieved thanks, "don't let me be talked to about it, please, till the time comes."

Her betrothed obeyed this wish, conveyed to him next day, very literally. He attempted, indeed, when he first met her, a tenderer greeting than heretofore, but Hilary, crimsoning from neck to brow, turned aside so determinedly he had to be content with lifting her hand only to his lips.

"It will be all right when we are married," he said confidently to his future father-in-law, and set about the congenial task of preparing for that event.

Park Villa he proposed to keep on as the first home for himself and his bride. Its movables were to pass into their possession by an arrangement with which Mr. St. John had every reason to be satisfied. By mid-August that gentleman's creditors had notice to send in their accounts. Mr. Bevis would disburse them shortly after Michaelmas. A telegram from Sydney said that Mrs. St. John's brother was prepared to receive her and hers. All was going—if not exactly as merrily as a marriage bell—as smoothly as sensible lovers could desire; and if Hilary seemed whiter, more spiritless, more like an automaton moving emotionless through the bustle that reigned now in the house, those about her found it easy to persuade themselves these were only signs of girlish shyness, and after her wedding all would be well.

The time arrived, as summer was departing, when Mr. Bevis felt he might announce his good-bye to bachelorhood to Mr. Milroy. An excellent opportunity offered for this. In the elder lawyer's room a conference had just closed concerning Mr. Bevis's admission to partnership. The expected offer of a small share in the firm had been definitely made him; not couched in pressing terms, for though the head of the firm could not lay his finger on professional fault in the young man, he found it uncommonly difficult to like him, and at present Mr. Bevis was no favourite of either clients or clerks. Still, Mr. Milroy would not let this set aside his semi-promise, so he made his proposal, and Mr. Bevis promptly accepted it, though he considered it a long way below his deserts, and did not fail to notice and resent the all but reluctance with which the step was accorded him. However, he had kept a stone in his pocket for a good many months ready for Mr. Milroy. Now he flung it dexterously.

"It 's a great pleasure to me, sir," he said, "to feel my position as well as my income secure now, for I am going to take other responsibilities on me soon. I hope to be married in a few weeks."

"Married, eh?" said Mr. Milroy, pleased to get hold of a theme he could be genial on. "Why, who is the lady?"

"One whom I trust you may quite approve," said Mr. Bevis boldly, "though unluckily she does not bring a fortune to put in—ahem—our firm. Miss St. John."

"Miss——!" The old lawyer wheeled round, downright incredulous, and stared at the young man dumb with surprise. Then, getting his breath, "You don't mean *our* Miss St. John?"

"I mean your young client and my dear Hilary, sir," said Mr. Bevis modestly; "I hope you don't dislike the match? Of course, our means being inconsiderable, we shall only start quite humbly; in fact, we shall remain in her father's house. Mr. St. John is taking his family to the colonies. I hope, by prudence, we may attain a social footing worthy of Milroy and Gibson, though in comparison with them we shall be poor at first."

Mr. Milroy cast a keen, troubled glance on the young man, then said shortly—

"Is she sure she 's fond of you?"

"My dear sir," cried Mr. Bevis, with a contented chuckle, "we have been as good as engaged these fifteen months; time enough, to a certainty, for her to find that out. My own attachment is of longer date. I fell in love the first time I met Miss St. John at Abbotswick; you remember, sir, you took me there. Under her then circumstances, it was great presumption of me. But her loss of fortune was my gain of a wife. I trust you don't object to my not waiting and doing better for myself in a worldly way?"

Whatever Mr. Milroy might object to, he 'd learnt that silence is golden on some occasions. On the plea of letters to write, he closed the interview abruptly, answering Mr. Bevis's "I hope you congratulate us, sir," with a curt "Certainly, certainly," and then, left alone, he sat and cogitated deeply over this news.

"It can't be helped, I suppose," he muttered, when he had put an hour away wrinkling up his forehead over the matter. "I daren't interfere. I had best not see her. Bevis says she cares for him, and he takes her, as he says, too—h-m! he seemed afraid I shouldn't like that—next to penniless. It will have to go on, then; but," shaking his head as he got up, "it's a thousand pities—a thousand pities."

No injunction having been laid on the lawyer to keep the subject secret, he passed the tidings on as he left his office that same afternoon. Mr. Bevis, from his window, saw him meet Norris Stafford; watched while the elder man took the curate's arm, and, pacing a few yards by him, said something which brought them both to a standstill, with expressions on the two faces he quite understood.

Indeed, it needed little skill to divine what they spoke of, and now the new partner took his innings, watching with glee as they separated; Mr. Milroy going his way with knit brows, the curate, with a serious, half-stupefied look, passing slowly down the street, unheeding sundry bows of recognition which greeted him.

We say the curate wore a look half-stupefied. Well, that hid pain most vivid, most acute. He had driven in with Hugh Dasent, arranging to go out again as far as Netley with him. Now he simply forgot why he had come into the town, and struck off straight homeward, desiring nothing but to get out of man's sight and hide his wretchedness; wretchedness that he very well knew he had no business to feel, for Hilary never, under any condition in which he had known her, could have been his. Yet alone in her girlhood he might silently love her, while once wedded he must never thus think of her again. Wedded, and to such a man! The curate groaned as Mr. Bevis's mean presence and sly, unmanly features rose before him. It was horrible! He could not let her go like this. He had cheated himself into believing he could one day live to see her worthily mated; but to this man—oh! he must speak. He——

But, athwart this rare outburst of passion, remembrance passed like an icy wind, and told him to be sane; remembrance of those conditions which overlaid Miss Humphreys' legacy—an insurmountable barrier between himself and all hope of Hilary. Why had he bound the burden of this wealth upon him? Why had he not preferred the freedom of his curate's pittance—a fair chance with other men of working and waiting for, and—that possibility half maddened him—of winning the girl he loved!

Reaching his house at a speed which his companion Tip mightily approved, he locked himself up in his room, took out Miss Humphreys' letter, and searched it through for some weak link in that gilded chain which galled him now to agony. Hilary's portrait, drawn from the same envelope, smiled up at him. He thrust both away, and, catching up his hat, went out again alone; unheeding his servant's injured reminder that Mr. Dasent had taken him from an untasted lunch, and now his dinner was waiting and spoiling.

The evening was closing in, and the caretakers of Abbotswick declared he looked "as wan as a ghost," when he rang the hall bell and strayed aimlessly from room to room for a full hour or more.

"Why, sir," said Mrs. Bell, "it's right creepy, going about like this now the place is empty."

But it was not empty to him. Hilary, a happy winsome child, a slim bright girl, a maiden fair as any star, was flitting everywhere before him. Till she was utterly lost he had not known how he longed for her—how every spark of human fondness was centred on her. Save this myth of manhood's joy he had no worldly ties now. His mother in the spring-time had ended her ailing life, and few men, rich or poor, were lonelier than he. He had tried—none harder—to go straight through many perplexities, and a force outside himself had held him up—till now. Now, he scarcely knew what was coming over him; he could take no comfort, grasp nothing hopeful in this dark hour; a stupid weariness was dulling his brain. When Mrs. Bell went to find him with a message brought up from the Rectory, she was scared at the very look of him.

"They've sent word, sir, that Brown in the next parish is worse, and would you go to him again? because the vicar is not home from his holiday yet. Begging your pardon, you'd best let me say 'no,' sir, for you don't seem fit for it."

So advised Mrs. Bell; but the summons she brought was like a bugle-call to Norris Stafford. Two days before, he had been to this ill labourer. He would not disappoint the poor fellow now.

"Then you must put something else on, sir," said Joyce, "for it's chilly outside. I'll get that coat you left here months ago—the old one my poor Miss Hilary once stitched a button on unbeknown to you. I laughed when I caught sight of her doing it, for she was not much with her needle in those days. Here it is, sir, done with the wrong-coloured silk, poor dear."

He let the woman help him on with this almost without a "Thank you," at which she wondered, as he was always courteous to servants, but opined she might have offended him by gossiping of her young lady. Then he got out into the darkness, his hand grasping that inch of cloth which Hilary's fingers had hovered over, and somehow, whether quickly or slowly he knew not, got to the house where he was wanted.

With what words he comforted that death-bed he never knew. First one then another of the crying women and children stopped him in the hot, crowded room to pour out their troubles and be consoled. It was late night when he got back to Netley Rectory, and afterwards it always seemed to him as if he had fallen into a trance as soon as he crossed the threshold, and not roused up again till many dark days had gone by.

CHAPTER XXI.

IN truth, the fever that got the curate in its clutches played such havoc with him through the beginning of September, and devoured his strength so fast, that the Netley doctor, in conclave with two professional brethren from Brainford, almost gave up hope of his pulling through. He had not been up to the mark of fair health when it attacked him, the parish practitioner declared; he had noticed a change in Mr. Stafford for months. For ten hot, moist autumn days their gaunt patient lay unconscious, only rousing to mutter incoherent nonsense, of which not even Hugh Dasent, who was constantly by him, could make head or tail.

On the twelfth day of the malady, however, a change set in; and one cheery morning, when a brisk wind had blown away the warm fog outside, Norris Stafford woke up, and his eyes, instead of being just big and vacant, had once more a perfectly rational look in them.

"You're better, sir," said Joyce delightedly. She had come across from Abbotswick to help with the nursing.

"I—suppose—I am," the patient answered slowly.

XUM

Then, with quite an access of energy, "Give me my overcoat, please."

"Lawk, sir!" said Joyce, "you don't want that to-day! you ain't quite fit to step up and away just yet."

"Give me my overcoat," he said obstinately, and to humour him she obeyed; whereupon he went into a most placid slumber again, holding it tight between his wasted hands.

"I expect his poor head is not right yet," whispered Joyce to her fellow-nurse, "and seein' me, he seemed to fare to think I ought to put the coat on him, just as I did the night before he was took bad, when I told him about Miss Hilary stitching the button on;" and she detailed the whim to Mr. Dasent presently, who told it to his wife, who stored it up for future consideration.

After that the curate mended slowly, though his rallying power was nothing like what it ought to have been. His doctors said they could not get him to the stage of vigorously wanting to improve; indeed, he could not get himself there, and though the latter part of the month saw him on his feet again, his full recovery lagged unsatisfactorily.

Plenty of people in Brainford knew of Mr. Stafford's illness, but for a long while chance and care combined kept the tidings from Hilary. She was busy now from morning till night. Whatever anyone wanted her to do she did: and the calls were constant and heavy, the outcome of them being that she fell asleep, utterly weary, the moment her head touched the pillow. Except to go among her grubby little scholars, she scarcely set foot outside Park Villa. Mrs. Dasent she did not see for weeks. Two calls this friend had paid, but Hilary, sheltered behind Philippa's petulant "Don't go away from me," had avoided meeting her with a cowardice for which she despised herself. She could not go down and speak to that happy wife of her approaching marriage—she had never even told of its hanging over her—and yet she was bound to name it if they were together now; so they must not be together. And thus she cut herself off from the surest source of tidings about Norris Stafford.

Mr. Bevis knew what was going on at Netley, and had great private anxiety over the issue of the malady; but his wish was strong that Hilary should hear nothing of it. He was a young man who liked to make assurance doubly sure.

"Any news from Netley upsets Hilary, I've noticed," he said to Mr. St. John and his wife (who considered the curate's illness a judgment on him). "Don't let her hear about this if you can help it;" and as he was then the autocrat of the establishment, he was implicitly obeyed.

So the days slipped by till there were only three between Hilary and her wedding morning. Then the Monday of real hard labour was just closing. The last huge boxes of the St. Johns' belongings had just rumbled off on a van *en route* for the dock, where Mr. St. John was going next day to see them shipped ready for their start at the end of the week. Mr. Bevis was gone to town till the next day, most unwillingly, as he took pains to explain, but he must clear off all business before their fortnight's trip to Torquay, and the office was so busy this Michaelmas that even Mr. Milroy stopped at the bank, where his son lived, at nights instead of going to his country house.

The packing had thoroughly worn Hilary out. Mrs. St. John had feebly fought over every item. A banner-screen worked by her grandmother (three puppies couched on scarlet roses!), a huge chalk drawing of her own school-days, and an enormous pair of lustres, were some of the trifles she yearned to carry across the seas instead of books and linen. These, to her grief, being left behind, she was exhorting Hilary to cherish them as they deserved, when a knock sounded at the door, and before Hilary could deny herself or escape, Mrs. Dasent was ushered in.

"Oh, good gracious!" cried Mrs. St. John, starting hastily up; "such a muddle as we're in, we are not fit for callers; but a voyage and a wedding do make confusion, don't they? I shall leave Hilary to explain," and, deeply anxious to hide her straggling locks and shabby gown, the mistress sidled out of the room as fast as she could, leaving Mrs. Dasent to repeat in amazement as the door was closed—

"A wedding and a voyage! Why, Hilary, what voyage, and whose wedding?"

"They're all going to Australia," the girl answered, looking steadily away, "except me, and I am to marry Mr. Bevis."

"Hilary!"

"Don't speak about it, please," her voice painfully pleading; "it has to be. Don't say one word about it; it's no use. Talk to me about yourself and Mosswick."

Whatever was wrong, Sylvia Dasent saw she must not try to force confession of it. It was difficult not to question, with that despairing face before her, but she must forbear if she was to win any confidence.

"Talk of Mosswick?" she repeated. "Well, there is rather much to tell. Our rector, Mr. Reader, is leaving us, taking wife and bairns out to New Mosswick next month, and I am hunting everywhere for a homely governess who won't mind going with them. And then," slipping an arm over Hilary's shoulder, "we have had other anxieties—great ones. You know Mr. Stafford has been at death's door?"

Hilary uttered one quick cry; a mist gathered over her eyes. Every bit of strength in her she had to summon to keep from fainting, and then barely succeeded.

"Dear child! how pale you are!" cried Sylvia, frightened. "You are surely ill! You're not fit for any wedding."

"Never mind," panted Hilary, "only—open the window: there—there isn't any air here."

Voices were sounding in the passage; they might be interrupted any instant. Sylvia had a lucky inspiration. Hilary's hat was lying on an ottoman.

"Put it on," said Mrs. Dasent, "and let me drive you out for a mile or two;" and too helpless to demur, in another minute Hilary was forth in the fresh, reviving breeze, behind Mrs. Dasent's active ponies, who soon left Brainford in the distance.

For a little while Hilary's friend judiciously let her be silent; presently the girl spoke, her tones very low and clear.

"You said 'has been.' Is he better now?"

"Better, and up," said Sylvia; "my husband has been with him for a week. I am going to fetch him away now. You know how much he thinks of Mr. Stafford. It would have been great grief to us to have lost him."

Again a quick-caught breath. Then, "And you did nearly? Tell me."

So Sylvia, not venturing to speculate on what this meant, told of the tussle life and death had been having at Netley Rectory, and how the patient, when fit, was to go away, perhaps for all the winter, and how the village folk had hung about his house waiting for tidings of him while——"

"While I knew nothing!" Hilary half whispered.

They had driven till they were nearly at Netley now. Mrs. Dasent would have turned back, but Hilary, with colour mounting to her cheeks, begged her to go on.

"I want to go into my church; I must go," she insisted, with earnestness not to be denied. "Please leave me there; I can get back alone. I am strong now."

She looked it. Something had changed her marvellously in this half-hour. But Mrs. Dasent had not said or heard a tithe of what she wanted.

"Let me stay for you by the gate, and take you halfway home," she begged; but Hilary shook her head.

"I may come to you again soon, if you will let me!" ("Any hour. When you will, dear child," said Sylvia eagerly)—"but now I must be alone;" and then her friend left her.

The church was dim as she went softly up the aisle; everything changed since last she stood within its walls. But her task to-day was not to note the reverent care with which St. Michael's had been brought back from ruin to beauty. She came for something else. Close to its old place stood unaltered the dark oak pew where she had ofttimes said her prayers beside Aunt Phil. Within it the girl now knelt and prayed, shuddering at the gulf she had but just escaped. There, with all her soul, she thanked God that the pang which rent her when she heard how nearly death had conquered Norris Stafford, the joy which quickened her when she knew him given back to life, had unveiled the secret of her love.

Her love! That to the end of time might be hidden in her own breast; for she had been cold, petulant, perverse to him—had taught him long ago to care naught for her; but she knew now why from her childhood she had been proud of his uprightness, why she had never grudged him Aunt Phil's wealth; and she knew—never to be self-deceived again—why her every instinct had revolted from becoming another man's wife.

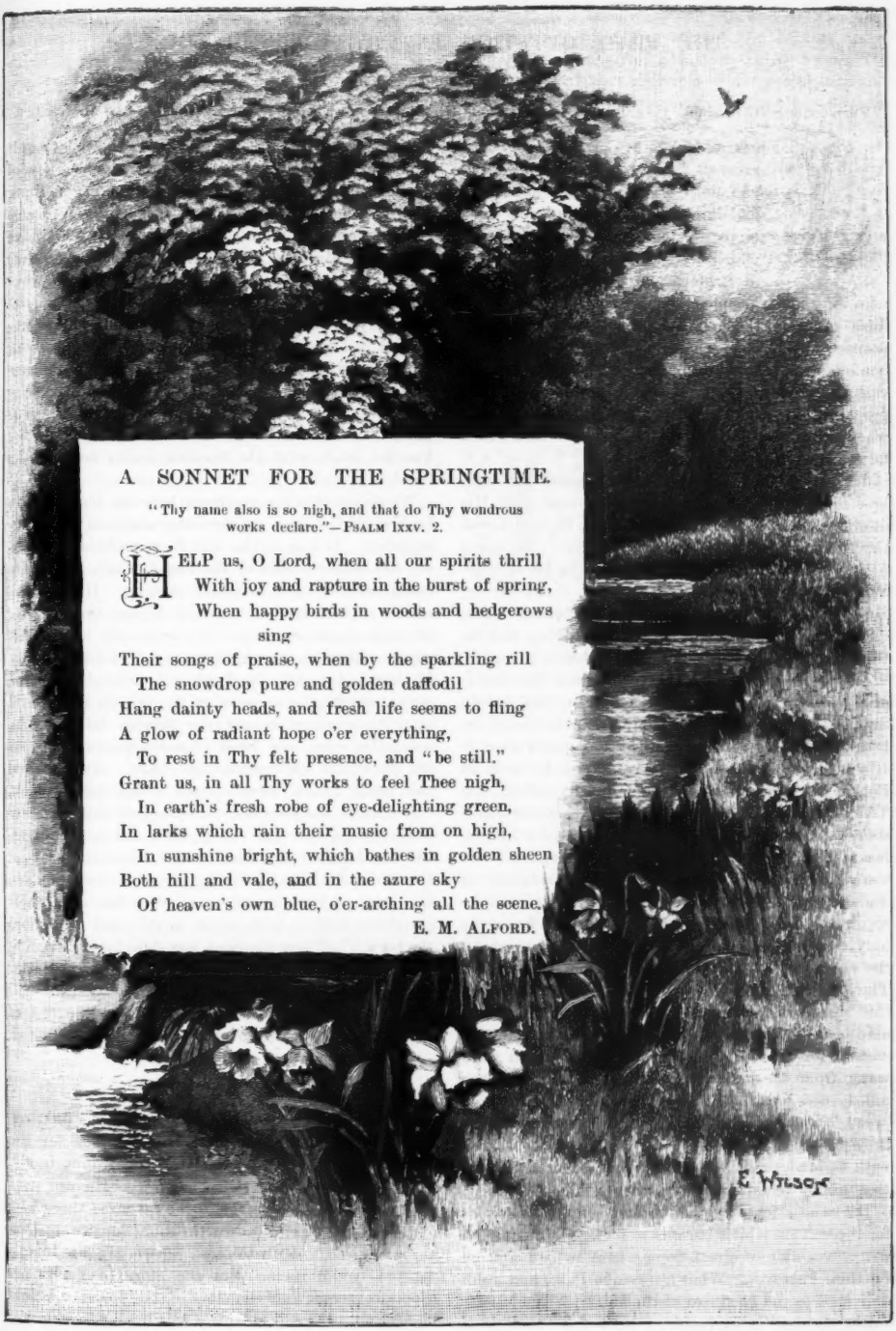
For her weakness, her blindness, for the pain they might lay on another, the girl asked pardon with bitter tears; but that her folly might not drag her into sin she entreated with all her might, and in that hour of humiliation poor Hilary found strength she had perchance never before sought aright.

As she went homeward in the gloaming, her mind seized on the only means of escape from what Thursday threatened. All wavering, all hiding from herself were gone now. She knew she was doing right, and was brave once more. Quickly she passed through the town to the great Bank-house, and there astonished Mr. Milroy with a brief interview that sent her back to Park Villa, trembling indeed at the prospect of her next ten minutes, but firm as a rock to her purpose.

She went straight to her father and stepmother. Something in the fearlessness of her features struck them both before she spoke, but her words startled them more.

"Father, I have been so foolish for months, I can never be enough ashamed of myself. It was grievously wrong of me not to say 'No' directly to the offer which was made me last year. I could not tell all it was leading to. Hush, please; I *must* say it all now; but here is all we owe—him;" she laid a cheque upon the table. "It is what Aunt Phil left me; it would have been mine on Thursday, and Mr. Milroy gave it to me now, for I told him it was to save you and me from great trouble. You need not mind taking it to set us all free. I am not afraid to let it go; I am less ignorant than when I left Abbotswick, I think. I can earn enough to live on somehow—somewhere. Perhaps Mrs. Dasent will show me how. It will be best if you will let me bid you good-bye now, and go to her to-morrow. And Mr. Bevis"—she blushed deeply—"will you ask him to try and forgive me? but tell him truly it would be wicked—disgrace to me, infamous to him too—to go on with this. I know I can never care for him as a wife ought, and I—will not marry him!"

(To be concluded.)



A SONNET FOR THE SPRINGTIME.

"Thy name also is so nigh, and that do Thy wondrous works declare."—PSALM lxxv. 2.

HELP us, O Lord, when all our spirits thrill
With joy and rapture in the burst of spring,
When happy birds in woods and hedgerows sing
Their songs of praise, when by the sparkling rill
The snowdrop pure and golden daffodil
Hang dainty heads, and fresh life seems to fling
A glow of radiant hope o'er everything,
To rest in Thy felt presence, and "be still."
Grant us, in all Thy works to feel Thee nigh,
In earth's fresh robe of eye-delighting green,
In larks which rain their music from on high,
In sunshine bright, which bathes in golden sheen
Both hill and vale, and in the azure sky
Of heaven's own blue, o'er-arching all the scene.

E. M. ALFORD.

THE FIRST QUESTION IN THE UPPER ROOM.

BY THE REV. J. TELFORD, B.A.

"Then cometh He to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto Him, LORD, DOST THOU WASH MY FEET?"—ST. JOHN xiii. 6.

JERUSALEM was preparing for its greatest festival. Troops of pilgrims had flocked in from the country, or had sailed across the sea from other lands to join in those sacred rites which were the glory of the Jewish race. God had made them a people who were not a people. They lived again with the flush of pride through memories of Divine interposition, which had changed them from Pharaoh's bondmen into the lords of Canaan. Little did that vast multitude understand that a greater glory was preparing for their nation. The hour was come when all eyes might behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.

Jesus kept that Jewish Passover before He established the Christian festival. As He sat with His disciples He said, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." It was a fitting hour for His farewell to those who loved Him. Whilst they rejoiced in that national thanksgiving, He opened before their eyes a more glorious sight. "Salvation, holiness, and heaven," so they find to their unutterable joy, "Are all in Jesu's name."

We know little about the room where the venerable Jewish feast thus gave place to the "Lord's Supper." Our Lord was at Bethany, surrounded by loving ministries which smoothed the rough road to His cross. But the Passover could not be kept at Bethany. It was only in the holy city, where the Temple stood, that it could be eaten. Thither Jesus sent Peter and John to make preparations for the feast. The place was to be known by a sign. There were many reasons for secrecy. The treachery of Judas, who was at His side at Bethany, was no secret to his Master. Christ would not have the holy converse of that upper room broken short by the entrance of a party of officers from the priests. The two disciples, therefore, were to be guided by this sign. Inside the city walls they should meet a man bearing a pitcher of water. It was the Jewish custom for the head of every house to fetch pure water from the fountain, with which to knead the unleavened bread. "This is the water of unleavened bread," they repeated as a kind of chant whilst they prepared the meal. Then followed the search with lighted torches for every fragment of leaven that might remain in any corner of the dwelling.

He, who a few days before had sent His disciples for the colt on which He was to make His triumphal entry, was able to direct them where to find a room for their Passover. What a message Peter and John delivered to the goodman of the house! "The Master saith, My time is at hand; I keep the Passover at thy house with My disciples." I cannot wait till to-morrow, Christ may have meant; let me keep it this very night. How much the householder knew of Jesus, we cannot say. Even tradition has nothing to tell us here. The form of Christ's message seems to show that this man was a disciple. It may have been John Mark, or Joseph of Arimathæa, who thus welcomed Jesus and His disciples. But all conjectures are idle. The man's biography is brief enough, but he must be written among those unnamed friends of our Lord, whose gracious sympathy and readiness to help shall by no means lose its reward. Universal hospitality seems to have prevailed in this matter, and the only recompense that could be given was the skin of the Paschal lamb, with the earthen dishes used in the meal.

No sooner did the goodman hear the request than he himself led them up the outer stairs to the guest-chamber. It was on the first floor, probably stretching out to the terrace of the house, where the guests could catch the cool breeze of evening. It was furnished. Low couches, scarcely higher than stools, were set round the table. All was ready for the last supper. Here the two disciples prepared for the feast. If they had to buy the lamb and present it, as the people did, for the approval of the priests, they would take their place among the Jewish fathers, who assembled when the blast of horns proclaimed that the officials of the temple were ready. The gates of the inner courts were opened about two o'clock. "Forthwith the long line of household fathers, servants, disciples of the rabbis, and, among the rest, the two deputed by Jesus, pressed across the court of the men, which was gaily tapestried and adorned, to the gate of the priests' court; the lamb on their shoulders, with a knife stuck in the wool or tied to the horn."* There the lamb was slain for the evening meal. The wine, the unleavened cakes, the bitter herbs were prepared, then the lamb was roasted. Before the evening closed in, Jesus and the rest of the little band came over from Bethany.

THE GATE OF HEAVEN.

THE Upper Room where Jesus prepared Himself and His disciples for the cross is the Holy of Holies in the New Dispensation. Heaven was very near to the favoured three who climbed with their Master up the Holy Mount, where He was transfigured before them. But the glory of the Upper Room is greater than the glory of the Mount of Transfiguration. Here Jesus opens His inmost soul to the

* See Dr. Geikie's "Life of Christ."

little company of His followers. The halo of victory surrounds His head. "God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and straightway shall He glorify Him." The world's Redeemer anticipates the conquest over sin and death which He is about to win. He feels Himself the one link between earth and heaven. He speaks of the many mansions of His Father's House which He goes to prepare for those who love Him. In even a more blessed sense than Jacob's resting-place at Bethel, that room became the gate of heaven to the disciples. So the revelation grew, till, in the sublimest prayer ever offered, the Saviour brought the little band to whom He had given the power to become sons of God to their new-found Father, that they might share His own present and eternal blessedness. "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine, and all Mine are Thine and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them."

It was in the Upper Room that Jesus bound the hearts of His disciples to Himself for ever. A suggestive writer describes this section of St. John's Gospel as "the development of faith in the disciples." The precious scene which is here spread before us becomes more striking from the lurid background which it finds in the Temple and the streets of Jerusalem. The growth of faith within—what a contrast to the growth of unbelief without! Here are the Eleven with Jesus—there are the Scribes, the priests, the Pharisees. Outside, events are leading to the Cross; inside, they are preparing for Pentecost and the salvation of the world. The last word the disciples spoke in the room or in the Garden of Gethsemane shows how their faith had grown since they sat down with Jesus to the Paschal Feast: "Now are we sure that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee; by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God." Every fear and doubt has been driven out. Christ is all and in all to the disciples. After such a voluntary tribute, there was nothing left for Jesus save to bow with them at the feet of God. The world lies heavy on His heart; but its unbelief adds a new touch of gratitude and thanksgiving for the spirit of those who saw His glory in the Upper Room. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me."

The earlier part of that evening in the Upper Room is best studied in the questions of the disciples. Those questions are unutterably suggestive and impressive. Jesus prompted and encouraged them. The hours of fellowship were numbered. Let them utter the thoughts, the wonders that were in their hearts. Their Master knew that His answers would be engraven on their souls for ever. The thirteenth chapter contains three groups of questions, the fourteenth three single questions. The earlier questions are personal and historic; they concern Christ and His first disciples. Those in the next chapter rise into a higher sphere. They lay hold of the most profound and blessed mysteries, and humbly beg of Christ for light. Nor did they sue in vain. The words which they drew from Jesus are unutterably precious to all true disciples, for they lay bare the very soul of religion. When Christ had answered the last, silence fell on the company. They only ventured to assure Him of their adoring trust and love. Henceforth we hear the Master's voice alone. The eleven are lost in thoughts of the separation and the home-going. Dean Stanley's verse, appropriate as it is to the Mount of Transfiguration, seems even more appropriate here—

> "We wist not what to think or say,
> Our spirits sink in sore dismay;
> They tell us of the dread 'decease,'
> But yet to linger here is peace."

PRIDE IN THE UPPER ROOM.



N the supper-room there arose, St. Luke tells us, a strife as to who should be accounted greatest. Not many months before, the same spirit had called forth a notable rebuke from the Master. Jesus set a little child by His side, and from that text taught them, "He that is least among you all, is great." The old spirit here broke out again. It is a strange contrast to the mind that was in Christ. He is preparing to lay down His life as a ransom for many, they are bent on greatness. The work has reached a crisis—so much at least they understand; but how blind they still are to its real significance their whole bearing shows. St. Luke has preserved the Saviour's rebuke. His Kingdom knew nothing of that lordship, that authority which the kings of the Gentiles swayed. "He that is greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth."

Christ's teaching received an illustration, which fastened it, as no words could have done, on the hearts of the disciples for ever. It had been a dusty walk from Bethany. Eastern sandals left the feet exposed, so that the customs of the country made feet-washing a preliminary of every feast. There stood the basin, the water, the towel, but no one stirred to fulfil the lowly office for which they were prepared. It was the task of the meanest servant of the house. The disciples' contention probably arose out of this custom. Had they stooped to such service they feared that their position in the future Kingdom would have been compromised.

To their unutterable surprise, Jesus Himself rose from supper, and prepared to perform this menial task. With speechless wonder they gazed on their Master. St. John's Gospel, written in extreme old age, preserves those precious reminiscences which

were in danger of being lost to the world. The history of the Upper Room in his hands becomes like a series of photographic views, which catch and retain every varying phase of the scene. It is not hard to discern the purpose behind them. The touching details are given that we may look upon the scene as though we ourselves had been present. One verse serves as a preface. It lifts the significance of that deed of lowliness a whole world above us. It is the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, Who stoops to this office of love. "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God, riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments; and He took a towel and girded Himself. Then He poureth water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded."

How deliberately Christ addressed Himself to His task! The flowing outer garment, which would have impeded every movement, is laid aside. He stands in the dress of a menial servant. The towel is girt about Him that His hands may be free. Every detail seems like another stroke of the artist's brush, giving authenticity and dramatic force to one of the most impressive pictures ever painted in words. This is indeed a sight to rivet the attention of all generations!

Awe and shame kept the disciples silent. They had feared to compromise their position by stooping thus, but, lo! their Master had taken upon Himself the lowly work. It was Peter who gave a voice to the general surprise. Did Jesus begin with Peter, or had some of the disciples' hearts already throbbed with shame as the Master's hands touched their feet? We cannot tell. One might perhaps infer from the form of the narrative that others had submitted in silence. Peter was of another spirit. When his turn came, and Jesus stood beside the couch, the fisherman of Galilee took fire.

PETER'S PROTEST.

"LORD, dost Thou wash my feet?" It was the first question in the Upper Room. It expressed the feeling of every heart. Peter would have gratefully accepted such attentions from one of his brethren. Then they would have been a welcome recognition of his position in the band of Apostles. But for his Master thus to stoop, that was almost an affront to Peter.

It is impossible to hear that question without recognising the disciple's estimate of his Lord. "Thou and me"—Peter has long understood the claim of Jesus to his unbounded love and reverence. Trained in the Baptist's school, he may have heard that comparison which spoke so loudly of the forerunner's self-abasement in the presence of Jesus: "But John would have hindered Him, saying, I have need to be baptised of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" (St. Matt. iii. 14.)

Such had also been Peter's spirit. Whatever part he may have taken in the struggle for pre-eminence among his fellow-disciples, it was far different when he was in the presence of the Christ. Awed by the first miraculous draught of fishes, he "fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (St. Luke v. 8.) On that same lake he had once walked toward Jesus. But fear crept over him as he watched the boisterous winds. In his agony he cried, "Lord, save me." A few moments later Peter was safe in the boat, the wind was hushed, he was joining in the cry of the worshippers, "Of a truth Thou art the Son of God." (St. Matt. xiv. 33.) Not long afterwards Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, where Peter uttered his memorable confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus accepted the confession, and pronounced His memorable blessing on him who had offered it: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven."

Such incidents show that Peter had learned—it is still the soul of godliness—to understand the unutterable distance between himself and his Master. Hence his protest. Christ was demeaning Himself; and Peter could not allow such an indignity. His glory and honour—the loftiest and best he dared to hope—was to catch some faint reflection of the Christ's surpassing greatness. So exalted was his estimate of his Master, that even the prospect of such blessing opened to him an immortality of fame and joy.

Jesus vouchsafed no explanation. Peter was evidently in the very mood to profit by this act of condescending love. To withhold the interpretation was to leave the fires burning the more fiercely within. Therefore He answered, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt understand hereafter." First the feet-washing, then the explanation. That was the order which Divine Wisdom chose; Peter must not attempt to change it. His Master, so a thousand experiences had already taught him, knew better far than he.

Peter, however, was persuaded that for once he was right. Who could doubt it? Was he not the guardian of his Master's honour? Jesus was too gentle, too lowly. He must not be allowed thus to stoop. Peter would teach his Master a much-needed lesson. The Christ must maintain His dignity. It is a strange attempt to turn the tables. Yet who can refrain from admiring it? It was love of Jesus that prompted Peter's stalwart protest.

After all, we can see that the disciple was wrong. To have his own way was the worst thing that could befall him. As yet he was not able to discern this. He made a bolder attempt to change his Master's purpose: "Thou shalt never wash my feet."

XUM

Christ was before him, waiting to begin. If He waited for ever, Peter would not give way. "There can be no reason, for I see none." That is the principle that underlies his words. We listen to the dialogue with quickened attention. Who is to gain the victory?

We are not long in doubt. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." That reply broke down Peter's opposition in a moment. He swung right round. Let it be so, if it must. His Master had proposed to wash his feet. He should do that, but He must do more. "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." The man who but an instant before was so stout in his opposition has thrown up his case and thus entreats his Master. Rapid though the change had been, it is intelligible enough. Peter had left all, and followed Jesus. To have "no part with Him"—that was the death of every hope. Nothing was left him then but the fishing-boat by the Sea of Galilee. How could he go back to that after fellowship with Jesus, which had changed his life and spirit? Rather than such a fate, let Christ have His will. Let Him show His servant, by washing not only his feet, but also his hands and his head, that the fellowship between them was never to be broken off. "Manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting." Jesus had promised it; Peter could never let it go. To him there was no horizon either for earth or heaven, save what Jesus opened.

Peter found, even here, that Christ must rule. His impulsive spirit had led him far astray at Cæsarea Philippi. Scarcely had he made his great confession ere Jesus began to speak of the passion which He must accomplish at Jerusalem. Peter's whole soul revolted against such a close to the mission of his Master. He took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall never be unto Thee." Dearly did he pay for his presumption. The voice which had called him blessed spoke in another tone, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art a stumbling-block unto me." Unwittingly, the disciple had become the tool of Christ's greatest foe. It was the temptation in the wilderness again—a kingdom without a cross. The same impulsive spirit betrays itself in the Upper Room. Christ cannot allow Peter to decide. He, too, must learn in his measure to offer the prayer, "Not my will, but Thine be done." He must also hold fast the thought which is the foundation of Christianity, that there is no cleansing save through Christ. Jesus must stoop, if we are to rise to newness of life. A Messiah such as the disciples dreamed of could not be the Saviour of the world. It is the suffering Christ, who poured out His soul unto death, that saves His people from their sins.

The additional cleansing for which Peter prayed was not needed by him. Jesus made His meaning clear by an illustration. The Jewish custom required the guests to take their bath at home; the host provided only that the stains of travel should be wiped from their feet in the room where the feast was spread. Then the guest was "clean every whit." Christ reminded Peter of the custom, and pointed out its spiritual application. "Ye are clean, but not all." The disciples, with the terrible exception of Judas, were His. He had called them out of the world; He had cleansed them by His grace; they were to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth. The feet-washing represented the daily cleansing that kept the soul from stain. So the Master spoke. Peter could find no word to answer. Jesus had shown His wisdom and His firmness of purpose. The disciple silently yielded. The feet of the fisherman were washed by the Christ of God.

AN IMPRESSIVE SERMON.

ONCE again St. John gives us a little cluster of details. The lowly office ended, Jesus took His garments and sat down again. Every touch helps us to enter into the suspense of the eleven. No point of the dialogue with Peter has been lost. How eagerly they wait for the promised explanation! The first words revealed to them the fact that they had much to learn. "Know ye what I have done to you?" They must have remembered the hours of inspiration when, as they sat quietly with Him in the house, Jesus shed new light on the parables. Here also a flood of light was poured upon an incident which had filled their hearts with wonder. A happy reference to the links which bound them to Himself opened the lesson. You gladly sit at my feet, you cheerfully obey my commands, you are my scholars and servants. "Ye call Me Master and Lord." "Yes," He added, "you are right." They had come to Him who had the words of eternal life; they were servants of Him who could lead them to glorious usefulness "Ye say well, for so I am." The words are few, yet how distinctly they mark the relations between Christ and the eleven; between Christ and all true disciples.

Then He drew His conclusion. "If I then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." That one act of lowliness adds dignity to all similar deeds. It teaches the Christ-like duty of mutual ministries of love. Jesus had summed up the teaching of His whole career in one significant act. Words might drop from His lips unheeded. Greater deeds might fail to inculcate the lesson of this homely ministry. Now Christ had left them a pattern for their future conduct. "For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done unto you." His love had crystallised into this precious gem which was to shine before their eyes for ever. Whatever honours might come to them, they were but His servants and apostles, and He was higher than they. "Verily, verily I say unto you, a servant is not

greater than his lord; neither one that is sent, greater than he that sent him." Every success and every honour they might win added more to their Master's greatness than their own. They were thus shut up to this example for ever.

Before He closed, Jesus added a significant word: "If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them." He knew that it was a hard thing to put in practice such a lesson as this. How soon jealousies might creep in to spoil the harmony! Therefore He pointed out the blessing the Church would reap if its members vied with each other in offices of love. Each would be strong in the sympathy of his brethren. Dark days were in store; but they might face them joyfully if there were peace and love among themselves. The world would share the blessing. Concord among the followers of Jesus would make clear to men the power of grace.

"See how these Christians love one another!"

The sight would thus draw all hearts to Jesus. The stumbling-blocks which pride and self-seeking among disciples set in the way of others would be taken away. They who thus lived and loved would receive the greatest blessing. The fever of ambition would die; envy would cease to rankle in their hearts; discord would no more weaken their hands. They would have rest from vanity, from struggles after honour. The blessing of Jesus would rest upon them, till they found themselves once more sitting with their Master at the better feast in the Kingdom of God.

Three precious thoughts suggest themselves to a devout student of this first incident in the Upper Room. We see that unless Christ cleanse us, we can have no part with Him. Peter's resistance gave way before the fear that he might lose the smile and grace of his Lord. Partnership with Jesus meant a share in His love, a share in His work, a share in His glory. To all disciples the Saviour offers the selfsame blessedness. Our hearts and lives are stained with sin, but Christ is separate from sinners. He must purify every disciple whom He receives. Zechariah, in his striking descriptions of the blessings which were to come to Jerusalem in later times, has not forgotten this: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." "The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost"—that is the cleansing grace of Christ applied to the believing soul. This the eleven had received. "Ye are clean"—they were already devoted to Jesus. Charles Wesley's hymn puts Peter's prayer into all our hearts—

"My dying Saviour, and my God,
Fountain for guilt and sin,
Sprinkle me ever with Thy Blood,
And cleanse, and keep me clean,
Wash me, and make me thus Thine own,
Wash me, and mine Thou art;
Wash me, but not my feet alone,
My hands, my head, my heart."

There is also a daily cleansing by the precious blood of Christ; every stain of pilgrimage is thus wiped away at once.

"Daily my pilgrim feet, as homeward wending
My weary way, are sadly stained with sin;
Daily do Thou, Thy precious grace extending,
Wash me all clean without, and clean within;
And make me fit to have a part with Thee
And Thine at last, in Heaven's felicity."

LESSONS FOR ALL DISCIPLES.

YET another truth. If we see that we are nothing without Christ, we may also see that there is nothing our Master is not prepared to do for us. Peter could not bear this lowliness. He had not learned that the whole life of Jesus is made up of such deeds of love, which are crowned by the Sacrifice of the Cross. What is the washing of the disciples' feet compared with the giving His life a ransom for many? There is no deed of love too lowly for Jesus to render to His disciples. As He kneels before them in that Upper Room, ministering thus even to the man who is plotting the betrayal, what a glory shines in His sacred face! He is the Friend to Whom we can venture with our smallest sorrows; to Whom we can turn with every confession and every prayer. To perfect His disciples Christ thus stoops, even on the threshold of His glory.

The feet-washing is not only a revelation of our Saviour's love—it is a pattern for His Church. Where is pride when Jesus washes the disciples' feet? A holy emulation in lowly ministries becomes the ideal of Christian service. It is not that literal following which popes and cardinals and emperors have indulged, amid the grandest pageantry of their courts. Such ceremonial may show what hold this incident has taken on the fancy of Christendom; but this is not the true following of Jesus. Every lowly deed of love that brightens another life—every ministry that comforts or strengthens the heart and hands of Christ's troubled followers—that is the imitation of Jesus. The greatest is he who most humbly and faithfully follows in the steps of His Master.

"He who would rise like Thee, like Thee must owe
His glory only to his stooping low."

As we linger in the Upper Room, shall we not all offer that prayer?—

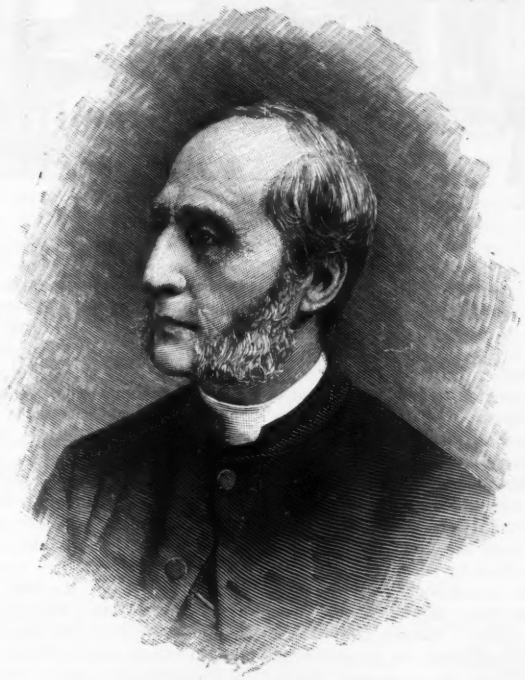
"O might my lot be cast with these,
The least of Jesu's witnesses!
O that my Lord would count me meet
To wash His dear disciples' feet!"

NONCONFORMIST WORK IN SOUTHWARK.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE REV. NEWMAN HALL, LL.B.

BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.

ON a shelf in a pleasant morning-room, not far from the top of Hampstead Heath, is a row of red-cloth, round-backed cases, like books, which, when taken down and shaken, disclose a number of little works and pamphlets, several of them printed in strange and curious type to English eyes. The books are copies of some of the Rev. Newman Hall's works in almost all the languages of the world. The chief of them is the well-known "Come to Jesus," of which no fewer than four millions of copies have been printed up to the present time. And among others, "Follow Jesus," "Scriptural Claims of Teetotalism," etc., have also had a large circulation. Here, with other languages, are the Tahitian, Telegu, Tamil, Malagasy, and Chinese, as well as some of those nearer home, Welsh, French, German, Dutch, Italian, Swedish, etc.



THE REV. NEWMAN HALL, LL.B.
(From a Photograph by J. H. Bloomfield, Hastings.)

It is a very pleasant, quiet room, in which, with numbers of other books, they now rest. A happy twittering of birds comes from the cage near the windows, where a couple of paroquets live on very friendly terms with a bullfinch, or sometimes fly about the apartment, having no fear of the two dogs, a Pomeranian and a fox-terrier, who seem to promenade about the lower part of the house at will. The three windows look on to a pleasant garden, with lawn, which surrounds the house, while an ivy-clad wall encloses the whole. Turning within again, the room is pretty full of books and *bric-à-brac*, the latter including memorials of Mr. Hall's travels and tours to and fro in foreign lands. Here is a curious little carved wooden cat from Egypt, a relic of those far-off days when puss was a sacred animal in the land of the Nile. The worn figure came from the cemetery of Pasht, near ruined Memphis. Gay furniture for decorating an Eastern donkey, ostriches' eggs, an Arabian dagger, Norwegian brass dishes, relics from Jerusalem, and other interesting things—memories of travel—are placed about the room, and indeed, are to be found, more or less, all through the house.

But the principal of these memories of travel are in Mr. Hall's sketch-books. Water-colour sketching is his hobby, recreation, and delight; and here in one or two of the shelves near the door are upwards of seventy sketch-books of water-colour drawings from America, Europe, Egypt, and Palestine. Of Niagara Mr. Hall took no fewer than thirty-seven sketches, and some of them, framed, are hung on the broad staircase on the way to the drawing-room on the first floor.

"Ah!" said he, in effect, "I had a narrow escape there," pointing to a spot beside the whirlpool below the great falls. "I was sitting there, taking this sketch, when suddenly it dawned upon me that the ground was insecure; I rose, and went a little further up from the edge. When I turned, a sudden swell of the whirling tide swept over the spot I had quitted. Had I remained, no one would have known what had become of me, for I was quite alone. I am told that such incidents do occur, and I regard that escape as providential."

Concerning these Niagara sketches, Mr. Gladstone—with whom Mr. Hall has been on very friendly terms—wrote, "I have examined these with much pleasure, and return my best thanks. Your representation of the water, in fall, foam, and vapour, as well as in movement toward the lip, seems to me admirable. —W. E. G., Feb. 20th, 1875." Mr. Hall possesses



MR. NEWMAN HALL'S STUDY.

perhaps the shortest post-card the ex-Premier ever penned. Mr. Hall had written to him concerning a visit, and enclosed a post-card with the words "Convenient" and "Inconvenient," suggesting that if he could not come, the former word should be struck out, and *vice versâ*. So Mr. Gladstone crossed out the word "Inconvenient," and added to the first word "with thanks.—W. E. G., July, '78." This card, with a number of letters from the same distinguished writer, are pasted in a book by themselves.

But returning to the sketch-books, several autographs of eminent Americans appear in one—Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, James Russell Lowell, and Henry Ward Beecher among them—all memorials of an American visit. There are numerous Alpine sketches also in the books. Perhaps Mr. Hall is fonder of the Alps than of any other of the beautiful and grand places of the earth; and he has been among their glaciers and slopes at least twenty times, his custom being if possible to visit some part of Alpine scenery every other year. In some of these excursions he has met Professor Tyndall, and tells how the learned Professor and his wife played the part of a doctor right well in that region, and of the astonishment of the Alpine folk when, after curing them, the Englishman and his good wife refused any fee!

The sketches call up many memories. When at Tangier, Mr. Hall saw the terrible state of some prisoners thirsting and crying for water. He found that they could not have any of the precious liquid unless they bought it. The air was fearfully foul, and almost every morning dead bodies were carried forth of prisoners who had succumbed. Forthwith, then, Mr. Hall purchased some water, and it was carried to the prison in bags of skin. Next day was Sunday, and he did the same thing. On returning home he wrote to the Prime Minister—who at that time was Mr. Gladstone—who communicated with Lord Granville, and shortly afterwards, as the result of British interference, it was announced that arrangements had been made to supply the prisoners with water free of charge, and to institute sanitary arrangements.

Twice has Mr. Hall visited the Holy Land, and he has also travelled in Spain and Ireland, and has not neglected the beauty-spots of Britain. Pictures of scenes in all these countries are to be found in the sketch-books. Scattered over these books, too, are several verses, and Mr. Hall has written many short poems and hymns. Some of the latter are used in public worship by Mr. Spurgeon and Dr. Dale, and have been included in various hymn-books. A volume of his poems and hymns, entitled "Songs of Earth and Heaven," and another "Mountain Musings," has lately been published, including some that had been out of print. Other books written by Mr. Hall are "The Forum and the Vatican;" "Homeward Bound" and other sermons, the largest and most important being "Meditations on the Lord's Prayer," a large library octavo.

There are many books in this comfortable room, ranged on shelves from floor to ceiling. They are for the most part "secular" here; the theological volumes being up-stairs in Mr. Hall's study. Here are well-bound copies of Scott's works, and just above them Dickens's, while on the other side are some three hundred volumes of poetry, including Gilfillan's series of British poets, and some of Pickering's editions. On one of the lower shelves is a fine old folio of Milton, in three volumes, with plates, and Mr. Hall is the fortunate possessor of a first edition of Milton's "Paradise Lost," in an excellent

state of preservation. He has also a copy of Cromwell's letters on affairs of State, written in Latin by Milton as Secretary; and also a copy of Bunyan's "Pilgrim," dated 1760, and with plates, some of which—say, of the raging Apollyon—used to terrify its owner when a little lad. The book bears the following inscription:—"To dearest Newman, in memory of years gone by in which this book was his delight, and *he* was, and still is, the delight of his mother."

This was written in that lady's old age, and she lived to be eighty-six. Portraits of her and of Mr. Hall's father are hung on the walls of the dining-room, and a fine one of the latter is flanked on the other side of the chimney-piece by one of Cromwell. This is a copy of the celebrated portrait in the Pitti Palace, and of which the Protector made his oft-quoted remark of painting him just as he was, with the warts. This seems to have been exaggerated somewhat, for there are no prominent signs of excrescences on the striking features. Mr. Hall has a great admiration for Cromwell, and boldly avows the opinion that he was the greatest monarch England ever had.

Another portrait in this room is of Mrs. Newman Hall, given to her husband by friends at Christ Church, of which Mr. Hall is the pastor, and there are also framed water-colour pictures by her. An interesting relic to many, on the wall near the door, is a quaint old looking-glass used by Rowland Hill, and Mr. Hall has also the silver teapot used by the same famous preacher.

Mr. Hall's dwelling is very roomy and old-fashioned. It was built some hundred and fifty years ago, and in it there are fine, large, deep cupboards, and a curious little passage and back-stairs, reminding one of an old country house. The front stairway is broad, and its side is hung with pictures and drawings. On the first landing a door to the left leads to the drawing-room, near the entrance to which is a fine marble bust of Mr. Hall by Onslow Ford, and presented to him by friends at Christ Church, and near by are some fine palms in vases presented by the choir. Some interesting memorials of travel are in the drawing-room, and a deep window embrasure is treated Orientally. Up-stairs again is the study, and numbers of theological books line the walls. Three desks or writing-tables are here, one near the fireplace; another, larger, near the front window; and a third, a high desk at which Mr. Hall often stands, also near the window. Round another window ivy is growing in American fashion from pots within the room. On the mantelshelf are photographs of Gladstone, Bright, Dr. Cuyler, etc., and above it is a fine copy of Raphael's Madonna, of Dresden. Here are MSS. by Mr. Hall's father, the author of "The Sinner's Friend."

The Rev. Newman Hall has been an Independent minister about forty-seven years. He was born in 1816 at Maidstone, where his father was the proprietor of *The Maidstone Journal*, and at sixteen he joined the Independent Church at that town. Afterwards, he entered Highbury College, and took the B.A. degree at London University at the first session, the University being then newly opened. In 1842 he was called to the pastorate of Albion Congregational Church, Hull, and in 1854 succeeded the Rev. James Sherman as minister of Surrey Chapel, in the Blackfriars Road, London. Later on Mr. Hall



MORNING-ROOM IN MR. NEWMAN HALL'S HOUSE AT HAMPSTEAD.

took the LL.B. degree in honours, with several young barristers, and won the Law Scholarship. He still retains the little book in which, when studying for these law examinations, he jotted down all kinds of memoranda, and carrying it with him, took it out when travelling and at odd moments, to examine himself in his knowledge and impress points upon his memory. Three times the diploma of "D.D." has been conferred upon him from America, but, though he highly values them, he does not use them, as they were complimentary degrees in recognition of his advocacy of the cause of the Union in the Civil War.

Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, of which place of worship Mr. Hall is pastor, is described as a perpetuation of Surrey Chapel. Surrey Chapel, of which the Rev. Rowland Hill was the first minister, was built on leasehold ground, and when near the end of the term, the present handsome edifice was erected in the Westminster Bridge Road. Altogether the cost, including freehold site, lecture-hall, organ, and the famous Lincoln Tower, two hundred and twenty feet high, in memory of Abraham Lincoln, was about £62,000. About £3,500, which is half the amount for the tower, was obtained in America. At the opening of Christ Church, which took place on the 4th of July, 1876, the Rev. Newman Hall preached in the morning, the Rev. W. H. M. H. Aitken (Church of England) in the afternoon, and in the evening the Rev. Dr. Donald Fraser, of the Marylebone Presbyterian Church.

To some extent we may take this union of preachers as symbolical of the position of the Church. While, in fact, an Independent Church, it is not formally connected with any denomination; and in the exercise of its Independency use is made of the Presbyterian order of "Elders," and at its Sunday services a considerable portion of the Church of England liturgy is used morning and evening, while it is Congregational inasmuch as the ministers and officers are appointed by the members, and these trustees and elders manage the affairs, subject to supervision by the congregation. There are 950 enrolled members.

The societies and organisations connected with it are manifold. The Rowland Hill Almshouses, which will accommodate twenty-three women; the Benevolent Society, instituted in 1784; the missionary nurse—personal and individual visiting and relieving of the poor and sick in their own dwellings. The visitors give their services gratuitously, and religious help and instruction are afforded, as well as temporal aid to the amount of £400 annually, quite irrespective of creed.

The Christian Instruction Society visits twelve common lodging-house kitchens in the squalid districts of the Mint and the Borough on Sunday evenings, where the visitors hold an hour's service, with the hearty concurrence of the lodgers, every week. A permanent and paid evangelist is also kept, and also an agent of the London City Mission, and a Mission Hall supported. Some idea of the character of the district in which the missionary works may be gathered when we say that a number of the houses shelter from ten to twelve families, and sometimes eight or ten persons in a family are in one room! Open-air services are held nightly during six months of the year in front of the church, and other spots, at which Mr. Hall often speaks, he having continued the practice of open-air preaching during fifty-four years, with a voice as strong as ever. Altogether between twenty and thirty services for the poor are held every week besides those in the church.

Schools form a very important and prominent feature of the work of Christ Church. There is the School of Industry, founded in 1808 by the Rev. Rowland Hill, to educate and partly clothe fifty girls, and enable them to become domestic servants. Sunday-schools flourish vigorously. Of these there are no fewer than thirteen. The total number of children on the books in 1887 was 5,123, with 400 teachers.

The whole of these, brigaded together, form the Southwark Sunday-school Society. They are worked at comparatively little cost—not quite £500: raised by New Year's offerings, annual collections, small subscriptions from the schools themselves, dividends from a small endowment, etc. On week evenings various philanthropic agencies are at work in these schools to promote temperance, thrift, and industry; beside mission services, with lectures and musical entertainments as a counter-attraction to the public-house.

Yet another very important branch of labour is Temperance Work, including a Society, Gospel Temperance Mission, and Junior and Senior Bands of Hope. Mr. Hall himself has been a strong advocate of total abstinence during fifty years.

Last on the list is an Auxiliary Religious Tract Society, through which are purchased and distributed thousands of tracts, books, almanacks, etc., in the course of the year, together with Auxiliaries to the Bible and the Foreign Mission Societies, etc.

Mr. Hall has an efficient colleague—the Rev. H. Grainger—residing near the church, who attends to parochial claims, while Mr. Hall devotes himself to preaching, general superintendence, and mission work. But though he resides at Hampstead, some distance from his church, yet he can reach it with comparative ease.

Some of Mr. Hall's most effective sermons have been thought out in the open air. He daily walks on the Heath, and often thinks out a discourse. A fairly full outline—sometimes longer and sometimes shorter—is then committed to paper, and more fully filled in and clothed at the time of preaching. A full outline of the sermon is generally written, which serves as a brief, suggesting the line of thought. He seldom writes a sermon in full, and then he reads. But he is, he said, more and more persuaded that preaching should be direct speech from heart to heart. He has learned much from observing men in Parliament, and noticing that those who succeed there are men who know what they are talking about, and who speak in a superior sort of conversational manner; but when they attempt to do anything very fine or high-flown they weary their audience. At the same time he was wont as a young man to write his sermons, and he advises young ministers to do so. But it is the power of direct heart-to-heart speech upon which he lays stress.

Mr. Hall has had varied experiences in preaching.

He has preached before the House of Representatives at Washington, and in this connection we may mention that for two and a quarter hours he once strove to convince a Northern audience that the people in England were in favour of the Union in the terrible American Civil War. He has preached at Athens on Mars Hill, where he took for his text the words "The Unknown God;" and he has preached to a Congregation of three persons in a little out-of-the-way Norwegian village. His own church will hold a congregation of two thousand; and though he is now seventy-three years of age, he seems as vigorous and hearty as ever, and goes over to preach there every Sunday from his quiet and charming home at Hampstead. He has been prevented by illness from preaching only three Sundays during thirty-three years.

MATTER-OF-FACT MAGGIE.

A STORY OF FARM LIFE.



"GOOD-BYE to another of my illusions, then," said Evelyn Meredith, as she and her sister sat over the fire one dull November afternoon. The wind sighed fitfully round the old Manor Farm, and a stray bough of the Virginia creeper tapped incessantly at the window. "Heigh-ho! I'm awfully disappointed in our cousin from London, Mildred. She is not in the least what I expected—with her hair screwed in that atrocious little knot at the top of her head. When I asked her what was the prettiest style for my new dress, she looked me up and down, and said that I was much more fashionable already than any of the girls in her set. Superior, I suppose!" and the toss of the pretty head, with its load of plaits and perfectly curled fringe, was significant.

Mildred looked pensively at the fire. "Still, Evelyn," she said, "it was nice of Maggie to choose to come here. We are her nearest relations now; it's natural she should cling to us."

"You are so sentimental, Mildred," returned her sister impatiently; "there is very little of *that* in Maggie Caxton! Here she comes, rushing along the hall as if she had the business of the world on her shoulders. I know I shall hate her!"

Maggie seemed to bring a bracing element into the sleepy atmosphere of the faded drawing-room, and Mildred unconsciously straightened herself in the easy-chair, while Evelyn pulled on the shabby beaded slipper which she had been balancing on the end of her slim foot.

"You look very cosy," said Maggie, stirring the fire, and giving a momentary brightness to the dreary walls. "Now," she went on, as she drew up the least easy-chair, and began her knitting with an energy her cousins felt to be peculiarly irritating, "I've been roaming all over the dear old house and garden, and should like to hear about my neighbours."

"Well, it's not a long list," said Evelyn, yawning. "The rector heads it, of course. He gets a convenient little cough in the winter, and is very properly ordered away to Italy. There are two farmers in the village, with families of small children, miserably poor, like the rest of us; a snuffy old doctor comes to visit father once a week; the curate (Mr. Dutton) and his mother call in every now and then with cheering accounts of farm-labourers out of work, and mothers with twelve or fourteen little children laid up with rheumatic fever!"

"Plenty of breathing-room, then," remarked Maggie. "I've been making no end of plans; one is suffocated with societies, and meetings, and associations in London. I like to go to work in my own way."

Evelyn glanced at Mildred with a significant cough.

"Mr. Fraser is coming in to tea," said Mildred, giving a turn to the conversation; "Evelyn forgot to put his name on the list——"

"Because he is a social nonentity," interrupted Evelyn. "He can't sing, nor even play tennis properly."

"He has a little land close by," explained Mildred; "and since father's illness, has almost entirely managed our farm, too. Evelyn must admit that he is an excellent farmer; and Mr. Dutton says he is very well-read. I only wish Edmund had some of his plodding ways."

"Ah! how is Edmund?" asked Maggie, with interest. "Of course he has left school now—what is he doing?"

"Ratting and shooting rabbits, till something turns up," said Evelyn drily. "Maggie, you'll find us all very unsatisfactory people, living in the reflected glory of ancient splendour, when Meredith Manor was famous for its hunting breakfasts and shooting



"'I should like to hear about my neighbours.'"—*p.* 547.

parties—oh, the wretched contrast! I shall soon detest these dreary old walls! I mean to dispel all your romantic illusions at once; you've come expecting an Arcadia, and——"

"On the contrary," said Maggie, laughing, "I've been reading every article on agricultural depression I could put my hands on, and I'm perfectly bristling with theories."

Just then the door opened, and Mr. Meredith came in. Maggie had been much shocked at the change in him: the handsome, genial uncle of her childhood was now a stooping, weary invalid; the energy and guiding principle of his life seemed to have vanished when he lost his wife, three years ago.

"Well, my dear, we are very glad to see you here," he said kindly; "but you will find our little place a dismal contrast to the gaiety of your London life."

"Gaiety! Uncle Merton," said Maggie, with a glance at her black dress, "gaiety and I have not been on terms of speaking acquaintance for years."

"Mr. Fraser, this is my cousin, Miss Caxton," said Mildred. "Oh, here is Edmund!"

An overgrown youth, with two terriers at his heels, came into the firelight, and as his grey eyes met hers, Maggie mentally exclaimed--

"He's not so bad, after all; better be rabbiting and catching rats than lounging in an easy-chair and railing against the fates!"

The dining-room was infinitely more home-like and comfortable; the tea-table was tastefully arranged, the lamp shone down on chrysanthemums and golden butter, autumn leaves and home-made cakes. "Why did Evelyn so persistently ignore Mr. Fraser?" Maggie was a woman, and instantly the "excellent farmer" posed in her imagination as a rejected suitor, though it was certainly consoling to find that his sorrows had not affected his appetite. "She is really wonderfully pretty," thought Maggie, watching the slim white fingers deftly arranging some crimson blackberry-leaves. "But, of course, one sees it is impossible," and Maggie looked carefully—she was very short-sighted—at the gaunt figure, rather rugged features, and the beard, with, alas! more than an inclination to red!

Mr. Fraser's glance roaming in search of the marmalade, he became suddenly aware of this close scrutiny, and asked, with a slight smile, "Did you notice many changes as you passed through the village, Miss Caxton?"

"What I *did* notice was the dreadful apathy and dulness of the children as they came out of school, and those big boys lounging round the village pump. Nothing done to amuse them, of course, these long November evenings. I have been making a plan; we'll have the schoolroom—three evenings a week, say—decorate it with Japanese fans, and a few good photographs—I've brought some with me; take games, teach them a few glees, or have classes for those who show the slightest wish to improve themselves; some of them might try a little German. We could begin next Monday."

Mr. Meredith gave a feeble gasp, Mildred put down the teapot in sheer exhaustion, and Evelyn, after a moment's pause, broke out in an irritating little laugh.

"If by Christmas you have persuaded us all that we might perhaps get up a little Penny Reading *next* winter, you will have worked wonders," she said.

"But you have just been telling me that you have almost nobody in the parish but the curate and his mother; of course I should mention the plan to Mr. Dutton," said Maggie, who considered herself a good Churchwoman.

"Mrs. Dutton will throw cold water on it, love," said her uncle feebly.

"Never mind; cold water is always refreshing. I work better for a little opposition," said Maggie, straightening herself as if eager for the battle.

"When the cold water takes the form of a splash and that's the end of it," admitted Evelyn; "but when it comes drop by drop—why, it was one of the worst tortures of the Inquisition."

"I am not at all afraid of Mrs. Dutton," said Maggie.

"I'll stand by you," said Edmund.

"I suppose," remarked Miss Caxton, "that the land in this neighbourhood is heavy. I have been reading up agriculture lately, and I was asking John a few questions as he drove me from the station. It struck me that the farming here is done on such old-fashioned lines—the rotation of crops—no straw sold."

"You have been studying the subject in London for how long, may I ask?" inquired Mr. Fraser. "Three months of theory against several generations of practice!"

Maggie was not in the least snubbed.

"Then it's quite impossible that the methods of three hundred years ago could be improved on?" she replied loftily. "In every other science we may make discoveries by experiment and induction, but farmers long ago reached the pinnacle of wisdom!"

Mr. Fraser's eyes twinkled, but Mr. Meredith interposed—

"Think of steam-ploughs artificial manures, and threshing-machines, my dear Maggie: all comparatively recent inventions."

"I shall be obliged to look in to-morrow on business," said Mr. Fraser, as he rose to leave, "and shall hear Mrs. Dutton's opinion. I should like to help in your scheme for the village children, Miss Caxton. I can take a class of lads for a geography lesson at least."

"Oh! thank you," said Maggie, not too warmly. "Is that your strong point?"

As Angus Fraser was striding along the narrow lane by the Manor Farm the next afternoon, he met Miss Caxton carrying a very large basket, with a few eggs in it, a small farm-boy walking open-mouthed at her side.

"Good afternoon," she said brightly. "I have been rambling over the farm with Tommy Stokes, collecting the eggs. I consider that the farmer has much to answer for in neglecting small economies and thrifts, and I have persuaded my cousin Mildred, who is really far from strong" (Maggie had a large share of family loyalty), "to let me take my part in household duties. What capital things clogs are! I borrowed these of the cook. You will admit the drainage has not reached perfection?" and she passed down the stone passage, whilst Mr. Fraser followed her, after scraping a considerable part of the farm from his heavy boots.

Maggie hung up the old grey shawl, and joined her uncle and cousins; hands and cheeks cold, red, and glowing.

"Why, Maggie, you have pieces of straw in your hair! What *have* you been doing?" exclaimed Evelyn with horror.

"Very likely," replied Maggie, going to the mirror. "Tommy Stokes and I have been peeping under the mangers. How *very* few eggs the hens lay! I should suggest feeding them with some of the smaller potatoes—chopped up, of course."

"You have not taken cold, I hope, my dear?" said her uncle, with a shiver. "You are brave to venture out in this fog."

"Oh, this clean country fog is nothing, and I never take cold," was the reply. "My London boots are too ridiculous. I went to the village shoemaker this morning, and ordered some sensible leather ones. He's quite an original; we talked politics for half an hour."

"In that stuffy shop?" said Evelyn. "I never venture inside the door!"

"He manages to live in it somehow," remarked Maggie, "so a few minutes won't hurt me. The entertainment plans are going on capitally, Mr. Fraser," she continued, turning to him. "Mr. Dutton happened to call, and Edmund and I told him what we wanted to do. He agreed to everything—so much more sensible than opposing every scheme from laymen. But what a pity he can't make use of the language of the eyes exclusively—I never heard such a poor, piping little voice!"

"He is the most hard-working, self-denying man I know," said Mr. Fraser, with some emphasis. "He almost starved himself so that he could help some poor wretches through the distress last winter."

"That was very good of him," admitted Maggie.

"And Mrs. Dutton?" asked Mr. Fraser.

"I couldn't see anything formidable in her," said Maggie. "Rather a weak, spiteful sort of woman; nothing more."

"You will soon change your opinion," put in



"Angus Fraser had plodded home solemnly beside Evelyn."—*p.* 550.

Evelyn hotly. "Mrs. Dutton opposes all plans but those of her own making."

"And her son's, surely," said Maggie.

"Oh, dear no; he scarcely dares lift his finger without permission. And she *hates* us all!" continued Evelyn, with flashing eyes. "I'm furious with myself for not treating her mean little ways with proper contempt!"

"My dear," remarked Maggie, "larger thoughts would turn out those trifling worries from your mind. Take up Carlyle or Ruskin, for instance."

"I must say I agree with Miss Evelyn that one would need a very concentrated dose of philosophy to fortify oneself against Mrs. Dutton," said Mr. Fraser. ("How he is trying to propitiate Evelyn!" thought Maggie.)

"Or something better than philosophy—patience," said Mildred's low voice.

Maggie noticed how very fragile she looked, and was surprised at the sudden kiss Evelyn gave her, and the mute apology of her dark eyes.

"I met several of the children as they came out of school this afternoon. I told them of the treat in store, and spoke to many of their mothers, and they promised to send them."

"You remind me so much of your poor aunt—just her energy," said Mr. Meredith, with a sigh.

"Edmund is quite interested in it," said Mildred. "You have taken him by storm, Maggie."

"Yes; we shall be very good friends, I can see. Why don't you let him go to one of the colonies, Uncle? That boy would pine to death in an office; he dreads the very thought of it! Why not send him to your flourishing cousin in Australia?"

Sunday afternoon—those of the family at Manor Farm who had braved the weather, and been to church, have just received the condolences of the lazier members. Angus Fraser had plodded home solemnly beside Evelyn, she having pettishly complained in the church porch of the impossibility of holding up her umbrella and dress at the same time.

"Shall I be any use in putting up your photographs to-morrow, Miss Caxton?" he asked.

"Edmund will help me, thank you, when I want him," said Maggie. "I have been talking to Mrs. Dutton coming along—and—it is exceedingly provoking—we cannot have the room then."

"Oh, yes, Mr. Fraser," said Evelyn, her eyes dancing with mischievous delight, "the choir practice is on Monday, service to be altered to Wednesday, and the schoolmaster is getting up a glee class of his own on Friday, she says—our three evenings. The room is really used for Temperance meetings, and so on, the other nights. And then she turned to Mary Marshall, and said, 'You will come to tea, dear,' and to Clara Smith, 'I will bring what I promised you, darling,' whilst she was icebergs to us."

"She is unendurable and detestable!" said Maggie, throwing her books on the table. "She has positively been round to the mothers, and made them say they think it would be bad for the children to come out—unsettle them! Such rubbish!"

Evelyn rose, and looking along the book-shelves, selected a volume, which she handed to her cousin. "Perhaps a chapter of this will do, Maggie. I'm sorry I haven't any of your favourite authors."

"Come, that's too bad," said Edmund; "you'll soon be as nasty as Mrs. Dutton yourself."

"Never mind; I deserved it, for losing my temper," said Maggie, laughing, and going off to her room. Evelyn followed her.

"Mr. Dutton is coming presently, Maggie; *will* you let me do your hair? That screwed up little top-knot really worries me."

"Well, you can never make me ornamental," said Maggie; "but you may try your best," and she sat down resignedly.

"I was very horrid to you," said Evelyn; "but it was really that woman's fault. You know that Mildred and Mr. Dutton have been engaged five years."

"Of course, I never dreamt of such a thing!" said Maggie indignantly.

"Well, it's a fact. In our prosperous days, Mrs. Dutton was delighted; but bad seasons and low prices have brought us down in the world, and she is trying to do everything to break it off. She has her own income, and as he gives away every farthing of the stipend——"

"Why not give him up, then?" said practical Maggie.

"Then Mildred would die outright," returned Evelyn. "She is just fading away now."

"Dear me, I hope I shall never be in love," said her cousin; "it seems to destroy one's own comfort, and everybody else's." Then suddenly, "Why do you dislike Mr. Fraser so much?"

"Because he should manage the farm, and leave the housekeeping to us," said Evelyn. "He and poor father have been burying themselves in accounts, and he says we ought to economise! He persuaded father to part with the mare; and now if we're asked to a party, we can't go—there's nothing to drive in the carriage—wants us to send the butter to the nearest grocer, or hawk it about ourselves (with curling lip) — says we ought not to keep more than one servant——"

"Oh, Evelyn! the chance I've been longing for these two years. *Do* let me undertake the butter-making, and baking, and everything. And Jane *ought* to leave, her mother wants her so badly."

"No, Maggie; when your money——"

"Stop; not a word. Jane goes home to-morrow, and I begin," and Maggie's eyes sparkled.

"We ought to have changed places in life," said Evelyn. Then recovering herself, "Don't wear your spectacles to-night, for my sake. Why don't you have eye-glasses? They are much more becoming."

"They are always falling off. I shall feel as blind as a bat—I do like to see people."

"They would frighten Herbert Dutton out of his wits," said Evelyn, ruthlessly pocketing the case. "You have not even looked at your hair; it is quite wavy and pretty now."

"It's a mass of hair-pins. I'm a human hedgehog," muttered the ungrateful Maggie.

It was a pleasant, peaceful evening. Mr. Dutton

was evidently full of happiness as he listened to Mildred's sweet, pathetic music, and thinking over these lovers' woes, Maggie's expression became quite sympathetic.

Maggie had provided a secret store of coarse brown aprons, and gave herself up to household work with a splendid energy: pattering about in the dairy, skimming the milk-pans, making up the butter, counting eggs; whilst Tommy Stokes quailed under



"'I can guess what you have to tell me,' she said."—*p.* 552.

the gleam of her spectacles. The butter was a triumph. I must confess that the first batch of bread was solid and substantial; but, as Maggie clearly explained, *that* was entirely the fault of the oven. (I have come to exactly the same conclusion about my own cakes.) Evelyn declared that she was tired out with watching her cousin work. Then the entertainment classes: Mr. Fraser effected a compromise with Mrs. Dutton, and Friday saw the dull schoolroom transformed. Evelyn represented the refining element, and brought some treasured plaster of Paris busts, trailed ivy sprays, and arranged autumn leaves and berries. Maggie gave a spirited address, Edmund recited "John Gilpin," and Mildred sang some ballads. The old cobbler, whom Miss Caxton had completely fascinated, performed some marvellous conjuring tricks. It was a success. But the next week, alas! when the little party from the Manor Farm came to the door they found it barricaded, and a wild tumult going on within. Climbing to the window, Edmund, with shouts of laughter, described the scene. A very tiresome girl, Tommy Stokes' sister, with a gift for mimicry, had, in her idle moments, cut out a pair of cardboard spectacles, and with a too faithful imitation of gesture and tone, was reproducing the address of the previous Friday.

"Oh, where is Mr. Fraser?" asked Evelyn. "He can keep them in order—he knows every child in the village."

"He seemed busy with uncle, and I told him he needn't come, we could manage without him," said Maggie; "but what use would he be outside?"

Just then Mr. Dutton came up, and, to Maggie's great disgust, the sound of his thin, piping voice through the keyhole effected what her own magisterial tones had been powerless to accomplish. But this was the only serious revolt of the winter.

Last year Maggie was deep in the study of Latin and algebra; now she devoted her spare minutes to artificial poultry foods. The hens could not be made to see their duty in the matter of eggs; and when, after patient meditation, she had supplied them with a delightful condiment—which she seriously thought of patenting—and displayed in February her piled-up basket of eggs, Mr. Fraser had not the cruelty to throw any doubt upon its efficacy. Indeed, they wanted any spark of enthusiasm. Mr. Meredith became more depressed every day; Evelyn left her fringe uncurled; and, as a climax to their troubles, Mildred, one Sunday morning, fainted as she left the church, and was taken to the curate's home close by. Then it was proved that Mrs. Dutton had a conscience, and, wonderful to say! she carried Mildred off to Hastings, and nursed her back to life in quite a motherly fashion. But they all missed her sweet, patient influence at the Farm.

However, as the cheerful old saying tells us, "It's a long lane that has no turning." One breezy March morning, as Maggie was crossing the meadow by the brook, unmindful of the daffodils that were "tossing their heads in sprightly dance," she was overtaken by Angus Fraser. He did not, of course, affront her by offering his protection as she passed through the herd of formidable creatures advancing with the curiosity

which "young things" are supposed to possess; and Maggie at once began the conversation.

"I can guess what you have to tell me," she said. "You have made the arrangements, and my poor uncle leaves the Farm and Kirstell Green for ever."

"Believe me, it was that or complete ruin," said Mr. Fraser earnestly. "You have been struggling so bravely, Miss Caxton——"

"Look!" interrupted Maggie, "Evelyn is at the gate, calling us." And they hurried to join her.

Needless to say, no consideration would have induced Evelyn to pass that gate. Her eyes were sparkling, her cheeks flushed.

"Of course she was brilliantly lovely then, but Mr. Fraser should have seen her an hour ago," thought Maggie crossly, as she noticed his intent look. She herself felt particularly plain and cold that morning.

"Oh, Maggie darling! oh, Mr. Fraser! such news!" she cried. "I don't know how to tell you. That dear old cousin in Australia is dead, and he 's left us all his fortune. We 're rich, *rich*, Maggie! and father and I will have a lovely little house in Kensington, Mildred will marry Mr. Dutton and live happy ever afterwards, and Edmund can shoot lions in North America. I must write off to Hastings this minute!" and she flew back to the house.

There was a long silence. Maggie drew a deep breath, and leaned against the gate.

"Poor child! I'm thankful she is so happy!" said Mr. Fraser, in a low voice. Something in his tone irritated Miss Caxton; or was it that Evelyn had left her own name out of the list?

"I don't know why you should speak of Evelyn as poor *child!*" she said. "She is only six months younger than I am, and *I* think this sudden prosperity will just turn her head."

"Happiness is good for some natures," replied Mr. Fraser. "You forget your cousin has already had a large slice of the troubles of life. What a load will be taken off Mr. Meredith!"

"Of course I am glad of that," said Maggie.

"And shall you join them at Kensington?" asked Mr. Fraser, with some hesitation.

"Certainly not," was the reply; "I hate London! I must go in; my throat feels sore"—coughing—"this wind is so treacherous."

Maggie was quite herself again when Mr. Fraser came in the evening. He found her sitting alone in the dining-room, cheerful, and a little more combative than usual. "Evelyn has just remembered that she must send for patterns of mourning," she remarked drily. "She is still in the wildest spirits. What should you do if you had a fortune left you?"

"I should still carry out my plan, I think," he said quietly. "Didn't you know I intend to emigrate in June? I shall join my brother in Canada."

"Oh, I *am* glad!" said Maggie, with intense interest. "Every single individual one hears of who means to leave this poor, over-populated country——" and then she stopped, astonished at his crestfallen expression.

Presently an amused look came into his eyes, and he began slowly: "It would be much better for the country if *two* individuals left it instead of the solitary *one*, wouldn't it?" Then, becoming grave again, he took her hand, and said very earnestly, "Maggie, will you come with me? Will you be my wife? I think I loved you from the first moment I ever saw you. I have never loved anyone in the world but you!"

* * * * * *

Maggie Fraser is almost perfectly happy in her Canadian home; her one regret is that, as she says, their life as settlers did not begin at the beginning, Angus having made the snug farm-house far too comfortable. The turbulent Eliza Ann Stokes accompanied her as a devoted and invaluable "help."

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE READING SOCIETY.

DAILY READINGS BEARING ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

MAY 13—JUNE 9.

MAY.	MORNING.	EVENING.
13.	St. Matthew xxvi. 17—30.	St. Luke xxii. 8—21.
14.	St. John vi. 32—44.	St. John vi. 45—58.
15.	1 Corinthians x. 16—31.	1 Cor. xi., from ver. 23
16.	Hebrews viii., from ver. 7; ix., from ver. 19.	Exodus xxiv., to ver. 13.
17.	Romans iii., from ver. 19.	Hebrews ix., to ver. 15.
18.	Hebrews xiii., from ver. 12.	Revelation vii., from ver. 9.
19.	St. Mark xiv. 12—26.	St. Mark xiv. 43—54.
20.	St. Matthew xxvi. 47—56.	St. Luke xxii. 47—53; Psalm iii.
21.	St. John xviii., to ver. 14.	St. John xiii. 16—30.
22.	St. Matthew xxvii., to ver. 10.	Psalm xxxviii. 8—15; Psalm xli., from v. 5.
23.	Job xix., to ver. 14.	Psalm lxxxviii.
24.	Psalm lv., to ver. 14; Zechariah xiii., from ver. 6.	Psalm lxix., to ver. 13.
25.	Isaiah liii.	St. Mark xiv. 27—38.
26.	St. Mark xiv. 43—54.	St. Mark xiv. 55—72.
27.	St. Matthew xxvi. 57—75.	St. Luke xxii. 54—71.
28.	St. John xviii. 13—27.	1 St. Peter iii., from ver. 12.
29.	Psalm xxvii.	St. John ii., from ver. 18; Ephesians ii., from ver. 14.
30.	Isaiah l.	Hebrews xii., to ver. 13.
31.	St. John xxi. 7—19.	Revelation i. to ver. 8, and ver. 17—20.
JUNE.		
1.	1 Thessalonians iv., from ver. 9.	2 Thessalonians i.
2.	St. Mark xiv. 55—72.	St. Mark xv. 1—20.
3.	St. Matthew xxvii. 11—26.	St. Luke xxiii. 1—5, 13—23.
4.	St. John xviii., from ver. 28	St. John xix. to ver 16.
5.	Acts ii. 22—32.	Acts iv. 19—31.
6.	Jeremiah xxiii., to ver 5; Revelation xix. 6—16.	1 Timothy vi. from ver. 11.
7.	Psalms lxxi., to ver. 12.	1 St. Peter ii., from ver. 15.
8.	Acts iii. 12—26.	Acts v. 22—33.
9.	St. Mark xv. 1—20.	St. Mark xv. 21—39.

XUM

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

A NEW "QUIVER WAIF.

IT has been encouraging to see with what ready sympathy our readers have taken upon them the burden of "THE QUIVER" WAIFS. Contributions have reached us from all parts of the country, and even from distant lands.

We look upon this as a permanent and growing work; and the hearty response our appeals have met, shows that our readers regard it in the same light. Thus encouraged, we have taken upon ourselves the responsibility of adopting another little Waif in the name of our readers. We give on this page the portrait sketch, taken from life, of this new member of our family.

Christine is a fine, bright-looking girl, high-spirited and of amiable disposition.

She has been rescued from circumstances of great danger. The perilous position of unprotected girls in our cities is a subject too well known and too painful to be more than slightly touched on here. It remains one of the greatest blots on our modern civilisation. There are so many evil influences at work among certain classes, that even with the protecting hand of a father and the watchful care of a mother, there is continual temptation and danger; but when the father is a hopeless drunkard—sapped of all virtue, love, and manliness—and the mother unworthy of that tender name, how little hope is there!

It was so with Christine. A strong-spirited girl, full of eager young life, what was there of restraint or wholesome interest in the wretched home of a father scarce ever sober? Is it any wonder that her real home was the streets? There she found a vent for her activities, and there she was readily welcomed by companions who were exercising a deadly influence over her, and but for a rescuing hand would have been a permanent outcast. But help came in time.

We can say no more about the history of little Christine, and it requires no words from us to urge that the rescue of such little ones, who have it in them to become bright and virtuous women, is a work that will certainly meet with the Master's "Well done."

Christine has found a shelter in the "Princess Louise Home" of the National Society for the Protection of Young Girls. The Matron would be glad to receive any of our readers who take an interest in "THE QUIVER" WAIFS at the Home, Harrow Green, Leytonstone, any day excepting Saturday.



The artist who drew the above portrait for us says of Christine, in a letter to the Editor, "She is a fine child, with dark eyes that filled with tears at the mention of her former history, but ready to sparkle with laughter at the prospect of having her portrait taken."

It is to our readers that we owe the ability to receive this third little one into our family of Waifs for this year. It is to them that we look with confidence for the increased help that will enable us still further to extend our family, all of whom are, according to our latest reports, doing well.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

List of contributions received from February 23rd, 1889, up to and including March 19th, 1889. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month:—

A Friend in India, 5s.; G. J., Birmingham, 1s.; Lover of THE QUIVER, Kilburn, 10s.; J. W., Camden Town, 7s. 6d.; J. Mackie, West Norwood, 10s.; E. G., 5s.; A Child, Tulse Hill, 1s.; E. W., 2s. 6d.; T. M. R., 2s.; J. J. E., Govan (seventeenth donation), 5s.; Ellice, Worcestershire, 5s; W., Sheerness, 2s. 6d.; Thankful, Warwick, 5s.; H. A. C., Oakham, 2s. 6d.

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

CHRISTIAN WORK IN SCOTCH LODGING-HOUSES.



A SKETCH AT A SCOTCH LODGING-HOUSE.

"WE have no paid agents," say the workers in the Paisley Lodging-house Mission; "our object is the salvation of souls, and the glory of God." Shelter, food, and clothing have been provided, for temporal necessities, and many a heart has been softened by Christian compassion, and brought out of shadow into the sunlight of heavenly peace. Miss Ledgerwood, 28, Argyle Street, Paisley, will gratefully acknowledge any help towards brightening lonely lives. Money, old garments, religious literature, would all be welcome, and be used to cheer fellow-creatures who may have deemed themselves forgotten by God and man. This work was started in the Jubilee year, and commenced through the visit of a lady to the Paisley Infirmary, and her conversation with a girl-patient living in one of the "common lodging-houses." The girl came to see the lady who had expressed interest in her, and gave much information as to the lodging-houses and their frequenters. "What a glorious place for mission work!" thought the lady, and next Sunday she held a meeting in one of these resorts; a large number of lodging-houses are now regularly visited, and teas have been given, and religious services held in each. Many have come down in the world, through drink and various causes, to lodgings and associations that once would have seemed impossible, and here, hiding from old acquaintances, and almost despairing, Christian sympathy has met them with open arms of succour, and messages of hope have reached them from Him who is healing, life, and light.

"SISTER SUNSHINE."

"Sister Sunshine" "pulled him through!" He was a patient with whom, last year, an attack of bronchitis lasted nine weeks; this year, only nine days. Coals had come from the mission-house, and "Sister Sunshine" had also come with hot and nourishing food, with medicine, and with nursing. The name "Sister Sunshine" was given by him to a lady who—a trained and certificated nurse, and with other qualifications—is working with a friend equally qualified at St. Mary's Mission House, Plaistow, East London. This is a large and poor parish, of which the Rev. T. Given-Wilson, M.A., is the vicar. A mission-house has recently been established there, and in it is a day-nursery or *crêche;* but the house is also the centre from which these ladies carry on their nursing mission connected with the church. Families are encouraged to pay a penny a week, and they can then have the attention of these parish nurses, though sometimes cases are attended gratuitously. From fifty to sixty persons have come in one day for advice, or to have wounds attended to, while visits are paid to the sick in their own dwellings. The "maternity work" is also an important branch of the nurses' operations. These ladies, it should be said, are quite independent of any sisterhood of an ecclesiastical character, and they afford an instance of what can be done by trained and qualified women. The work of this nursing mission is surely a practical application of Christian principles which might well be incorporated in the work of any church where necessary.

PROTECTING LIVERPOOL'S CHILDREN.

The mere existence of such a Society as the Liverpool Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is perhaps the strongest evidence of its necessity.



A SKETCH AT A SCOTCH LODGING-HOUSE.

It is for the benefit of no particular class or denomination, for in Rule 8 we read, "the Society shall protect children from cruelty, without regard to

character, creed, position, or nationality." It invites, moreover, the earnest co-operation of all public and benevolent organisations, constituting itself a centre for information and effort, private individuals being specially asked to bring to the notice of the Society (in confidence when desired) any instances of cruelty or neglect which may come under their observation. By the word "Prevention," the Society would primarily signify an inquiry into the causes which produce suffering and disease among children, and a high rate of infant mortality, and persistent efforts to mitigate or to remove such causes, giving in all instances the utmost publicity as regards the results of such inquiry, and of all action (legal or otherwise) which it may have been necessary to take. The term "cruelty" has very special reference to (1) all treatment or conduct by which physical pain is wrongfully, needlessly, or excessively inflicted; or, (2) by which life, or limb, or health is wrongfully endangered or sacrificed; or, (3) by which morals are imperilled or depraved. The exposure of children during inclement weather, and at late hours, as pedlars, hawkers, or mendicants, is included in the list of offences classed by the Society as "cruelty." We can only wish the Society, which is doing an increasingly useful work, a fervent God-speed. The children surely have a paramount claim on our loving protection—"the right divine of helplessness."

THE DECLINE OF PREACHING.

We have read every word of Canon Twells' delightful "Colloquies on Preaching" (Longmans), and are promising ourselves a second perusal of some of the chapters. The writer has put together a series of imaginary conversations between various classes of preachers and of hearers, in which the sermon of the average country parson is more or less severely handled on one side and more or less feebly defended on the other. Canon Twells evidently seeks to convince his brother-ministers of the urgent necessity for a complete reform in the matter of sermon preparation and delivery. We think in some cases he has taken too depressing a view of the present state of things, but on the whole his observations are justifiable in fact, and we trust that many a preacher will read and lay to heart the counsels contained in his brightly and thoughtfully written book.

SOUL-LESSONS IN A GARDEN.

Someone has said that a garden is an effort after the lost Paradise, a glimpse of the peace and loveliness that innocence knew. Gardens seem to be specially loved by happy children—themselves like the flowers, "the smiles of God's goodness"—and by the aged, who retreat from business turmoil to find rest and happiness in tending the fertile sod. But all of us are cheered in body and soul as we move, amid sunlight and shade, down fragrant garden-paths, and receive the messages of promising fruitage on wall and bough, and read aright the bright hopeful faces of bud and flower. There are "thoughts too deep for tears" associated with many an old-fashioned bush of sweetness, and many an old friend that brings back the voices that are still; but the flowers of remembrance have power likewise to whisper courage, patience, quiet endurance, the secret strength which only Heaven can give, the sure and certain triumph of resurrection-glory, when dark days are no more. Perhaps in our garden the course of time may be evidenced by opening and closing flowers. May each day of our existence be a spiritual bloom-dial, sweet and fragrant with kindnesses that shall drop seeds for all eternity! Down upon our knees the oft-recurring weeds will have to be uprooted, and with faces turned heavenward we shall be in the right



condition to receive light and dew from above. "To be in position," says Drummond, "*to abide in Christ*, that is all;" and he describes the flower standing still, spreading its leaves in unconscious prayer, echoing the evangel of free grace, and peace, and Heaven-kept growth. The text of our garden is rest and faith; He who clothes the lilies thinks upon every need our lives can know.

> "Thy dew upon these buds distils,
> Thy grace is vast and free;
> Thy hand arrays these daffodils,
> Thy heart remembers me."

TATE AND BRADY.

We have received the following interesting letter from Mr. G. Townsend, Exeter:—"The following is a copy of an advertisement at the end of an old almanack:—'The Cœlestial Diary; or, an Ephemeris for the year of our Blessed Saviour's Incarnation, 1739, etc. By Salem Pearse, Student in Physick and the Cœlestial Sciences,' etc. I beg to offer it you, under the impression that it may find a place in your 'Short Arrows,' in connection with your articles on the 'Metrical Versions of the Psalms' in THE QUIVER:—'Lately published: A Supplement to the New Version of Psalms, by Dr. Brady and Mr. Tate; containing the Psalms in Particular Measures; the usual Hymns, Creed, Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, for the Holy Sacrament, etc., with Gloria Patris, and Tunes (Treble and Bass) proper to each of them, and all the rest of the Psalms. The Eighth Edition, corrected. With the Addition of Plain Instructions for all those

who are desirous to learn or improve themselves in Psalmody; near Thirty New Tunes, composed by several of the best Masters; and a Table of Psalms suited to the Feasts and Fasts of the Church, etc. With Tables of all the Psalms of the New, Old, and Dr. Patrick's Versions, directing what Tunes are fitted for each Psalm. The whole being a Compleat Psalmody. Useful for Teachers and Learners of either Version. London: Printed for Richard Ware in Amen Corner, and may be had bound up with all sorts of Common-prayers. Where likewise may be had the Nineteenth Edition of the whole Book of Psalms, by Sternhold and Hopkins; Composed in 3 Parts, and set to Music, by John Playford.'"

THE "FREE ROOMS ASSOCIATION."

A small society has lately been formed, called the "Free Rooms Association," to provide unfurnished rooms rent-free for some of the most needy candidates and annuitants of the "United Kingdom Beneficent Association." The first room was taken last July, and is occupied by an old lady whose income is £20 a year, and to whom it is an inestimable boon. A second room becoming vacant in the same house, a great effort was made to raise sufficient subscriptions to secure it. This was accomplished in the beginning of March last, and a lady appointed who has no private means whatever. Miss Georgina Pearson, of 46, Hyde Park Square, London, W., and the other members of the Association, greatly desire to place it on a more permanent basis, and to take other rooms as opportunity occurs and funds permit. Miss Pearson is very glad to give further information, and to receive subscriptions and donations. A gentlewoman old and homeless is a pathetic figure amid all our culture and luxury.

THE WONDERFUL BEAM.

One who was speaking lately to Sunday-school teachers and Christian workers drew an inspiring lesson from the legend of Christchurch, which relates to the building of the well-known sanctuary. The men who worked on the church noticed that in their midst there moved a mysterious helper, ever ready to toil and take his share in rearing the house of prayer, but absent when the weekly hour for payment came round. Nobody knew who he was or whence he came, but they grew accustomed to his assistance, and looked on him as one of themselves. One day they were in great trouble, for a necessary beam was found to be too short for its intended position, and this meant hindrance and delay. They went home, feeling discouraged, but next morning they found the beam had been fitted to its place, and all had been made right by the mysterious workman who shared their labour. Then, says the legend, they knew that One only had adapted the wonderful beam. They showed what had been done to all around, and the place was called Christchurch from that time forward. The story contains a truth for every workman of God. Let no toiler for the Master lose heart, for we have a Fellow-Worker who understands all our difficulties and discouragements, and sympathises in our humblest need. If God is with us, who can be against us? Even if success be never apparent to our mortal vision, no worker for Him *can* fail, seeing that if we be but faithful and prayerful, God Himself is at our side—the service is shared with Him, and we shall share His triumph. He will help us to rear everlasting temples to His glory, and to build up saints upon the one foundation. We heard of a Sunday-school teacher who decided his labour had been in vain, and he would send in his resignation to the superintendent. "Next Sunday," he thought, in much depression of spirit, "will be my last." But that very Sunday, a scholar who was going elsewhere to work lingered to bid him good-bye, and to thank him, half-shyly but with earnest sincerity, for the help his teaching had been to him, and the power it would prove through his coming life. Unknown, unguessed, a good work had gone on in that young heart—and the teacher did not resign.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIANS' UNION.

Many of our readers will remember the striking picture in the Academy Exhibition of 1888, called "The Soul's Awakening," in which a girl in the springtide of life is roused to the dawning consciousness that the immortal soul is not of earth, but belongs to the immortal God. Some have breathed doubt concerning the religion of the young as imaginative, transitory, emotional; but Samuel is not the only one to whom God has spoken in the blossom-time of life, and He who had His own special blessing for the children has service and benediction for the youths and maidens who are taking their places to-day amid the ranks of standard-bearers, and banding themselves to fight the good fight of faith. The Young Christians' Union arose out of the meetings held for children at the Conference Hall in 1885 by the Rev. E. Payson Hammond; it was suggested by Mr. Spiers that the boys could help one another on by meeting together after Mr. Hammond's departure, and as the same idea had occurred to some of the boys, a drawing-room meeting was started for prayer and praise. Increasing numbers led to anxious search for increased accommodation, and the meeting afterwards removed to a room connected with the Wesleyan Chapel, though the members belong to the Church of England, Presbyterian, Baptist, and other bodies, and their union is thus quite undenominational. As many of the earlier members are now young men in business, a junior meeting has been started for the schoolboy element; temperance work is also furthered, and a charity fund is kept up, whereby Dr. Barnardo, the China Inland Mission, and other channels of good, have been helped as the lads can afford. The meetings have led to open decision for Christ, and fuller consecration, and the committee remark: "We hope our young American cousins will start a Young Christians' Union," for Mr. Hammond has spread tidings of the society while working through the West and California.

THE POWER OF CHRIST'S LOVE.

A worker connected with the London Missionary Society sends a cheering account of Gospel triumphs

from Ranee Khet, on one of the spurs of the Himalayan base. He tells of converts "terribly in earnest"—not rich or intellectual, but steadfast in their adherence to the Saviour. Long before the sun rose they were on one occasion found praying and reading the New Testament. They were warned that poverty and persecution might await them if they became Christians, but their answer was, "We put our trust in Jesus; we want to know more of Him." One of them, a cartwright, had vowed money to the district deity if his wife recovered from illness; but she was long an invalid, and during that time he had benefited by Christian teaching. On her recovery he used the money to erect a school-shed for the mission—the earnest, doubtless, of a more finished structure as the power of redeeming love breaks down opposition and



"Long before the sun rose they were found praying and reading."

proves increasingly mighty. Whether told to innocent-hearted children at home, or to wild savages in untravelled lands, the story of the love of Jesus is the greatest power that can move the soul. "When the minister told how Jesus died," said a tiny girl to her father after service, "I felt I must love Him—I want always to please Him." And Dr. Moffat told of a tribe he once visited, where the power of Christ's love was strikingly evidenced. He was told the men never wept—losses of property or friends could not move their stern hearts or unseal the fountain of tears; but when he spoke to them of Jesus, and preached of the Redeemer "who died to save us all," the rock was smitten, the sternness was melted, and "the men who could not weep" shed penitent tears as by faith they gazed on Calvary. Unto Him that loved us hearts that seemed the coldest have bowed in allegiance. Let this knowledge cheer many who seem at present working amid stony places and unresponsive soil.

SOME NEW BOOKS.

Those of our readers who remember the interview with the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes which our Special Commissioner reported some time ago, even if they have not seen anything for themselves of the work which Mr. Hughes and his friends are doing at St. James's Hall, will be interested in the volume of addresses entitled "Social Christianity," which he has just published through Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. Mr. Price Hughes has a happy knack of seizing upon the topic which is at the moment uppermost in the public mind, and turning it to good account in his addresses. Young men will do well to read this book, and no teacher, especially if his work lie in cities, can afford to neglect it.—With the work of one Welshman before us it is interesting to turn to a book by another son of the Principality, Mr. T. Marchant Williams; and this time it is a book upon Wales. In "The Land of my Fathers" (Longmans) Mr. Marchant Williams has several objects in view, chief among them being the exposition of his views upon the educational question generally known as "payment by results." Unfortunately, Mr. Williams has allowed himself to appear not a little extravagant here and there in a manner which must detract very seriously from the value of his book. The character of Enid is very beautifully drawn, and Olwen is another good character—strong in her faith in total abstinence; but the others are not at all so well drawn. As a narrative, this story is weak; but as much of it is professedly from personal experience, we hope that it may do good.—Messrs. Longmans have also sent us a volume of reprinted papers on crime, reformatories, and kindred topics, by the late well-known philanthropist, Mr. Barwick Baker, under the title of "War with Crime." It is rather more

than two years since Mr. Baker died at his Gloucestershire home; but the memory of the work he did is still with us; and this interesting record of his aims and efforts ought to prove useful to those who are trying to follow in his steps and make the rough places smooth and the dark places light. Of course, we cannot endorse every sentiment which is put forward in these reprinted papers; but, certainly, with the bulk of them we are in hearty sympathy. —Messrs. Cassell have just issued a new and cheaper edition of L. T. Meade's story for girls, "The Palace Beautiful"—a work which would make a very acceptable present for any young girl, or would be a useful book in any Sunday-school library. —Mr. Thomas Archer's "Decisive Events in History" is another work of which Messrs. Cassell have issued a new edition, this time with illustrations. From the Battle of Marathon to the Proclamation of the Emperor William of Germany at Versailles is a far cry, but Mr. Archer takes his readers over the ground covered by most of the decisive events in history between these widely separated points.—The Principal of Foyle College, Londonderry, has addressed to his "old boys" a series of very valuable "Investment Hints" (Hodges, Figges and Co., Dublin). This little work is intended to guide Dr. Hime's old pupils in the moral principles which should govern their conduct in their business relations with their fellowmen. It would be well if others than Dr. Hime's boys were to regulate their conduct by these truly Christian precepts.—"Castle Building," by the Rev. Gordon Calthrop (W. Hunt and Co.) is an old friend with a new face, and a few additional features as a further attraction. Our readers are so well acquainted with Mr. Gordon Calthrop's style that we need do no more than commend this little book to their early perusal if they have not already possessed themselves of it.

"A LITTLE MOTHER INDEED!"

There were eight in the family, and the "little mother" was the second in point of age; the eldest, a brother, was in the hospital, and the others, from a bare-footed baby upwards, were around her. She looked old and careworn, when, according to her years, she should have appeared young and fresh and bright. Where was mother? Mother was dead! Father was "out of work." Yet four of the children went to school. And how was that? Why, this little maiden of twelve years and six months—for that, it seems, was her age—went before the committee, and the fees were remitted. It was at one of the free breakfasts of the London Congregational Union that the children were found, and that morning the father had had no breakfast, but had gone off for work, and that week there had been no fire in their dwelling up to that time. 'T is a terrible picture! Happily, the sequel is a satisfactory one. The children were provided for at one of the free breakfast-tables of the London Congregational Union for three months. The father obtained a good situation at thirty-five shillings weekly, and afterwards three pounds per week. The timely help saved the family from the workhouse, and the man, who was crushed in spirit, has been raised again. Oh! the value of timely aid in such cases!



"'It 's the first time I've had to sleep out.'"

"HOMELESS BY NIGHT."

A gentleman connected with a Christian charity related that he passed one night along the bridges and other open-air sleeping-places where the homeless poor may be found by night. His experiences were strange and sad, though his real interest as God's servant in these poor wanderers must have been in itself some sort of an answer to the querulous complaint that assailed him—"It is easy for *you*, who are well off, to talk of a Father in Heaven; but how can *we* trust God, seeing we are poor and homeless?" And it is God Himself who moves heart and hand to seek out these shelterless ones, and cheer and comfort them. "At last," said he who told the incident, "I came upon a man who betrayed no grumbling humour and uttered no reproaches. I told him how sorry I was to see him homeless, and he cried out, "But it 's the *first* night I have had to sleep out. Praise the Lord, I have always been able to keep a roof over me; I have never slept out before." Here was a wanderer praising God that things were no worse, and finding a strain of thanksgiving even in his destitution. What a lesson for those of us whose cups of bounty brim over!

"GRACIOUS WORDS."

"It is wonderful! they are gracious words!" joyfully exclaimed a German, who, outward bound for Sydney, strolled into a meeting at the Strangers' Rest, 163, St. George's Street, E., and was shown from the Word of God that salvation full and free is to be found in Jesus. A Norwegian captain brought his son and first mate to the "Rest:" the son declined a tract, saying he could not understand it, but the father persuaded him to take it, saying, "Spell it out,

and God will bless it." The words of this tract were used to bring the young man to the Saviour, and he has brought other members of the crew to the meetings, which are carried on without intermission *every day* throughout the year. The "Rest" is open from two to nine; seamen can here write their letters or enjoy quiet reading, and the workers—all of whom (save the caretaker) are unpaid—spare no pains to make Jack, whatever his nationality, feel at home here when ashore. Special blessing has been experienced amongst the Jews, many of whom have here for the first time heard the truth concerning the Messiah, having accepted the invitation which, inscribed in Hebrew, is placed in the window. "From what I heard at the 'Rest,'" writes a Jew, "I was led to search the prophecies; I had to overcome many difficulties, but thanks to our blessed Lord, who hath given me the victory, I am a witness to His glory." As a rule, the sailors who leave, each receive a bag containing Testaments and helpful literature; and suitable books and tracts will be gladly received by Mr. J. T. Isaac, who will forward a *sample bag* to any lady undertaking to furnish a supply.

BRISTOL BIBLE-CLASSES.

Bible-class workers will be cheered by the tidings of an important and increasing work carried on in connection with the "Old Market Street Men's Bible-Class," Bristol. What a hive of industry this city appears to the traveller! and spiritual energies are busy likewise. The report of this class is really a striking one, and proves what may be done by powers that are consecrated to God's service and the uplifting of mankind. Many deplore the indifference of the masses, yet numbers at the present time of the working classes not only stand beneath Christ's banner, but bear it hither and thither with glorious success. The members of the Old Market Street class give thoughtful papers on various subjects, carry on open-air work, plead for Temperance, interest themselves in mission work in the neighbourhood and abroad, band themselves as "Pilgrims" to conduct services in various parts of the city, carry on a medical society and savings bank, a cricket club, and, apparently, every other beneficial agency. Every Sunday some of the members visit a class for lads, numbering 146, thus bearing in mind the future recruits for the men's class, which shows a roll of 800, and is still "moving on."

Dr. Barnardo asks us to acknowledge the receipt of 5s. from L. E. H., Lewes.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

73. In what words did our Blessed Lord indicate to His Apostles who it was should betray Him?

74. From what words do we gather that the humble origin of Jesus was one of the causes of His rejection by the Jews?

75. Quote a passage from the book of the Revelation which shows that it is the same Jesus who was crucified that shall be the Judge of the quick and dead.

76. What words of David show that in his early youth he had great faith in God?

77. In what words does the prophet Isaiah speak of the patient suffering of Christ?

78. Which of the Apostles speaks of the value of patient suffering for Christ?

79. From what passage do we learn that the garden of Gethsemane was a place to which Jesus frequently went?

80. In what way are we to look upon chastisement from God?

81. What intimation did Jesus give to the High Priest of His second coming to judge the world?

82. What words of David show that he had to encounter much opposition?

83. In what way did Moses confirm the oath of obedience which the Israelites made to God at Mount Sinai?

84. In the marriage of the Lamb we are told the Bride (the Church) shall be arrayed in fine linen—what does this symbolise?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 474.

61. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." (St. Matt. xxii. 37—39.)

62. That we confess that Jesus is the Son of God. (1 John iv. 15.)

63. The grace of God manifested in them through Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. i. 4.)

64. The duty to watch and pray, for we know not when the Son of Man cometh. (St. Mark xiii. 33, 34.)

65. Trust in God's providential care. (Ps. xxiii. 1—4.)

66. The prophet Malachi, who also mentions the advent of St. John the Baptist. (Mal. iii. 1.)

67. He was taught by our Lord Himself. (1 Cor. xi. 23.)

68. From His discourse concerning the Last Judgment. (St. Matt. xxv. 40—45.)

69. To the Church at Sardis, lest God's judgment should come upon them as a thief. (Rev. iii. 2, 3.)

70. A position of trust and responsibility in His Heavenly Kingdom. (St. Luke xix. 17.)

71. "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." (1 Cor. x. 24.)

72. That the Holy Ghost would be with them to teach them what to speak, and therefore they were not to be troubled beforehand. (St. Mark xiii. 11.)

XUM



MAY'S CALL TO THE CITY CHILD.

OUT of the city—away, away!
Pale-faced little one, come at my call,
For here is the merry month of May,
With floral gifts for one and all.

The lanes are white with hawthorn bloom,
The daisy wears her pink-edged frill;
The common 's afire with golden broom,
And the sun gleams bright on the rippling rill.

The buttercup jewels the verdant mead;
The throstle cock sings from the pliant bough,
The swallow skims past with the lightning's speed,
As the hind creeps by with his team and plough.

The primrose glints from our wayside banks,
The pale anemone stars the wood,
And the skylark sings her song of thanks
To the Giver of all things bright and good.

Out of the city—away, away!
Pale-faced little one, come at my call;
Here, here is the merry month of May,
With life and joy for one and all.

JOHN GEORGE WATTS.



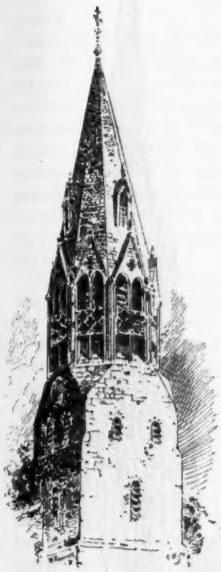
UNIV. OF MICH.



WILD ROSES.

See p. 573.

SOME OF THE MOST FAMOUS SPIRES.



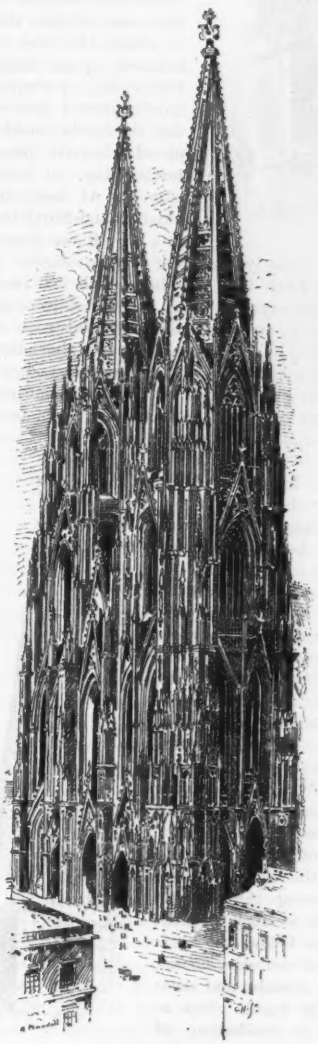
LOSTWITHIEL.

BEING to some extent a matter of taste, it would perhaps be too much to assert positively of any spire that it is more beautiful than the rest of its compeers. For our present purpose it is sufficient to say the spire of Strasburg Cathedral is one of the most beautiful as well as most famous in the world. Many of us can remember the anxiety that was felt on its behalf in the late bombardment of Strasburg, and the gratification that was expressed at its escape from destruction. It is placed on the northernmost of the two west towers, and rises to an altitude that considerably exceeds that of the greatest of the Pyramids. But instead of being the apex of a mass of solid masonry comparatively easy to ascend, like the great task of the ancient Egyptians, this marvellous work had to be placed in position by means of a wonderful pile of scaffolding of an intrepidity and intricacy of construction that only our own recent great engineering triumphs can enable us to realise. We have no spire like it in our own country, for it is made of the most ornamental traceried open-work from its base to its summit, and the perforations form a design of exquisite beauty. A very high degree of enrichment pervades the whole of the stone-work of the cathedral, as though intended as an expression of a sense of what was fitting for "the habitation of the Lord." The western façade is extremely rich. The buttresses between its divisions are adorned with canopies and statues; the entrances are crowned with crocketted gables; and the receding sides of the magnificent doorways are lined with rows of niches and statues. And this superb "head-stone of the corner," to use the phrase of the Psalmist, seems richer than all.

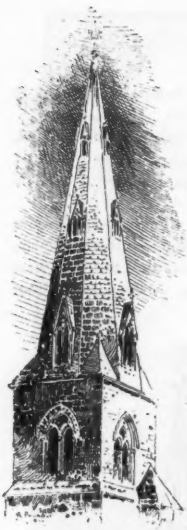
There is another German spire of similar open tracery work that looks as lace-like against the sky. This is at Freiburg. The cathedral is built of red sandstone, which gives a sunset tone to the building, and the spire is wrought of the same stone. It looks down from its great height upon palaces, castles, halls, convents, churches, chapels, fountains, and statues, as well as upon all the houses of the inhabitants, with which these are intermingled, and upon the winding of the river, the wide country around, and the sloping hills in the distance. And it must be added, it seems to beautify all that it looks down upon.

When Strasburg and Freiburg spires are mentioned, that of the cathedral of Burgos, in Old Castile, must not be passed over without equal praise, for it is also of exceeding beauty.

In the history of spires few incidents are more interesting than the circumstances attending the building of the two noble examples on the west front of Cologne Cathedral. The mediæval architect



COLOGNE CATHEDRAL.



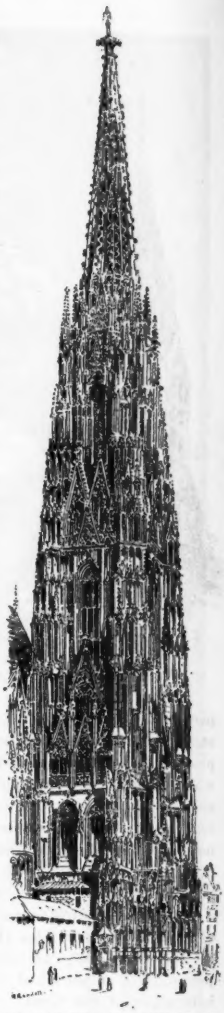
BARNWELL.

entrusted with the task of replacing the cathedral erected by Charlemagne, which had been destroyed by fire, had the satisfaction of seeing his great work commenced on August 14th, A.D. 1248. Much progress may have been made before the day came that he could look upon it no longer, and we know it was carried on for many years afterwards by others—till, indeed, the east end was perfected; but there came, at last, a time when the works were stopped. A large crane was left upon the height to which the west end had attained: as an outward and visible sign, perhaps, of the unrelinquished determination that the fabric should be completed when the means were forthcoming, or opportunity offered. At last, after six hundred and thirty-two years, to a day, it was finished, and finished exactly according to the original particulars set forth in a drawing which had been fortunately preserved. These two spires have octagonal bases, and taper to points, capped with floriated finials, five hundred and fifteen feet above the ground level. Each angle or rib is crocketted, and each plane is pierced with quatrefoils and other ornamental work. There is a third spire to this fabric, at the point of intersection of the transepts, which is three hundred and fifty feet high. After viewing the relics of bygone kings, in the great golden chest studded with precious stones, the rare old cameos and mosaic work in the sacristy, the pictures, sculpture, countless carvings, ironwork, stained glass, the columns, the groining, the chapels, canopies, tombs, and other wealth of architectural interest in the interior—to step out into the upper air upon the parapets or balconies at the base of either of these spires, and view the silvery Rhine meandering through the country at such a great distance below, the roofs of other churches, houses, streets, suburbs, and villas close at hand, gives as vivid a realisation of the magnitude of this stupendous effort of centuries of persistent intention and industry as can be desired.



BAMPTON-IN-THE-BUSH.

The Cathedral Church of St. Stephen, Vienna, is another superb fabric, with an open-work spire. It has also two lower spires, built of solid masonry, surmounting massive octagonal towers that rise from the roof. These have the rare feature of a corbelled-out balcony on each, with an open-work parapet or balustrade, at about two-thirds of their height. But they have nothing of the majesty of the greater spire, which rises from the ground, and glides up and up, gradually diminishing in bulk without apparent break, but increasing in richness of effect with the closer contact of traceried windows, traceried gablets, crocketted canopies, and floriated finials, till the tower ceases, and the spire begins with tier upon tier of ornamental gablets up its swiftly sloping outline, till the summit is reached and crowned with a floriated capstone, above which rises a vane and cross.



THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. STEPHEN, VIENNA.

There are two spires, too, in the quaint old Swabian town on the Danube, Ulm—not so stately, though, as this Viennese example, nor of such great altitude; but, nevertheless, of very handsomely perforated masonry.

Over and above these richly wrought spires on the Continent, there are many others built in solid masonry, of great note. Some, too, as in our own country, have disappeared. There was once a tall slender spire on the tall slender tower of the Cathedral of Laon, overlooking the fertile wine country of the department of Aisne. The town of Laon is full of steep streets, for it is built on an eminence; and there are walls and gates and ramparts around it. The spire no longer remains, but the tower still stands, pierced with long, elegant, lancet-headed lights; and just below the level on which the spire was placed are to be seen several colossal oxen standing out in full relief, and

looking across the country. Viewing them, one is told they were raised there in recognition of their long and faithful labours in conveying the necessary building materials up to the eminence where they were required.

Some spires that are not unworthy of being classed with the most famous are made of carpentry, and covered with lead. One of these is the splendid spire of Notre Dame, of Amiens. Leaving the roofs below, with many pinnacles all capped with graceful statues, it rises first in three tiers of masonry, with elegant openings of different designs on each tier, and bold gargoyles stretching out at each angle, and then, freeing itself from the stone finials and gablets, and all surroundings, shoots up clear of them all, like a mighty lance.

The Cathedral of Dijon, too, has a fine timber spire. The Cathedral of Rouen has an iron one that rises to the height of 496 feet.

Some few French examples are covered with slates. A church in Orbais presents us with a specimen of this mode. At the point of intersection of the roofs, there is a square base or body two stages in height, lightened with dormers, and this is shaped into an octagon by cutting off the four angles. Leaving pinnacles at these corners, the spire tapers lightly up to a coroneted capstone, surmounted by a tall metal cross. The body, the pyramidal portion, the pinnacles, the dormers, and four gablets introduced, are all covered with small slates, with an effect that is always allowed to be charming. In some instances the slates cease midway up a spire, as at a ring of parapet-work, and the covering is continued with lead up to the summit.

In our own country we have some beautiful spires, though they have not the delicate filigree-work to be seen in those of Southern Europe. Perhaps our climate may have something to do with the adoption of sturdier modes of building; perhaps our traditions, handed down from Stonehenge and similar monolithic works, made us unreceptive of new ideas in the way of expressing adoration in stonework: perhaps our national attention, or, strictly speaking, that of our ancestors, was turned to other matters. Nevertheless, as has been said, we have some tall spires, both in stone and timber. These will come to mind in a moment: Salisbury, Lichfield, Oxford, Norwich, Grantham, Louth, Coventry, Ashbourne, etc.

Besides these, more in the by-ways, isolated in little villages, and then again widespread in numbers in districts nearly corresponding in extent with counties —as in Northamptonshire, to wit—we may find others, if we look for them. The church of St. Mary, at Sutton, in Lincolnshire, for instance, has a tall timber spire covered with lead, rolled, and ribbed herring-bone fashion, that is really of much greater height than the short though elegant and light Early English tower on which it is placed, for the tower is about 73 feet high, while the spire is 84 feet high. There is also a tall spire at Helpringham which may be mentioned, with two rows of spire-lights in the course of its proud progression upwards. In an ancient example at Lostwithiel, in Cornwall, we may see on a small and sturdy scale an approach to the richness we have observed on the Continent. A hoary, venerable tower, with thick mellow walls, rises from the ground at the west end, strengthened with many mellow buttresses, and pierced with low, narrow lights. It diminishes as it rises stage by stage, till by a recession or canting of the angles it takes an octagonal form for a belfry. On each face of this octagonal belfry, between light columns capped with grotesque heads, are two tall lights coupled together by a gable with a quatrefoil on it, and midway across them is a broad band ornamented with a double row of quatrefoils. Then on the pyramidal part of the spire are four gabled spire-lights, and above the capstone is a weather-cock and cross. In some other cases we may notice a still nearer approximation to Continental richness in the addition of flying buttresses, perforation of parapets, statues, and sculptured ornament. Bampton-in-the-Bush, in Oxfordshire, has four statues standing on curiously arranged pedestals, four long spire-lights at its base, with their gables surmounted with ornamental crosses, and near its summit a band like a ring upon it. But it is but plain-looking, with its solid masonry and plain roll-like ribs, nevertheless. At East Harding, in Norfolk, too, there is a spire (of timber covered with lead) that recalls remembrances of them, but does not compete with the grander examples we have indicated. The Northamptonshire examples have frequently tiers of spire-lights, as at Rounds Church and Barnwell Church.



ULM CATHEDRAL.

Our south-eastern counties have many delightful little spires constructed of timber and covered with cleft oak shingles. Pleasant memories of shady lanes, embowered roads with the branches of trees meeting overhead, bridle-paths by the borders of woods, and other avenues of approach to villages of half-timbered cottages, black and white, or cream-coloured and brown, with roofs of thatch, or slates toned with lichens; inviting porches covered with roses, woodbine, clematis, or jasmine; diamond-paned lattices, and trim gardens full of old-fashioned flowers, with rows of beehives in most of them, too, come to mind at the slightest mention of them. As there is no precise rule of proportion as to height, beyond what a perception of the fitness of things in general gives, they are of various altitudes, agreeing, indeed, in this matter with the

monarchs of the sylvan scenes around. Unlike lead, which occasionally fails, and permits wet to enter and twist the timbers within till the spires become crooked—as at Chesterfield, in Derbyshire—oak shingles answer their purpose extremely well, and they certainly present a homely and rustic appearance that harmonises agreeably with the surrounding scenery. The church of St. John, at Danby, in Essex, is an interesting example. It is very slender and lofty. After passing the belfry stage it rises about sixty feet; but curiously, the lowermost portion and the summit are covered with lead, and the shingles are used only for the central portion.

Spires are monitors, for they point "in silence heavenward." May their influence be wider and deeper for this glance at their beauty and variety, and this recognition of the piety and industry of those who erected them!

S. W.

MISS HILARY'S SUITORS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WILFUL YOUNG WOMAN," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

It had been arranged that Mr. St. John was to meet his all but son-in-law at Liverpool Street on the Thursday evening, and that the two gentlemen were to make their journey down together.

Both were on the platform punctually; but the moment they met each detected in the other certain signs of nervousness.

"Got through your business all right?" said Mr. St. John, taking great pains to appear at his ease. But carefully commonplace as the question was, it did not seem to suit his companion.

"My business!" Mr. Bevis retorted, with a start and a rapid side-glance; "got through it all right? Of course I did. What made you ask?"

"Oh, nothing. Only—I should have been sorry, my dear fellow, if you had had any extra bothers, just now—just now."

"Not I," said Mr. Bevis, changing his frown for a laugh; "never felt freer from bothers in my life. That's the right state of mind for a man who's going to be married in a couple of days, isn't it?"

"Undoubtedly," agreed Mr. St. John; "and—er a very enviable condition. But," dropping his voice, "just tip the guard, Bevis, and get a compartment to ourselves. I've something to say to you."

The bridegroom-elect cast another quick glance on the elder man. Lively uneasiness was the result. Mr. St. John seemed to have expanded in stature since yesterday. His tone had the old free roll of patronage once more. Suspicions, fears, jostled upon each other's heels. What had happened? Had that man Stafford——? The moments seemed hours till they were safely locked in alone, and the train moved off from the hurly-burly of the station. Then, leaning anxiously forward to his *vis-à-vis*, he said—

"You left all right at home this morning? Your daughter——?"

"A-h!" said Mr. St. John, with a portentous sigh. "I am in the peculiar position, my dear Bevis, of having a disclosure to make at her desire, which—which——"

"Be good enough, sir, to make it quickly," Mr. Bevis begged; devoured with apprehension of he knew not what. And vastly as he would have enjoyed delivering himself of the eloquent preamble he had compiled for the occasion, Mr. St. John was overborne by his hearer's tense excitement, and declared his news in one slaughterous sentence.

"My daughter has provided me with means of releasing myself of debt to you, and she seems determined that your marriage shall be broken off."

One faint gleam of relief passed over Mr. Bevis, then his foxy complexion turned perfectly livid. He could barely stop the rage in his heart from rising to his lips. For a minute he felt suffocated with it. Then he said, huskily—

"This avalanche is rather tremendous. Perhaps you will tell me its—ostensible—why and wherefore."

Thus requested, Mr. St. John repeated with great precision what Hilary had said, winding up with a few embellishments of his own as to the mixed feelings with which he made this announcement, his regret that his daughter's affections had not been sufficiently secure to avoid the catastrophe, his counterbalancing satisfaction at being able to clear off his obligations to Mr. Bevis sooner than he had expected.

Here the young man stopped him. If anyone thought he was going to be thus nimbly cheated out of what he had resolutely set his will on getting, they were mistaken. He would fight for Hilary—his prize, his wife—tooth and nail. But time was short. He had to weigh every syllable he had just heard—to get his own rapid line of action fixed.

"Excuse me," he said abruptly, moving off to the opposite end of the carriage; "I must be allowed to think this over. We can talk it out when we reach Park Villa." And he hardly spoke another word till they arrived at that half-dismantled domicile, where Mrs. St. John was looking out for them in great trepidation.

Very romantic and unworldly, the lady took it for granted the discarded suitor would be broken-hearted, and in disjointed sentences endeavoured to convey her sympathy without at the same time condemning Hilary.

"I'm afraid you're upset," she said, "so I've sent for a little supper from the confectioner's all ready for you. Young people are apt to forget their appetites in—in affliction of this sort. I am *so* sorry about it! But I'm sorry for Hilary too. I know she does not wish to grieve anybody. Her poor dear determined face did look so pale when she started this morning."

"She is gone, then?" said her father.

"Oh, yes—by the train that runs within a mile of Mosswick Heath. Bertie saw her off. And she bade me good-bye so nicely! And I'm sure," said Mrs. St. John, beginning to cry, "she has always behaved well to me, though she had to sleep in an attic, and was put off with a cracked looking-glass and no towel-rail. I do hope, Mr. Bevis, you won't bear her any ill-will, though I've no doubt you must feel it."

"Feel it!" he echoed, taking up the cue supplied him by this simple, sentimental lady; "why, my dear madam, I shall never get over it, never! or, I ought rather to say, I never *should*, if—but I won't accept this cruel resolution of Miss St. John's. I might have something to say about no one speaking for me, no one defending me, in my absence—no one putting what I had done for her father and her family plainly before her—but I don't care to build up discord for the future. My regard for Hilary is deep enough to overlook all that has just taken place. I understand her nature. I see why she has acted thus. She"—with the least possible accent on the pronoun—"she was high-minded enough to turn restive under obligation. She has let this come between us; but I shall follow her to Mosswick. I will see her to-morrow, and efface all that, and claim her in spite of her rash flight."

Now Mr. St. John was uncommonly disgusted by Mr. Bevis's side-thrusts at himself, by the sneers at his own placid acceptance of benefits. With Mr. Milroy's cheque in his pocket, ready to pay off every sou he owed to this rather underbred young man, the spirit of his family reasserted itself.

"I pass over your innuendo in silence," he observed loftily. "If I wanted to begin recriminations I might point out that you egged me on into speculation—positively proposed it; though when it failed, you were ready enough to show up its dangers, and hint at rough measures for repaying yourself, till I consented to go out of harm's way into exile. But I want no ill blood between us, so I say nothing of this. You are practically paid," slapping the breast-pocket which contained the cheque, "so I shall only add my advice that you take no journey after my daughter to-morrow. She shall be coerced into nothing; she shall not be badgered into giving away her hand if, as her words seem to show, she sees no reasonable likelihood of happiness ensuing. I think it my duty to say this, to defend her from such a sacrifice."

This was more than Mr. Bevis could bear. "Allow me to say, sir," he exclaimed, "your parental anxiety is not well enough timed to stand for much. By your own admission you have taken every farthing of your daughter's little property, a sum *I* had intended her to keep solely for her personal use. You have no objection to her giving that away without——" (by a clever touch just travestying Mr. St. John's magnificent air) "without her seeing any reasonable likelihood of—a bare maintenance. But, sir," firing up into lover-like heat, "I think it *my* duty, my cherished duty, to defend her from that! I'll let her money go. Take it, and welcome, and justify the taking to yourself as best you can. But Hilary I will not let go. You may desert her, but my home shall protect her. She shall *not* be left to be the sport of chance and charity, and this she shall hear from me at Mosswick. Mrs. St. John, good-night."

"Oh, do, do stay and have a little supper!" urged that lady, much impressed by this high-handed outburst; but Hilary's ardent suitor was not to be allured even by oysters and greengage tart, and went off on the very high horse indeed. So Bertie came in and made short work of the eatables, favouring his mother meanwhile with a piece of his mind.

"I mayn't know all the ins and outs of it," said the lad, "but I shall crow if Bevis is sent to the right-about. He's not the sort for Hilary. I could have told her heaps of things about him, but I daren't when I was in the office. He'd always the whip-hand of me, somehow. But he was a crooked sort of chap, and as for that 'my own dearest' letter of his, Hilary no more wrote it than I did, and when he said she did he told a lie. I do hope if he goes after her he just won't get her!"

Hilary had assuredly lost no time in setting every obstacle she could between them. Great was Sylvia Dasent's amazement when the girl appeared at the Heath that Tuesday, before noon. Willing enough she was to let it be the haven Hilary asked for a little while. To the story of the broken engagement she listened, pitiful, but not surprised, for that the promised bride had shrunk strangely from her marriage she had seen well enough the day before. Silently, but deeply, she had condemned the glaring selfishness of Hilary's father, revealed unwittingly by the mere framework of the tale; and though, out of innate kindliness, she spared some sympathy to the disappointed suitor, she gave to Hilary unfaltering support in the step she had dared to take.

"I tried to honour him—I did indeed," said Hilary; "but somehow it was not possible; and as for—anything else! Sylvia, I cannot tell you all," hiding her face; "but if I had promised to give what I knew I could not, what should I have deserved? But I will do anything to make up for seeming to behave so ill to Mr. Bevis. He will forget me best, perhaps, if I go quite away. For him and for myself" (with a great pain in her sad eyes, which Sylvia intuitively knew had nothing to do with Mr. Bevis), "the farther I am away the better. So will you help me to go? Will you ask your friends who are voyaging out to New Mosswick to take me with them?"

This was startling. Miss St. John's uprearing was scarcely fitted for the Far West. But Hilary was very urgent. She was afraid of no work. She had entered on a new education in her father's house, had taught herself many things while teaching his children—more while helping his slipshod wife. Now, whatever Mrs. Reader wanted of her she would do to her very utmost—anything, everything, if only she might go. So earnest, so resolute, and withal so pleading she was that Sylvia Dasent yielded, though fast liking for the girl made her loath to part from her. Her husband, taken into consultation, thought the plan feasible. Every hour being now an object, Mrs. Dasent drove that very afternoon to Mosswick Rectory, made its mistress part *confidante* of Hilary's history, and, after brief hesitation, secured for her the post which was to take her into willing banishment.

It was a curious exit for Miss Humphreys' one-time heiress to make from the neighbourhood. Hugh Dasent—with purpose though not malice intent—began telling Norris Stafford of it that evening, when he rode to look round after his invalid. Why the curate, suddenly enriched, had not befriended the penniless girl had always puzzled the squire of Mosswick. Stafford, when poor, was liberal by dint of self-denial almost ascetic. Now, though he had not launched out personally, he had spent money freely on every part of his estate; but to Hilary St. John he had shown no generosity, either pecuniary or—recalling his scant attention to her at Mosswick—polite, but now Mr. Dasent would give him another chance. So he dilated on how and why his wife's young friend was soon to leave England, penniless except for what she hoped to earn, thinking, "It wouldn't hurt Stafford a bit to furnish her with a few hundred pounds *sub rosa* through me."

But Stafford made no use of this fine opportunity. Instead, he just lay back in his big chair, one thin hand over his eyes, so dizzy with foolish exultation over this news—"Hilary hated that marriage! Hilary was not to be that lawyer's wife!"—that he scarcely dared speak for fear of letting his irrational joy get loose.

"She's a good, generous girl," said Hugh Dasent, exasperated into prolonging Hilary's praises, "and I'm afraid that, woman-like, she will fret over the notion of having treated this Bevis badly. But, upon my honour, I believe she half hates him, so she could not act differently from what she has done, could she?"

"I suppose not," the curate answered, his tone so constrained that Hugh Dasent asked anxiously if he were over-tired.

"Not the least; but," covering his evasion by holding out a letter, "I have something else to think of to-day. I have heard from Cannes. Changes come thick upon us. Poor Legh is dead."

"Why, then, this living is yours! It belongs to Abbotswick, does it not?"

"Yes."

"And you'll present yourself?"

"No, I shall present Crawford. In fact, I've told him so already. He's a thorough good fellow. The parish could find a better nowhere."

"What! And you will go on being curate when you get strong and come back?"

"Dasent," said Norris Stafford quietly, "I don't suppose I ever shall come back."

"Man alive!" cried his friend, "why not? Netley can't get on without you, and it's a downright shame to let Abbotswick stand for ever empty."

"Netley will get on all right with Crawford," the other answered, and there was surely regret in his voice; "and we must find some means to fill Abbotswick. The place has not been a rose without thorns to me. I can tell you that much, but no more. And this is for you only. Good-night, old fellow."

CHAPTER XXIII.

BY eleven o'clock on Friday morning Mr. Bevis was at Mosswick.

Carefully prepared in dress, in manner, in every word he was going to utter, he asked and obtained an interview with Mrs. Dasent, and finding out skilfully how much Hilary had told her, laid his own account of late proceedings before her with such show of sadness, of noble disinterestedness, that his hearer, from taking a feminine one-sided view of the matter, began to fear there was very much to be said for this rejected admirer, and to feel that Hilary might indeed have grave reason to chide herself for ill-treating the luckless young lawyer.

The cloud upon the lady's fair, frank face was the index to her thoughts. Mr. Bevis marked with covert triumph the impression he was making, and ventured boldly on. If ever "nothing venture nothing have" was any man's motto, it was his that hour.

"Now, madam, as Miss St. John's best friend, will you induce her to see me? In obedience to her, I have been reticent—lukewarm, she might call it. Respect for her wishes has hitherto restrained me, but I should be mad to let it blight my chance of happiness for ever. I believe I know the cause of her withdrawal from our engagement. Now let me have the means of removing this. She ought to know what she is ruining. I do beg of you, Mrs. Dasent, to lend me your help that I may tell her, as I have never done before, that she is the first, last, only object of my affections. Surely I have a right to see her for this!"

The young man was vehement, ardent, and, above all, injured. Poor Mrs. Dasent felt irresolute. That Hilary could not love him might not be his fault. Some link there was in the girl's confession which she had not disclosed. "I cannot tell you all," she had whispered; and Sylvia, surmising much, could be sure of nothing. Did Mr. Bevis's hint signify he knew this mystery? Perhaps she ought to counsel Hilary to listen to him; in fact, so determined did he seem, she felt uncertain of her power to dismiss him till he had at any rate got part of what he came for.

So reasoned Hilary's hostess, and thought she reasoned fairly, till, looking up, she caught Mr. Bevis watching her with such cunning calculation on his face as stirred her to momentary sympathy with Hilary's aversion for him. Still, right was right. "I

will ask Miss St. John to speak with you," she said; and was leaving the room to seek her, but met at the doorway an extraordinary new arrival.

"I insist on seeing your mistress, engaged or not engaged. I know who's with her, and I've come to dear—oh, if he isn't there!" catching sight of the young lawyer, who had suddenly slunk up the farthermost corner of the room—"Come out of the dark, you good-for-nothing! No, it's no use looking at the door" —planting her robust figure in front of it—"you



"'Sylvia, I cannot tell you all.'"—*p.* 567.

catch him here, so I won't be put off," a high-pitched voice was exclaiming, and the speaker, a middle-aged female, in a startlingly smart dress, pushed past the footman and confronted Mrs. Dasent.

"A person, if you please, ma'am, who says she has particular business with you," said the servant, looking as if he suspected the stranger of lunacy.

"And so I have, ma'am," cried the new-comer. "Very particular too! It's about that Bevis, and my can't get by me. You may well be afraid to face me, and I'll make you more afraid before I've done, and that I call upon this lady to witness."

"Pray be calm," Mrs. Dasent begged of this excited visitor; "if your business is with Mr. Bevis, he shall attend to it, and I will listen if you want me, though I cannot imagine what brought you here."

"A cab, ma'am," was the prompt answer, "which is to cost me eleven shillings from Brainford and back,

return journey half fare. My poor husband was in the livery line in a large way, and taught me how to make a bargain. And now, ma'am," pulling off her gloves as if for action, "now for what I've come about. I daresay you think me crazy. Perhaps I look it, for I nearly feel it; but if ever a woman had cause to, it 's me, and that hollow-hearted young rascal that stands there with his teeth chattering with fright in his scheming head is the cause of it."

The individual thus graphically indicated certainly answered to his description. Disgusted terror stood on every line of Mr. Bevis's countenance. If a look from his small fierce eyes could have annihilated this vociferous female, then had her moments been numbered; but Mr. Bevis had a stock of talent for self-defence worthy a better man and better cause. Cloaking his discomfiture with a daring attempt at a smile—

"My dear madam!" he cried, "your coming is unlooked-for, but you and I can talk over—our little affairs more fully at my rooms than here. Rather than intrude on Mrs. Dasent, I'm quite ready to return with you to Brainford;" and he got up as if to escort her from the room; but the angry dame waved him back.

"No, sir, sit down! No more slipping out of bonds without a third party present, thank *you!*—Ma'am," turning to Sylvia Dasent, "have the goodness to hear me, and then, if you wish ever so for your friend to marry that young man, why, if you're the lady you look, you'll change your mind. Mr. Bevis, ma'am, came to my home three years ago, and why was because the house was bigger than me and my daughter wanted; but being my poor husband's last purchase, we wouldn't move out of it, but thought we'd fill up with a genteel lodger. So that snake in the grass came for the year he was in a London office, and quiet he seemed, and steady and careful; and when my Grace and him struck up a liking, I didn't see I'd any call to stop it; and when he talked of their marrying after he'd got into the berth he said was waiting for him, I gave my leave, pleased to think my dear girl was going to have a law gentleman. Well, ma'am," impressively, "Mr. Bevis goes away from London. We part most comfortable. He comes to Brainford. He runs up now and then to see my Grace. He writes nice letters to her—yes, down to last week, ma'am, I do assure you. First they were all about the time when she'd be with him. That cooled off after a few months. I looked them through last night, for I could not get a wink of sleep, with Grace sobbing under the counterpane as if her heart was broke. Then for a year or so there 's been nothing in them about getting married. Still, poor girl, she was satisfied, and I never looked to find him false. If I had, I should not have let him have my Grace's money out of the three per cents.; but when he said it was a pity for it to lay there, when he could get me double for it at his office, why, I thought so too, so he 's had all hers and mine, my poor husband's savings, to put out in the last twelve months.—Don't shuffle about in that way, Alfred Bevis, you know it 's true.—Well, ma'am, when he 's got our money and my poor girl fond of him, when I'm expecting him to fix the day any time, what does he do? Why, he creeps up to Islington; he goes to the boarding-house at the corner of our square; he watches till he sees me go out for my Thursday morning shopping; then he sneaks across to Grace and tells her—for you see, ma'am, telling is safer than black-and-white, 'specially with no third party present—that he 's made a mistake all along! that he likes her as a friend, but nothing more, and he 'll soon send back our money, and so he 'll wish her good-day. The brute!!"

Mr. Bevis instinctively jerked back.

"Ah! you may well do that; if she'd a father alive you'd have to run for it!—But, ma'am," swiftly turning to much-amazed Sylvia once more, "I made up my mind pretty quick to be after him; so down I came this morning, went to his lodgings, and got to the root of the mischief.—'Mr. Bevis is gone to Mosswick,' says the woman; 'that 's what I was to say if they sent for him from the office.'—'Where 's Mosswick?' says I.—'Why, it is the Dasents',' says she.—'Who are they?' said I.'—'Great friends of Miss St. John,' says she.—'Who is Miss St. John?' said I.—'Why,' says the woman, 'the young lady Mr. Bevis is going to marry on Saturday.'—And then, ma'am, I saw it all, and thought I should have dropped! But, ma'am, a mother can't be put down as if she was a dumb beast." (Mr. Bevis only wished she could!)—"'Is there a train to Mosswick?' says I, when I'd got my breath again.—'Not till afternoon,' says the woman, so off I went, hired a cab, and here I am. And now, if you please, I want to know if you want this perjured young falsity for your friend—and who 's going to have the punishing of him, you or me?"

Distressed, and yet for Hilary relieved, at this scene, Mrs. Dasent essayed to calm poor furious Mrs. Allen.

"You have been most badly used; but, indeed, I have never forwarded Miss St. John's engagement, and I can assuredly promise it will never be carried out; for Mr. Bevis," turning to him with the scorn she felt——

But he interrupted her—got up and came near, speaking low and fast. As a spider fast spins out silken cords to mend its damaged web, so his fertile craft tried to turn this disaster into capital.

"Mrs. Dasent," he said, "I can bring yonder woman to reason presently." ("Yonder woman," having quick ears, gave a snort of defiance.) "I don't deny what she tells you, but I do deny that it weakens my claim on Miss St. John. For her sake I have acted wrongly. For her sake—that her home might not be infested by poverty, I even borrowed these Allens' money"—("These Allens'!" cried the listener indignantly. "Oh, my!")—"knowing I could repay it directly. Or"—quickly correcting himself—"soon, now that I was made partner. Therefore, I demand to make this explanation to her myself. She ought to hear from me alone of the—I admit—blameable course I took through my new, my unconquerable, my—*you* know all her circumstances, Mrs. Dasent—my disinterested devotion——"

Here the door again opened, and brought the special pleading to a full stop. How, we must go back a couple of hours to explain.

When Mr. Stafford went down to his breakfast that

Friday morning—the first time he had done so for five weeks—the sun was shining so cheerily and Tip wagging his tail so suggestively that the dog's insinuation was as plain as words could have put it.

"Fine day for a walk? So it is, Tip. You and I will have one presently;" and much to his old housekeeper's satisfaction, the two soon sallied forth on the warm side of the avenue.

Something was making Norris Stafford look more himself again. Hilary was happier. His thoughts played thankfully around that point. For his own part——? What had to be must be. Some distant day, perhaps even some other life, all might be clear to her; so he must wait. It was for her he wanted happiness the most. Uneasiness crossed him as he remembered what Hugh Dasent had said of her troubling about that man whom—thank God!—she could not bring herself to marry. But just as he was pursuing this thread into tormenting himself, Tip pointed cleverly at an object across the drive. The object rose—Miss Gertrude Cavenham—and bore down on the convalescent with outstretched hands.

"Better? Out? Well? Oh, how can I express how delighted I am! May I pack up my sketching things and stroll with you? Dear Mr. Stafford, this is like old times."

There had been no old times when they two had strolled together, and Norris Stafford was far from wanting the lady how. This, however, he could not say, but, being nearer Abbotswick than the Rectory, he suddenly determined to take refuge in the former house; then, perhaps, his companion would leave him. No such thing. Though Miss Cavenham had not progressed as she desired on her matrimonial chase, here was a chance of attracting her invalid when he might be more impressionable, perhaps, to tender influences, and the chance should not be neglected.

"May I go just as far as Abbotswick too?" she asked sweetly. "I wonder if—if you would take the help of my arm? Papa does often. No? Proud man! But *I'm* proud too—to see you so well after these sad weeks. I've said I came to sketch ever so often, but," with elaborate confusion, "it really was because I wanted so to know how you were getting on!" and thus she chatted amiably till Abbotswick was reached, where, as Mr. Stafford ungratefully showed no intention of asking her in, the lady petitioned for a peep round the garden: "The sweetest old place! Oh, how I should delight in having such a Paradise!" she exclaimed, getting desperately plain-spoken, as, after wandering round, her curate began to look tired, and had not yet uttered one such syllable as she angled for.

"Let us stop a little while, Mr. Stafford, here in this pretty arbour. All of yew, I declare! Do sit down. You can rest leaning there? Then I will take this pretty rustic bench."

And she did, much closer to him than Mr. Stafford desired, and looked up at him, and looked away, and ogled and flirted in such a business-like manner that at length he perceived her design with much affright, and became excessively anxious to get away.

"Tip," he said, stooping to pat the little animal fidgeting about at his feet, "you think we must be moving on, don't you? Come along, then!"

"Oh, not just yet," begged Miss Cavenham; "naughty doggie! don't take us away. Look yonder"—all the curate's friends knew his quadruped's tastes—"cats, Tip, cats!"

The little diversion the lady thus started ended in a remarkable manner. Off went Tip among the currant-bushes after a tortoiseshell enemy. With barks and scuffles and miawings many, puss escaped to the path, had a wild race in the open, and then took refuge in the yew arbour itself, hotly pursued by Tip, who, yelping and sneezing, worked his way after her through the close-cut greenery, kicking out gravel and leaves and all sorts of *débris* as he burrowed on.

"Bad little animal!" said Miss Cavenham, "look how untidy you're making everything, my dress included."

And the curate had to shake from her skirt a goodly powdering of dust, and a crumpled piece of paper just unearthed. This last he was throwing aside, when a word upon it caught his eye. With most perplexed look he smoothed it out, examined, read it, then gave a start of astonishment.

"April 27, 188-.

DEAR STAFFORD,—With this I send the copy you requested.—Truly yours, "R. MILROY."

"Treasure trove?" questioned Miss Cavenham, gently reminding the curate of her presence, which through two minutes of dead silence he seemed to have forgotten.

"No—yes—I hardly know," he said, "but it's something I must see after. Excuse me—pray rest here as long as you like—but I must say good-morning."

He had no more attention for her than if she had been a block. Miss Cavenham prepared to depart affronted. (It was the last time these two met for many a day. The General's gout demanded a visit to Bath. There Miss Gertrude victoriously captured a half-pay colonel, and returned to Steeple Forncett no more.) Hurriedly lifting his hat, Mr. Stafford went down a side-path after a young gardener, whom having found—

"Harry, can you remember so far back as last spring twelve-months?" said he.

"Yes, sir, some things. It was main showery, and the weeds was wuss than this year."

"Do you recollect April the 27th?"

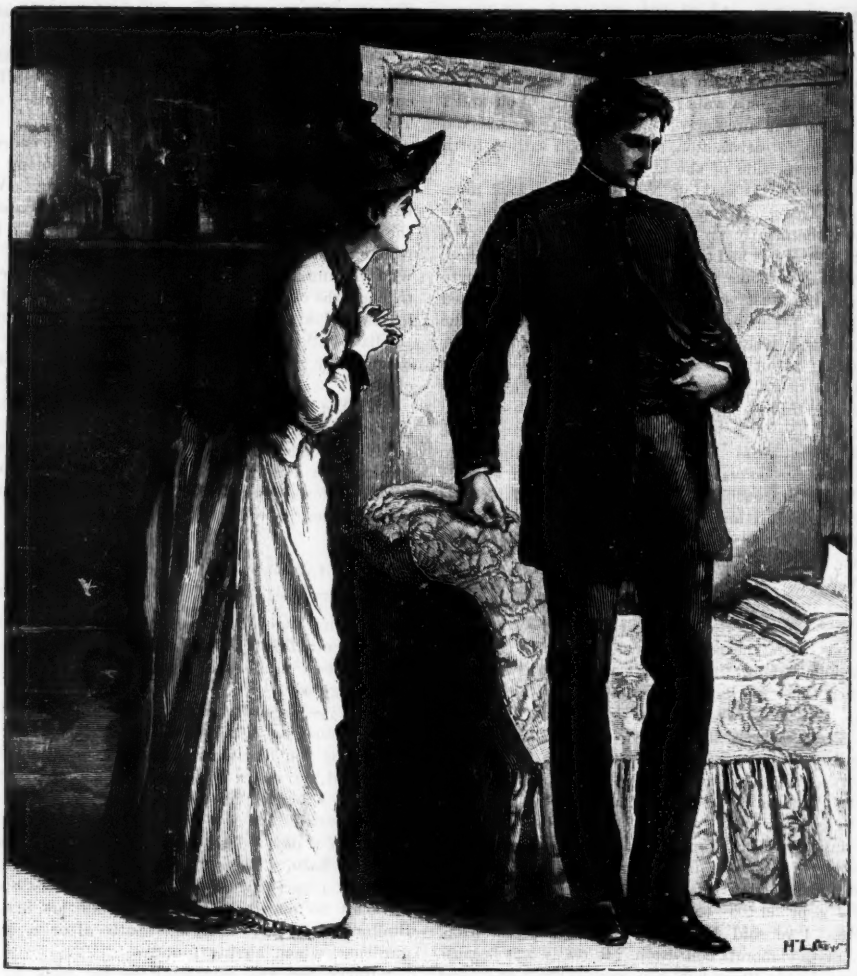
"Why, yes, sir," grinning, "that's chalked up on the stove. 'T was the day Mr. Bell went to church along of Miss Joyce, and you went out by train at noontime, and I stopped to look after the place till five."

"Right. Did any stranger come to this garden on that day?"

"Yes," Harry answered; "a young chap that asked as if you was at home, sir."

"A lad? Younger than you?" ("Master St. John brought this for you, sir," his housekeeper had said that evening, giving him what had been left.)

"Why, no, sir, it were a gent with whiskers, sandy ones. And he said he come from Mr. Milroy's. I asked him 'cause I thought he might be one o' them town folk sidlin' round after the flowers."



"'I did not know—I can—never thank you——'"—*p.* 575.

"Was he here long?"

"Well, sir, it were a choppy sort of day, windy and showery, so he sheltered hisself a bit in yon arbour, and 'mused himself with readin' of a letter. I see him take it out and undo it, for I kep' an eye on him from the glass-house yonder, though he couldn't tell that, for, thinks I, 'You may take a fancy to some of them scillas for your buttonhole; I caught you a-looking at 'em.'"

"You are positive it was not Miss St. John's brother?"

"Certain sure, sir. I know him well, and I fare to think I know this young master too. I believe he come over here somewhere about the time the old mistress died."

Plunged in meditation, the curate stood still a minute. Then a dark flush mounted his face. His fingers involuntarily clenched themselves. "If so—the scoundrel!" he muttered. Then aloud—

"Is there a horse ready to be used?"

"Yes, sir."

"Order it directly; I want to be driven to Brainford."

He was at work for Hilary. He might lift a shadow of regret from her past. He forgot his weakness and set aside Bell's expostulations.

"Drive me yourself, if you like, Bell. But go I must. Round to the Rectory for a moment first."

In half an hour he was in the town.

There, by good hap, the first acquaintance he met

was Bertie St. John. Instantly the cart was pulled up, and the curate was out by the boy's side.

"When," very distinctly, with a firm hand on his shoulder, "you took a letter, a large one in a blue envelope, to my house at Netley, on the twenty-seventh of April last year, who gave it to you to bring?"

Bertie's heart sank into his shoes; somehow he had always smelt mischief in that exploit.

"Mr.—Milroy, sir," he stammered.

"And you brought it to me direct?"

"I—brought it, sir," looking here, there, and everywhere, rather than meet the curate's direct gaze.

"I know you did, *but*—had it left your hands first? The truth, my boy, please." And Bertie, no longer fearing his office tyrant, wisely made a clean breast of the transaction. Mr. Stafford listened grimly.

"Now jump into the cart, and come with me to Mr. Milroy."

Five minutes told the lawyer their errand. At first the infamy it betrayed appeared incredible. Then, when the discovered note and the long envelope the curate brought had been examined closely—

"This seal is the office one, so I can't swear to that," said Mr. Milroy: "unluckily, as I remember, my private stamp was mislaid that day. The address is uncommonly near my writing, but I can take an oath it's *not* my own."

"Mr. Bevis could copy anything—I've seen him do it," put in Bertie naïvely.

"The scamp! Well might that poor girl drag herself from his clutches," said Mr. Milroy below his breath. Then ringing the bell which summoned the office-keeper—

"Harris, ask Mr. Bevis to step up here."

"Mr. Bevis has not been to-day at all, sir."

"Go down to his lodgings and ask him to come."

The answer to this message, impatiently awaited, was only the one served out to Mrs. Allen. "Mr. Bevis had gone to Mosswick on important business."

"I think," said Mr. Milroy, "I shall go there on important business too. Harris, do you recollect April the twenty-seventh, last year? I left the office early, and——"

"I know, sir, and you bid young Mr. St. John take a letter to Mr. Stafford just as you went. I noticed it because I heard you say 'at once,' and I knew—begging your pardon, Mr. Herbert—he did not do that, for my boy, who played football with the Grammar-School team, said he helped to beat them that last match."

"Did you see anything of Mr. Bevis that afternoon?"

"Yes, sir, he came in after time, as I was locking up, and went to his room for a bit. I thought he was not well, but he snapped at me when I said so. He said something about coming to write a letter. The taper on his table was smoking when I went up to see everything was left right."

"That will do," said Mr. Milroy.—"Herbert St. John, whatever new employer you get with, obey him, my lad, and him only, then you may keep your fingers out of such mischief as you've had them in this time.—Mr. Stafford, you get home as fast as you can; this is a pull for you. I'll come round your way to lunch, but first I'll go and pick a bone with—my partner!"

And that took the lawyer to the library at Mosswick Heath just as Mr. Bevis was hedging Mrs. Dasent about with his string of specious protestations.

With brief greeting, and a whispered "Wait a minute," to the lady of the house, Mr. Milroy went straight up to the young man, confronted him with the sheet of paper Tip had brought to light, and with crushing sternness spoke out his accusation clearly.

"A communication was sent by me," he said, "to Mr. Stafford on April the twenty-seventh of last year. You intercepted its direct carriage, you opened and read that communication in the yew arbour at Abbotswick; this," tapping the note, "you dropped unnoticed from the document; swept aside by the wind, it only came to light this day. I know every step of the matter. We all understand the dastardly use you made of the information thus gained. From this minute all connection ends between us, Alfred Bevis. Now, go!"

The game was over! The young man got up, his face as grey as ashes, and without a word left the room.

Mrs. Allen, staying only to discover that her best chance of getting back her money lay in putting in instant claim on part of the cheque yet uncashed by Mr. St. John, rumbled quickly off in her cab, and before long Mr. Milroy followed, leaving only a message for Hilary.

"Bid her forget that rascal like a bad dream. I'll make a point of seeing her in a few days, and letting her into the secret of all his trickery. What?" as Sylvia stopped him to tell their new project, "she's off to New Mosswick, is she? When?"

"Oh, not till next month."

"Bravo! that's a capital idea—capital!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

A VERY incubus was lifted from Hilary by Sylvia's account of that stormy interview. Complete comprehension of her late suitor's unworthiness was yet withheld, but enough was revealed to show that her distrust of him throughout had been a safe instinct, and to free her conscience fully from self-reproach on his score.

"Forget his very name, as Mr. Milroy tells you," Sylvia said, and willingly enough she let herself obey, her heart filled with the exultation of release, though with that was linked a sadness, a bitter-sweet, which not even Sylvia must ever know of.

She was very diligent through the next few days, putting her worldly gear in order for her voyage, so full of desire to meet Mrs. Reader's every want and wish, that the Rector's wife grew more than reconciled to taking her, though she candidly admitted she had felt at first reluctance to do so, for a rough-and-ready lass, daughter to one of the Dasents' tenants, had just volunteered for the post, and had now to be rejected.

A note from Park Villa, answering one in which

she had told her father her new prospects, reached Hilary on her birthday. The contents were curious. "She was to rejoice that the St. Johns were spared a disgraceful alliance, and forgiven for having so nearly brought this upon her family. Without pretence of compunction," her parent said, "he was making use of her trifling fortune, considering it simply his other children's due, as his lack of prosperity dated entirely to his eldest daughter's mismanagement. The vulgar person called Allen she might like to know was pecuniarily recouped. The other individual—he would not violate good taste by writing his name—had in the curtest manner wound up his affairs and quitted Brainford." (Where, we may here say, he has not since been seen or heard of.) Then Mr. St. John was kind enough to give his daughter his blessing and to express a hope for her happiness in a new sphere.

Time was fleeting towards her departure for this. Gladly would Hilary have seen it hastened. Hardly an hour went by at Mosswick without her hearing of Norris Stafford, and in such-wise that her love, unfettered now though secret, grew apace. Badly she wanted to get quite away; exceeding restlessness lengthening every day.

Mrs. Dasent, more and more attached to her, deplored to her husband that they could not keep her with their children rather than give her up to the Readers, but Mr. Dasent, though fully sharing his wife's regard for their guest, set that idea aside.

"Absence is better for her," he said; "we are too near the region of what might have been for her to have settled. I expect she will get away without even looking at her old home again."

That was not to be. Mr. Milroy, of whom nothing had been heard since the Friday morning, now wrote asking Hilary for a meeting shortly; he would suggest Saturday noon, one week from what so narrowly missed being the blackest day in her life. Being of age, she could now give a legal receipt for the sum he had advanced. He had to be at Abbotswick on the day named, and would be personally obliged if she would see him there: perhaps Mrs. Dasent and her husband would be with her.

In her ignorance of business, Hilary had forgotten that such a trifle as a receipt was needed. Now she would have better liked simply to sign and send it by post. To exact the form of her in scenes it was a pang to revisit seemed unlike Mr. Milroy; but, for his great kindness a few days back, he must not be refused, so the morning of Saturday found them on their way as the lawyer asked.

It was a still early autumn day, the earth flooded with summer's farewell sunshine, the grass by the roadsides all a maze of dewdrops captured in cobwebs, the air filled with faint scent of fruits and ripened grain. Troops of birds busy among trees and hedges shook showers of crimson berries to the ground as they rustled among the branches, while leaves of elm and beech, and thick festoons of wayside climbers, seemed painted with fresh tints from hour to hour. Never had Netley looked brighter and fairer; Hilary's eyes were filled with such yearning tenderness for the old spot as they drew near that her companions almost resented the tax thus laid upon the girl who had already suffered long and much.

But Mr. Milroy, when he cheerfully met them in the hall, hardly seemed to think excuse worth offering.

"Your coming spares me time and steps," he said, shaking hands all round.—"No, you can speak to Miss St. John presently, Mrs. Bell" (nodding away Joyce, who was following her young lady, deeply anxious to hear "if she was going foreign directly, and did she know who the place was let to? The horses were up from grass, Daphne and all, fit for somebody"). —"I've a little something to mention at once," the lawyer went on, leading them to the drawing-room, still just as she had left it two years since.

"I am so very sorry I forgot it," Hilary began.

"Forgot——? What?" said the lawyer. Then breaking into a laugh, "Oh, oh! the receipt! Miss Hilary, excuse me, that was only a small matter. Please sit down. I really wanted you here for this." He took from the table something Hilary had seen before—"Aunt Phil's letter to Mr. Stafford," she cried.

"Right: which he received with his legacy, which at his request I will now read to you."

Then, reassuring her with a kindly nod, he began—

"MY DEAR SIR,—We have had battles in plenty since you have had charge of Netley, but having studied you pretty closely, I have come to the conclusion you are an honest man. As such I now propose to treat you, and acquaint you with a plan which I shall die happier for believing you will carry out. My young kinswoman Hilary St. John is looked on as my heiress. She looks upon herself as such. This may be my own fault; but it makes the position at times offensive to me, and bad for her. I have suffered from having been my own mistress from childhood, and would avoid my own shortcomings for Hilary, whom I consider, on the whole, the best girl in the world, though a shade '*spoiled*.' By my scheme she is to have a little wholesome discipline; I expect it will weed out her friends from her flatterers, and teach her a few lessons she might never learn otherwise. Here it is:—I bequeath you all my property to hold for two years from the date of my burial." (Inarticulate sounds of surprise at this from his three hearers, but the lawyer read on.) "Do what you choose with it for that time. Build up the church; ferret over my estate; turn everything topsy-turvy; do as you like. Save every penny for your own pocket, or for that mother of yours for whom you've pinched yourself these ten years. You're absolutely free to deal with the income of Abbotswick for the time stated. That is my bribe for the conditions that follow. At the two years' end I desire you to return the property intact to Hilary St. John. *How*, you and Milroy must settle; only see that on that date she has it, and till that date no living person besides yourself and Milroy knows of this disposition of my property. I only add that, should you refuse to act under this will, all I have would go to my heir-at-law, a distant relative with a million

of his own, and a bad reputation. From him Hilary would never get a farthing. But you won't refuse! —Trustfully yours, "PHILIPPA HUMPHREYS."

"There!" said Mr. Milroy; "a copy of the deed which gives you all back was what a certain rascal stole a sight of, and set him to entrap you. Here's the deed itself. What do you say to that, Miss Hilary?"

She looked up at first speechless, her eyes shining through lustrous drops then. "Oh, Aunt Phil was not angry with me after all!" she cried. "But—but I won't take it away from Mr. Stafford!"

* * * * * *

She could not tell them why, nor advance one argument that was not speedily demolished. Perforce she was reinstated. Mr. Milroy fetched the old servants in to welcome back Miss Hilary the heiress. They were all so joyful in their astonishment, so good to her, she should have glowed with nothing but delight. But something was aching under all. Never had Hilary felt so unworthy, so unready to be rich and to bear rule as now; and as those with her, their first astonishment over, talked of the curate's stewardship, how on himself he had spent none of Aunt Philippa's gold, but laid all out so that Netley and she should be the richer—even the little church upon the marsh he had saved enough modestly to endow—as they spoke of how he had endured the misunderstanding of many as to his ousting the rightful owner, how he had gone patiently on, true to his single-hearted purpose, Hilary felt getting very desperate and very miserable. Of course this deepened his dislike to her. He would resent her offering anything; and yet he must be benefited, spite of himself.

"Will you tell Mr. Stafford?" she began, nervously, to the lawyer; but he stopped her.

"My dear Miss St. John, I think you should tell him anything yourself. Stafford was not up to being here to-day. He has been too ill to stand such a confabulation. But he has done you no common service, and you yourself ought to acknowledge it."

"Directly too," put in Mr. Dasent; "he leaves Netley in an hour. Now I see why he's bent on getting away for good. If you speak to him at all, Miss St. John, it must be now."

Hilary straightened herself up. "Then," she said to Mr. Milroy, "we will go, if you please."

* * * * * *

Thanks are Stafford's due, if any man ever earned them," said Hugh Dasent to his wife, watching the pair down the avenue; "but I'm afraid Hilary won't find hers easy to utter. Stafford and she never took to each other, did they?"

Mrs. Dasent must have been in a brown study, for she answered nothing!

* * * * * *

"Miss St. John felt a mere message would be insufficient, so she comes to bear her own gratitude, Stafford," said Mr. Milroy, walking Hilary unceremoniously into the curate's sitting-room.

Norris Stafford, with the reaction from long overstrain upon him, got up slowly from his sofa. Hilary gave him one frightened glance, then all but cried out. He looked ill, careworn, forty! By no effort could either of them find a word for the other. Their embarrassment affected Mr. Milroy. "Have it out best alone," thought he. "What, Tip, clever doggie! shall you and I go and find some more cats?" he exclaimed, and with the willing terrier disappeared up the garden.

"I did not know," began Hilary, terribly tremulous, her heart beating in her bosom like some tremendous bell, "what you had been doing for me till—just now. I can—never thank you."

"Pray don't attempt it," Mr. Stafford answered; "I hoped—to have left—and—spared you the effort."

Now that was harsh. Good he was, but not *kind*—to her! Hilary began to feel as if she were choking, but he must bear away some better remembrance of her than this.

"I wanted to say," she went on, "that you're to have some of Aunt Phil's money yet: Mr. Milroy shall send some after you."

To pay him with! Wages from her!!

"I will not have it," he said, so positive he sounded cruel.

"Then," she said, tears getting into her beseeching voice, "I shall know you are angry with me still, and won't forget that I used to be so cross and rude and very—very nasty to you."

Then two great sobs came fast. At that the lover got the better of the man.

"Don't, child, *don't!*" he said, coming nearer.

His voice betrayed him. Hilary gave one swift upward glance. That told her everything.

"Oh, Norris! is it so?" she cried, and the next moment was weeping for very joy upon his breast.

* * * * * *

So Mrs. Reader had to give Hilary up after all, and content herself with the useful substitute from Holly Farm; but she has had a succession of lady helps from the Old Country, for they marry off fast in New Mosswick, and the post is popular. The St. Johns stop in New South Wales. The boys earn well, the girls thrive there, becoming notable young managers. Their mother will not leave them, so her husband, kept comfortable without exertion of his own, receiving, moreover, regular remittances from England, resigns himself to live there. "For," as he tells his friends, "he is not sure he should get on with his son-in-law if he did return!"

It is five years since that wonderful day which launched such surprise upon the neighbourhood, and the two principal parties are quite used to being happy together now. The Crawfords flourish at the Rectory. Netley-on-the-Marsh is Norris Stafford's parish. Tip lives on in clover, and carries his age bravely.

All Hilary's domains thrive, even in these days of rural grumbling, under her generous hand and her husband's wise, helping care. And Sylvia Dasent *will* call Abbotswick—Arcadia!

THE END.

A LILLIPUTIAN COMMUNITY.

"SHUT up those dreary books and reports, and come and see the human material they treat of. A pinch of practice, in my opinion, outweighs a ton of theory."

Not very reluctantly, I piled my heavy Blue-books and Poor Law Reports together, and sallied forth with my friend into the bright, crisp autumn air.

"I am going to take you to the Chase Farm Schools at Enfield. You will have a lovely drive through what in olden days was the Royal Chase, where the great Queen Bess had her hunting lodge."

"In our practical days famed for its Royal Small Arms Factory and its palatial pauper schools."

"Now, hold hard; withdraw your adjectives. Not 'palatial,' and certainly not 'pauper.' I won't hear my dear children called 'paupers'—that is a *sine quâ non*, if you wish to raise the disinherited classes to self-reliance. Are these poor little atoms of humanity responsible for their own helpless condition? Is it their fault that they have sprung up in a hot-bed of misery, cut off from intimate acquaintance with even fresh air and clean water? Why, in addition to all these drawbacks, should they be made into a race of pariahs, hall-marked 'paupers' from their cradles?"

"The world doesn't generally credit guardians with such tender feelings."

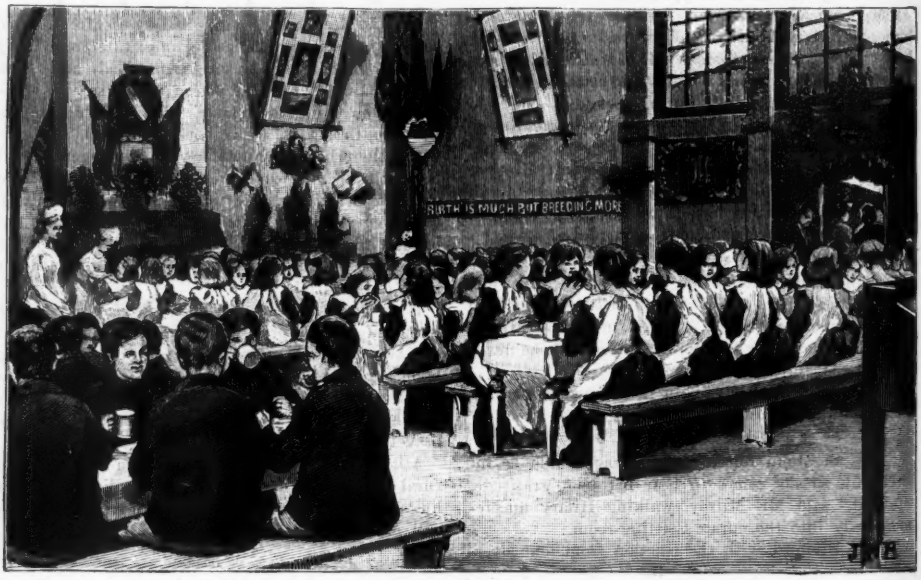
"It is not a question of anything but common-sense, and must be judged by results. We won't allow these children to be called 'paupers,' nor the school a workhouse school; and, I think, when you have seen all I have to show, you will agree that, as far as we are concerned, the 'Bumbles,' 'Tilly Slowboys,' and 'Oliver Twists' are creatures of the past."

It was not long before we reached the schools, pleasantly situated on the crest of a hill, with plenty of open air and space all round.

"Now, you can't call that 'palatial,'" said my friend, as we drove through a prettily laid-out shrubbery, up to the large new yellow-brick buildings, plain and substantial, built on what is called the pavilion system—a centre and three surrounding wings.

"I withdraw the word 'palatial.' The elevation does your architect credit; for, though quite unadorned, it is very attractive. It must have been pretty expensive."

"The total cost, inclusive of every item, was £60,750, which is entirely covered by a rate of 1½d. in the pound for thirty years. At present there are about five hundred children in training, but there is room for twice the number. When you have to meet the absolute requirements of many hundred children, you must have space and air. Cheap and nasty won't do when human lives are at stake; and more than human lives—souls and minds to be trained and elevated. Material surroundings influence everyone, whatever



IN THE HALL.



"GROUPS OF BRIGHT-LOOKING GIRLS."

philosophers may say; and if you wish to elevate a child coming from a class enfeebled for generations by bad air, bad food, and evil habits, contracted in crowded dens amid squalid surroundings, you must plunge that child at once into a life the very antipodes to that in which it has vegetated. It has been used to dirt and disorder of every kind. First, it must be made clean and tidy; then its mind must be developed to take an interest in work and a pride in doing well and excelling. Trained industry and a spirit of self-reliance are the only safeguards against the improvident habits which make our poorest class so dependent on the State."

The hall, which we just then entered, was airy and clean as hands could make it, tinted with a pleasant shade of French grey, which contrasted nicely with a deep chocolate-coloured dado, surmounted by a simple stencilled pattern. Wending our way down a spacious corridor, we passed the open door of the matron's store-room, which, fitted up with racks and shelves, seemed to contain more miscellaneous articles than any American store. At that moment the tables were laden with very tempting-looking cakes, which spruce, natty maidens were rapidly cutting up for the children's festivity, as this was the great occasion of the year—the annual prize-giving.

After crossing one or two open courts, we reached a spacious asphalted playground. Groups of bright-looking girls, in tasty brown cotton frocks and snowy pinafores, were gathered at one end, evidently in a high state of expectation as to the coming event; while a squad of boys were drawn up in admiration round the school band, whose energetic playing did much credit to their teacher.

"We spare no pains on our band," said my enthusiastic friend. "Hark what justice they are doing to the march which our Chairman, Mr. Latham, has composed specially for this occasion."

No one could doubt of the enjoyment and pride felt by the zealous little musicians, who looked almost military in their tasteful uniform of blue lined with red.

The company having by this time assembled, the drill-sergeant showed off the acquirements of his pupils, both boys and girls, who performed sundry evolutions, marching and deploying with an accuracy many Volunteer colonels might have envied. To this succeeded musical drill, in which both boys and girls displayed great agility and precision. Headed by the band playing merrily, all marched off to the fine lofty hall, over sixty feet in length, which was gay with banners, mottoes, and wreaths of flowers in honour of the day. A hecatomb of prizes having been awarded, to the evident delight of the recipients, the new swimming-bath became the next object of attention.

This bath, fifty feet by thirty, is filled with tepid water, and used on alternate days by boys and girls. More than anything, it seems to have given them a taste for an element of which the poor are generally rather shy.

Dressed in suitable blue serge swimming dresses, the girls swam bravely round and round the bath, and hotly contested the races, emerging dripping and radiant from the water. The boys in their turn exhibited their proficiency, disporting themselves like young Tritons, and eagerly diving after the small coin thrown into the tank by the amused visitors.

During this time the hall had been cleared and arranged for tea, and our last glimpse of the children was seeing them enjoying an extra-good supper of tea and cake in honour of the occasion.

A survey of the airy, clean dormitories, bath-rooms, lavatories, and cheerful class-rooms adorned with modern improved maps and coloured pictures, was enough to show how the welfare of the "children of the State" was considered.

Systems and arrangements, however excellent, are but the dry bones; it is the human element which gives the breath of life; and truly fortunate are the guardians in their chief superintendents, Mr. and Mrs. Tye, who have been associated with the school for more than twenty years. Both are equally proud of the successes of their large family, whose eventual career they follow with the most loving solicitude.

Such an establishment is a little world in itself, and the accumulated experience of years, as told by Mrs. Tye, is far more interesting than any volume of fiction.

The most encouraging feature of the whole is that not only are the children, as it were, re-created, fashioned into active, sensible, intelligent beings, but that they in many cases have exercised such an influence on their parents that they have dragged them out of the workhouse, aroused in their despondent minds a longing for independence, and raised the whole family from helpless pauperism into active and successful exertion. Time and space exclude the interesting details given of both boys and girls; but one we cannot pass over in silence.

During one of the recent Exhibitions at Kensington, a handsome, well-dressed man called on Mr. Tye, and asked to be allowed to see over the newly built schools.

"What an improvement on the old schools! Why, one could touch the ceilings there without much trouble. These are splendid!" said the visitor.

"When did you see our old schools, sir?"

"Why, Mr. Tye, have you forgotten me? I am Frank Warren."

Turning over the tablets of his memory, Mr. Tye recalled two bright, active little boys, children of a once flourishing man, who had been put under his care in very melancholy circumstances.

"Remember you?—certainly I do. Need I say how delighted I am to see that life prospers with you? How is your brother Harry?"

"Well and flourishing. We both work together at the same business. I got on, and married my master's daughter; so I could give Harry a hand up. Now we own fishing-smacks of our own, and are doing famously. I was chosen one of the Commissioners to the Exhibition, and have much enjoyed the kindness I have met. The Prince of Wales asked us to luncheon at Marlborough House, and to-night we dine with the Lord Mayor."

"And your father?" asked Mr. Tye, hesitatingly.

"Thank God! sir, he has given up that terrible drink which brought us all to ruin, and lives happily and comfortably with Harry and his wife."

Other boys have risen; girls have won their places in the world through their loving devotion to their employers. One has attained distinction by her great intellectual gifts, and not long since earned two hundred pounds a year as a lecturer in the United States.

WILD ROSES.

WILD roses, delicate and fair,
Born of the sunshine and sweet air,
On tangled hedgerows blossoming,
When happy birds are on the wing,
And skies are blue, and days are long,
Are they not worthy of a song?

Ah, yes! if perfect words could paint
Their colours, and recall the faint
Sweet fragrance of the summer noon,
And move in music to a tune
Filled with the joy of golden days,
And glow and stir of leafy ways!

A blissful morn comes back to me,
From that dear time when Marjory—
One year ago—was by my side!
And we had wandered far and wide,
And stripped the lanes through which we passed
Till by a stile we paused at last.

"Here rest a moment! sister mine,
And round your brow my hands shall twine
A wreath of roses gleaming bright
With fairy petals, pink and white,
Warmed by the sun, and wet with dew—"
"But none," she said, "so sweet as you!"

Wild roses, gathered once by her,
Pure, fragrant, delicate, and fair,
Plucked in the morning, and at noon—
So brief is beauty—faded soon!
Yet in my heart, as bright and gay—
So long is love—they bloom to-day!

J. R. EASTWOOD.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

BY TRYON EDWARDS, D.D.



ALL understand that the English language derives its phraseology, more or less, from other languages, but few probably are aware how large a proportion of its words are of Anglo-Saxon origin. According to the *Edinburgh Review*, however, which supposes the English language has some forty thousand words, including radicals and derivatives, about five-sixths of all these words are of Anglo-Saxon origin. And according to Trench, if the English language were divided into a hundred parts, sixty would be Anglo-Saxon, thirty of Latin origin (including the Latin words that have come to us through the French), and five would be Greek, leaving but about five to be divided between other languages from which we have adopted isolated words.

The Lord's Prayer, for example, consists of sixty words, and of these only six (trespasses, trespass, temptation, deliver, power, and glory) are of Latin origin, and the place of most, if not all of these, could easily be supplied by words of Saxon origin. And of forty-three words in the first three verses of the twenty-third Psalm, only three (pasture, comfort, and restoreth or convert) are from the Latin, and for every one of these it would be easy to substitute an equally expressive word from the Saxon. And in five verses in Genesis, out of a hundred and thirty words, all but five are of Saxon origin; and in five verses from the Gospel of St. John, out of seventy-two words, all but two are Saxon. The Anglo-Saxon is not so much one element of the English language, as its very foundation or basis. Try to compose a sentence of but ten words of only Latin derivation, and it will be found difficult, if not impossible, to do it; while, on the other hand, if we except the topics of theology, philosophy, etc., whole pages might be written on almost any subject, especially on matters pertaining to common everyday life, every word of which might be of Saxon origin, without the least appearance of awkwardness or stiffness in the expression.

In fourteen pages taken from Shakespeare, Milton, Cowley, Thomson, Addison, Spenser, Locke, Pope, Young, Swift, Robertson, Hume, Gibbon, and Johnson, having in all 1,492 words, all but 296, says the *Edinburgh Review*, are Saxon, the proportion in some of the extracts being over two-thirds, and in others more than nine-tenths from the Saxon. Taking these extracts as a fair test, the Saxon would constitute about four-fifths of the English language.

As to the relative proportion and importance of the Norman and Saxon elements in the English, it is noticeable that almost all the words of dignity, state, honour, and pre-eminence (with one remarkable exception), come from the Norman as the conquering race. Such are the words sovereign, sceptre, throne, royalty, homage, prince, duke, count, treasurer, chancellor, palace, castle, hall, dome, and a multitude of others. The remarkable exception is the word "King," showing that the chieftain of the conquering race came in, not by a new title, and as overthrowing a former dynasty, but as claiming to be in the rightful line of succession, and so conciliating the subject people.

Then again, what someone has called "the statelier superstructure of the language," articles of luxury, words that have to do with the chase, with chivalry, with personal adornment, etc., are of Norman origin throughout, while the great features of nature—the sun, moon, stars, earth, water, fire—and such social relations as those of father, mother, husband, wife, son, daughter, etc., are Saxon. The palace and castle may have come from the Norman, but to the Saxon we owe the familiar and dearer names of house, home, roof, hearth, etc.

So again the instruments for cultivating the earth and securing its products, the plough, sickle, flail, spade, etc., are from the Saxon; as also such words as wheat, rye, oats, barley, and the names of most domestic animals. And it marks the relation between the Norman the conqueror, and the Saxon the conquered, that the names of most animals, while alive, are Saxon; but when killed and dressed, and prepared for food, they become Norman; for the Saxon had the charge and labour of raising, tending, and feeding them, but only that they might be killed and appear as food on the table of his Norman lord.

Words change, too, greatly, in their meaning with the progress of time. One of the early poets speaks of Christ as the *silly* babe of Bethlehem; for silly then meant *innocent*. And Dr. Barrow says we ought to cherish the strongest *resentment* towards God; for sentiment then meant *love*, and as God cherishes the strongest sentiment or love to us, we ought to cherish the strongest re-sentiment or return of love to Him. And Paul, in the old writers, is called a *knave* of Christ, for the word knave then meant *servant*. And the word *prevent*, which originally signified to go before, now means to hinder, or keep one from doing; for as one going before another (through a door, for example) might be in the way, and so keep the other from going out,

the word has now just the reverse of its original sense or meaning. And as a singular thing, it is said that "Punch and Judy," which now furnish amusement for children, were originally two tragic plays, to show off the fearful wickedness of Pontius Pilate, who has thus become Punch, and of Judas Iscariot, who has now become Judy.

We might go on for pages with these sketches of the sources and changes in the history of language, but if they may lead the reader to the study of such works as those of Trench, and others, from whom so many of these facts and statements are taken, what has been written may not only be amusing but instructive.



"IN AND BY."

BY LADY LAURA HAMPTON.

"God asks not *what*, but *whence*, thy work is; from the fruit He turns His eye away, to prove the inmost root."—ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

THE village slept peacefully beneath the rays of the full moon; the street, so replete with life and animation by day, was silent and deserted; the houses, with their shuttered and white-blinded windows, appeared as awesome as sepulchres of the dead; not a sound broke the stillness but the babbling of the brook as it rushed past the mill-wheel.

"Ding-dong, boom; boom:" and the clock in the old church tower on the hill above tolled forth the midnight hour, during which, as everyone knows, all

inanimate things, as well as the dumb creation, find tongue for a season, and the silence which so late had reigned was broken by an exultant voice exclaiming, "If you could only see the pile of sawing I did yesterday! Such trees sawn into logs—such logs into planks—such planks into laths—something like a day's work! Then to think of all the uses that wood may be put to! it makes one feel a power in the world, I can tell you, to look on that heap of work done by oneself. Whirr——" and the mill-wheel gave a creak as if anxious to commence once more.

"Whilst I," despondently answered the church clock, "though as full of energy as you are, see no result to my labours—day after day, night after night, the same old story, round and round the dial! Tick-tock, ding-dong, boom! who is the better for it all?"

"Is that a question you are asked to solve?" whispered the night-wind as it rustled the ivy-leaves about the speaker's face.

"To solve, perhaps not," it answered back; "but then what am I here for?"

"Is it not to keep time?" it replied, "to count the moments as they fly, to mark the hours as they pass unheeded by?"

"And to what purpose?" it persisted.

"That your maker's will may be done in you," answered the breeze.

"*In* me, yes: to mark, to learn, to keep—a selfish enough life, indeed; whilst others who have not half my capabilities see work done *by* them, and rejoice in the result of their toil."

"Be faithful, and you too will be rewarded," sighed the wind, as it died away in the distance, bearing far on its wings the sound of the half-hour tolled forth by the speaker.

* * * * * *

"Whirr, whirr!" what a noise the mill-wheel was making as it turned merrily in the sparkling waters, shaking the falling drops off into the sunshine as if seeking for beauty and pleasure even in the midst of work itself.

An elderly lady and a young girl stood in earnest conversation on the bridge which spanned the stream below the saw-mill.

"Yes, dearest," said the former, "I do indeed feel for you in this enforced separation from home and home interests for so many months, and that, too," she continued, with a smile, "when you had so many irons in the fire, and schemes for increased usefulness; but you know Who orders our paths in life, and though we plan, He knows which is best for us, the '*by*' or the '*in*.'"

"I do not think I quite understand what you mean," answered her companion.

"Well, dear, we are all too eager to be mill-wheels," replied the first speaker; "we splash, and dash, and make a great fuss over our life, and what we are to do with it. Our chief idea of work for God is His work being done by us. 'Lord, what wouldest Thou have me to *do*?' We overlook the fact that often God's work for us, is just His Will being worked out *in* us. Like the church clock over there, we find ourselves enclosed within a tower of circumstances, and we have apparently nothing to do but the daily round; but just as wheel within wheel must be formed apart, and adjusted with the utmost nicety, before the dial hands can point the hour; just as each piece in the machinery must be regulated and oiled before the pendulum can swing true, so every separate circumstance and event of our life is ordered to work out God's Will in us. There will not be one notch too many in the wheel, or one stroke of the hammer too few; the winding up will follow the running down, if unreservedly we place our lives in His keeping, asking Him to teach us to redeem the time. How slow we are to remember that this life is our school-time, all its lessons adapted especially to each one of us, to fit us for our appointed work in that higher and fuller life of which it is written, 'His servants shall serve Him, and shall see His face.' Of all the fulness of knowledge granted to us there, surely the most wonderful will be when, looking back on the past, we recognise the Hand that led us all our days, and trace how the 'by' and the 'in' were indissolubly blended, though to our finite wisdom so often seemingly sundered."

WAITERS FOR SORROW.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., MORNING LECTURER AT ALL SAINTS' AND ST. AUGUSTINE'S, SOUTH LAMBETH.

OUR sorrows are of great consequence. This is in itself a very comforting thought, for our sorrows are made little of by the world. Very few can understand, or enter with sympathy into another's grief. The heart generally "knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not therewith." Sorrow is too distasteful to most people to make them wish to have much to do with it; and they think that, without troubling themselves about other people's, they have plenty of their own. And so we feel isolated in our trouble, and there are very few to whom isolation is not very hard.

Our hearts are wounded—it may be indignant, it may be bitter—when we find others treating as of but little consequence that which hurts us so much.

But, whatever view *men* may take of our sorrows, there are those to whom they are of great consequence. They are of sufficient importance to have two great personages waiting for them, wanting to have to do with them; wishful that we should communicate with them about them. They are each

waiting for them, wanting them, ready to enter into the closest communication with us about them, prepared to deal with them.

These two beings are the greatest we know—God and Satan.

These are the "Waiters for Sorrow"—for *our* sorrows. Let us see how each will deal with them, if we give them to him, or allow him to take them.

Whatever your sorrow may be, God is a waiter for it; and what we must do with our sorrow is, deliberately to put it into His hand.

If we do so, what may we expect?

One thing we shall be given, and that is, enlightenment of mind about our sorrow, by the influence of the Holy Spirit. We shall not be left to walk on in solitude and darkness. I do not say that the "why" and "wherefore" of each sorrow will be revealed the moment we commit it to God—it may be that years will elapse before we know why exactly this or that trial came; but God's Spirit will certainly reveal much to us which will give us both strength and peace.* Perhaps God will never reveal to us in this life the link between our sorrow and the first earthly cause from which it sprang; but as we have given our sorrow to Him, He will reveal Himself in it.

Inwardly in our souls shall we hear the Father's voice—for it is a Father's voice we need in sorrow—and that voice will say, "What has come upon thee is not of haphazard, from the changes and chances of thy mortal life; not from them alone, without Me, have they touched thee, but *My* kindnesses, *My* disciplinings, *My* teachings are in them; and *My* knowledge of the necessities of thy soul."

Moreover, he who commits his sorrows to God shall be shown his relationship to Christ in them: the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief will walk with him in all places whither he goes, and tarry with him as his company in all places where he stays.

And God will bring our minds into conformity with His. Rebellion of will adds terribly to the misery of sorrow. We have to bear a heavy burden and to struggle with great exertion at the same time. The load uncast on God presses us down, and we have to fight against that God Himself. But if our mind be in conformity with His mind, the bitterness of strife is gone—there is peace. God never can let any man tarry outside Himself, who wishes to be in union with Him. We are within the range of the action of the Peace-giver, when we have committed what disturbs our peace to Him.

The sorrow given to God will always draw forth sympathy from God. We shall realise that He is not acting against us, but feeling for us. If we have given a sorrow to God, we cannot imagine His receiving it carelessly, His doing nothing with it—His (so to speak) just stowing it away, and taking no notice of it. God will feel for us, and let us know that He does. And we shall experience all the solace and comfort that exist in sympathy. A heart-craving will be satisfied, a soul-hunger cured, a spirit-wound bound up and mollified with ointment. From the moment that we truly commit a sorrow to God, He will be in that sorrow for us.

And He will transform the earthly in it into the spiritual. The earthly—the actual loss or care—will be a seed; and from it He will cause to spring the spiritual, which will yield a harvest. The earthly may be destined to entire death, like the seed; but something better is to come up—the harvest of the soul.

> "Thou canst not tell
> How rich a dowry sorrow gives the soul,
> How firm a faith, and eagle-sight of God."
>
> ALFORD.

Many and many of God's children have had their earthly sorrows so changed into spiritual joys, that they confess they have found that, the bare existence of which they could not have dreamt of before. Many passages in her Bible, a Christian lady said, had no meaning for her until her child died, and then a flood of light was poured over them.

Where we make a mistake very often is, in seeking compensation on the same plane as our sorrow. We think God will meet the earthly with the earthly—compensate the loss of the earthly "seen" with the revelation of some other earthly "seen." But God's way with Job is by no means always the way with us. The word to us is often this: "It is expedient for you that I go away," and then "Another Comforter shall come." God grant it. God grant it to us in our hour of sorrow. This is easy to write about, but hard to realise, but there is truth in it; and when our extremity comes, may the truth appear for us.

There may be great peace in the midst of sorrow. God is, by the working of His Holy Spirit, the God of Peace, and when we have committed our sorrow to Him, He will bring our sorrow and His peace together. He prepared a table for David in the presence of his enemies. In the Pitti Palace at Florence there are two pictures which hang side by side. One represents a stormy sea with its wild waves, and black clouds and fierce lightnings flashing across the sky. In the waters a human face is seen, wearing an expression of the utmost agony and despair. The other picture also represents a sea, tossed by as fierce a storm, with as dark clouds, but out of the midst of the waves a rock rises, against which the waves dash in vain. In a cleft of a rock are some tufts of grass and green herbage, with sweet flowers, and amid these a dove is seen sitting on her nest, quiet and undisturbed by the wild fury of the storm. The same storm may be raging, but how differently may persons be circumstanced in them! "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon Thee, because he

* "Sorrow," says Richter, "seems sent for our instruction, as we darken the cages of birds when we would teach them to sing."

trusteth in Thee." The issue of "committed sorrow" is peace. We cannot commit without looking up; and, as Richter says, "Whoever can turn his weeping eye to heaven has lost nothing; for, there above is everything he can wish for here below. He only is a loser who persists in looking down on the narrow plains of the present time." An entire sun will reflect itself in a single tear.

But there is someone else waiting for your sorrow—someone eager to have it—someone who knows only too well what to do with it. It is the old enemy, Satan, prepared to work evil to the soul, whether by sorrow or by joy.

When Job was in grief, he intruded himself on him, and we know through Job's wife what advice he was prepared to give.

Give *him* your sorrow, and these are some of the things he will do to you. He will arouse all your evil passions against God. He will take it, and make you look upon God as a merciless, wanton, hard-hearted God, Who has allowed this trouble to come upon you, when undoubtedly by His power He could have prevented it; and He will if possible make you hate Him. He will never suggest to you that an affliction permitted is often a greater mercy than an affliction averted. Many a man has raged against God, and become His lifelong foe, simply because he allowed Satan, who was waiting for his sorrow, to take it and work it at his will.

Moreover, Satan will hide out all the spirituality of the sorrow which he is manipulating. There never was a sorrow, I suppose, which was not replete with possibilities of good. It is Satan's purpose to exhibit it in its hard, naked outline of distress. Distress it is, and as distress alone he will have us look at it. The design, the operation, the effect—they may all have spiritual possibilities and life in them; but he hides them all.

All that Divine love and power *may* do, he kills the thought of; and a future, with its healings, and its compensations, and its hopes are not for us.

Then he throws us in upon ourselves, that we may fret, and grit, and vex ourselves, and become morbid, by everlastingly revolving round the axis of our own woe. Thus many a life has been ruined; the evil of making oneself one's centre comes upon the man none the less truly because it comes not by the way of self-indulgence in pleasure, but by that of self-indulgence in grief.

And so it comes to pass that a man has to bear his sorrows with the bitter consciousness of utter isolation; for, of course, he would not consciously accept this evil one as his friend. The waiter for his sorrow has taken it, and turned it against him; and made deadly poison out of what might have been wholesome, even if it were bitter food.

So, then, good reader, let this little paper be a helpful one to you whenever your hour of trial comes. God grant that in such as I experience, it may be so to me.

Let us remember, whenever any trouble comes, and whatever the trouble may be, that there are waiters for it—that either for or against us, as we ourselves shall determine, it will be used. Let us take our sorrow quickly to God. Let us be alive to what may happen if we do not. Let us realise what many never dream of in the times of their distress—that there are "Waiters for Sorrow."

LA MARGUERITE.

BY ELIZA F. POLLARD, AUTHOR OF "VENGEANCE IS MINE," "NAN," "ROBERT ASKE," ETC.

CHAPTER I.—STORM.

WHO has ever witnessed a great storm at sea without a sensation of fear, and without uttering a prayer for those tossing on the wild waves! Never in the memory of man had such a storm raged as broke over the north of France one night in the October of the year 18—. Houses were unroofed by the wind; the waves, lashed to fury, swept over the beach. With early dawn it seemed but to increase. And the boats were at sea! They had put out the previous afternoon. Crouching before a great fire, a young woman, with her baby in her arms, wept bitterly; married one short year, her young husband had left her only yesterday, and now where was he? Her heart was like to break. The cottage door opened, and a man drenched with rain and salt brine entered hurriedly. "Lisette," he said, "there is a boat in sight. We think it is your husband's."

She rose to her feet, uttered no sound, only laid her baby down in its cradle, and made for the door. "You must stay at home," said the man, roughly but kindly. "You could not make way against the wind." But she, unheeding him, went forth struggling towards the beach. A group of sailors saw her coming, almost flung along by the wind; one of them stretched out his arm and caught her. Yes, there it was—she saw it—on the very topmost wave, a black hulk, within a few hundred yards of home! Suddenly it disappeared. A great cry arose from those on land. Lost, lost! the cruel sea had closed over it, and the gallant crew had met their death!

"Lisette, you must rouse yourself, for the child's sake," and they laid her little son in her arms. "Be comforted; he will live to be a man like his father, if

you care for him." With such-like words they sought to rouse her. How was she to care for him when the bread-winner was gone? In this far-off Picardy village there was little woman's work; it was the men who went abroad on the sea and earned for wife and child. What could she do? Her sorrow and her trouble were very sore. One day, about a week after the disaster, a neighbour came to her and said, "Lisette, in the great city of Paris there are many forsaken children, and they are taken to a great hospital, and from thence sent out to nurse in the country. So much is paid for them every month, and twice a year clothes are provided; why should you not go and fetch one to bring up with your little Jean? It is not much money, but it is always something. Seek the Mayor and get your certificate of good conduct and go to Paris. See, we have made a collection for you: enough money to pay your journey there and back, and a little over;" so saying, she dropped a leathern purse into Lisette's lap.

"You are all very good. I will do as you bid me," said Lisette, "for the child's sake." She knew only too well how hard it must have been, in that poor village, to get the money together; it was almost a fortune. Next day she started, wrapped in her large black widow's cloak, the hood drawn over her head, her young face looking very white and sad, her eyes red with weeping. She was not afraid. Did not God take especial care of the widow and orphan? And the Mayor had given her full directions, with an especial letter to the Director of the Foundling Hospital. A carter took her into the nearest railway town, and saw her off. She slept that night—or rather she lay down to sleep—at an inn near the station in Paris, and as early as she dared the next day found her way to the Hospital. She had to wait, even after she was admitted, a long time in a great room with other women, who had come on the same errand as herself. After innumerable preliminaries, by ones and twos the little creatures were brought in and distributed among the women. Only one poor weakly babe, lying in the good nurse's arms, could find no foster-mother. "What would be the use? It would die before I reached home with it," was the continual remark.—"Nay, it only needs a mother and fresh air," said the nurse, hushing it in her arms. Lisette bent forward and looked at it; her own heart was so sorrowful, she was full of pity. The child turned its blue eyes upon her: at least, she thought it did so. "I will take it," she said quietly, holding out her arms.—"Oh, I think you will be good to her," said the nurse.—"I will," answered Lisette.

An hour later, with a bundle of clothes on one arm, and little Marguerite sleeping under the black cloak on the other, she was on her road to the station, and, late at night, worn out, she reached her own cottage, and laid the infant stranger in the crib beside her own big, bonny boy.

CHAPTER II.—A FRIEND.

THEY grew up side by side, Jean and Marguerite—he sturdy and strong, a true sailor's son, she fair and fragile, with blue eyes and golden hair, and Lisette was comforted. The child had brought her luck, the neighbours said, and in truth it seemed as if the widow's cruse of oil would never fail. They were very poor, but they wanted for neither food nor raiment. When the children were old enough and she could send them to school, Lisette found many little things to do.

The sea had taken what was dearest to her, but it helped her to live. When the tide is low—and in these parts, at certain seasons, it ebbs out very far, till the sea is only visible, a faint line in the horizon, and below the beach the sands stretch far and wide—at such times, the women, armed with great spades, go down to the shore, and with their petticoats tied back, and wooden sabots on their feet, dig great holes in the moist sand, in search of bait, which they sell—cheaply enough, alas! for it is hardly earned—to the fishermen. This Lisette did, and soon Jean was old enough to help her. Marguerite could not: she was not strong enough; but instead, she would rise early in the summer months, and wander away across the great "dunes," or sand-hills, till she came to a little forest of green pine-trees, and there she would fill her apron with cones and make faggots of the broken branches; what she could not carry herself she would hide away, and in the evening she and Jean would run back again and bring them home; and this she did all the summer long, so that in the winter, when the snow lay deep upon the ground, they sat on their wooden stools in the chimney-corner, warm and cosy. One day, when she was thus occupied picking up cones, singing softly to herself—for Marguerite was a very happy child—she came suddenly upon a gentleman, sitting on a low camp-stool, with an easel before him, painting; she saw he was watching her, and she stood quite still. He was an elderly man, with a clever, kind face, and his voice was very gentle when he spoke to her. "Little one," he said, "stay quite still just as you are until I bid you move, and I will give you this," and he held up to view a silver coin. Marguerite flushed with pleasure; she had never earned so much before; what would "Maman" say? She would not have moved for the world; she stood quite still, till her arms ached and her legs began to tremble under her. The artist had forgotten himself in his delight over such a model! Suddenly he remembered. "You are a good little girl," he said, laying down his brushes; "you may go now; here is your money; but tell me first—where do you live?" She explained as best she could. "I will go and see your mother; perhaps she will let me paint you again: it will pay you better than picking up sticks. Look," and he pulled her towards his easel. She could hardly believe her eyes; there she was, with her little red petticoat and bare feet, her fair hair escaping in curls from under the close-fitting cotton cap: it was very pretty! She said so, in her innocence, with a merry laugh, and the artist laughed too at the naïve appreciation of his work. That evening he found his way to their cottage, and made an arrangement with Lisette that during his stay at Cayeux Marguerite should come each day, and sit or stand for him to paint. The sum of money he agreed to pay was a mere trifle to him, but a fortune to them, and they were very happy. Before the month was out,

Armand Dubois and Marguerite were fast friends; when he went away, promising to return the following year, she was very sad.

CHAPTER III.—LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

Not the next year only, but year after year, Armand Dubois returned to Cayeux. The place seemed to fascinate him, and the pictures he painted of it and its people brought him great success. There was a quaint ugliness in the irregular, tumble-down mud huts, with their thatched roofs, which his artist eye transformed into beauty.

But there was another attraction, which he scarcely liked acknowledging even to himself, it seemed so foolish—the child Marguerite. She had charmed him. He had painted her a score of times, and the face ever seemed to him sweeter and sweeter. "It is like an angel's face," he said to his sister. "I wish I had had a little daughter just like Marguerite."

"Oh, Armand, how can you say that? Think of your boy Léon;" for Monsieur Dubois was a widower, with an only son, and his sister Marie kept house for him.

"I do not forget Léon. How should I forget my son? He is a dear boy and a clever one," said M. Dubois, "and I am very proud of him; but this little Marguerite has a wonderful charm about her. It is sometimes difficult for me to believe she is a peasant's daughter. Have you noticed, Marie, what a talent she has for drawing? How she copies, and correctly too, all she sees! I am teaching her a little; I cannot help it; she learns so quickly."



"The women . . . go down to the shore in search of bait."—*p.* 584.

"It is a pity; you will make her discontented with her lot," said his more matter-of-fact sister.

"Marguerite discontented!" he exclaimed; "I have never seen a shadow on her face!"

"Then take care you are not the cause, direct or indirect, of darkening that young brow. Leave her in the station of life in which God has placed her."

"How should I do otherwise? You do not suppose I am going to adopt her, even if her mother would consent to such an arrangement?" answered M. Dubois.

"I do not know what you might or might not do," said his sister; "you artists are nothing better than grown-up children till the last day of your lives."

M. Dubois laughed. "I believe you are jealous on Léon's account," he said.

"Perhaps I am," she answered; and there the matter dropped.

During the summer vacations Léon Dubois always joined his father and aunt at Cayeux. And, while his father painted, he and Jean made excursions together along the coast. Jean was a good sailor, and could manage a boat well, so there was no fear; and the young Parisian grew almost as sunburnt as his companion, and as devoted to the sea. *He* laughed with his aunt over his father's enthusiasm for Marguerite. "His latest hobby," he called it—only it lasted longer than most hobbies.

M. Dubois was justly proud of Léon. He was a tall, handsome youth, had studied well while at college, passed all necessary examinations, and, at last, had entered the large military college called the Polytechnic, answering to Sandhurst, or West Point, and hoped to come out first, and get nominated into the Engineers. He was very ambitious, and studied hard; he meant to succeed; his father had sacrificed much for his education, and Léon had no intention it should be in vain. He often said to Jean, "Cayeux gives me health and strength which last me for the whole ten months I am in Paris. The air is so pure, the life so simple here. I often dream I hear the waves breaking on your beach, and wake longing for a whiff of your fresh sea-breezes and the scent of your pines."

"Ah, it is very well for two months," answered Jean, "but you would tire of it all the year round."

"Probably I should," answered Léon. "At present I find it very pleasant."

And so the years went by, and Jean and Marguerite were nearly sixteen.

One day the boy came to his mother, and said, "Mother, Martin and his son are going to put out to sea next Monday in their new boat; they are going fishing along the coast of England, perhaps even up to Scotland; they have offered to take me with them, and give me a share in the profits. It is a very fine offer, and very good of them. It is time I earned my living; you must let me go, mother."

Lisette burst into tears; she had been expecting this to happen for some time past. She knew Jean was a big, strong lad, and others had already hinted he ought to be earning his living regularly, not in a haphazard sort of way. Jean had more than once spoken to Marguerite on the subject, and she too knew it was inevitable. But the mother's grief was very great; tenderly Marguerite consoled her, but she never once said it could be otherwise. She loved Jean dearly; she had never been told he was not really her brother, any more than that Lisette was not her mother, but she knew that when the time came Jean must go to sea. So quietly she set about preparing his things, talking to Lisette, and trying to rouse her interest. When the Dubois heard the news, they said Jean was quite right, and they helped to rig him out, and when the day came for him to go, they all set off together, and walked across the pine forest to the little port of Le Hourdel, where the vessel lay at anchor. They were all so bright and cheerful that Lisette could hardly be sad, and when she saw the handsome new boat and the masters, though the parting was bitter, she was almost content.

"Ah, Jean! if only one day you could have such a boat of your own," she said.

"Who can tell, mother?" said Armand Dubois; "more improbable things have happened."

And with this hope at her heart, Lisette embraced her son and left him to begin life for himself, praying God to bless him and make him a true, honest man and brave sailor, as his father had been. But that night, when Lisette and Marguerite found themselves alone, tired and weary, beside the hearth, with Jean's vacant place before them, they just threw their arms round each other's necks and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER IV.—A SURPRISE.

JEAN had been gone nearly a month: it was the middle of September. Only a few strangers still lingered at Cayeux; the bathing season was nearly over. The Dubois were always the last to go, but even they were thinking it was nearly time to return to Paris. They had seen much less of Marguerite since Jean had left. She had come one morning to M. Dubois, and had told him she could not continue to sit for him, because her mother fretted when she was away; besides, she did not think she was well: she complained of her limbs aching, and she did not eat. The neighbours said it was nothing; she would be all right when Jean came back, and by degrees she would get accustomed to his absence.

"You are quite right to stay with Lisette now," Mademoiselle Dubois had said. "I will come and see her in a day or two."

She kept her word. Marguerite was absent—gone into the village on some commission.

Mademoiselle Dubois found Lisette crouching by the fire, shivering. She saw at once that she was ill with fever. "You ought to be in bed," she said. "How long have you been like this?"

"For the last week or ten days," she answered. "Marguerite has been to the chemist and got me some herbs, but he says it is the fever, and must run its course."

"Nonsense!" said Mademoiselle. "I will go home and send the doctor; but you must really go to bed."

Lisette shook her head. "I am not as bad as that," she answered.

Only at the very last extremity do the poor French peasantry think of going to bed; but that evening, after the doctor had seen her, she was so much worse that Marguerite succeeded in persuading her to do so.

All night the fever raged; she was evidently very ill, and she continued so for several days, during which time Marguerite never left her; and the little money they had went so fast, and soon the winter would be coming, and so many things were wanted. All their savings had been given to Jean to buy a share in the boat, and he might not be back for two or three months: they could not tell; and in the meantime they must live and pay what was owing.

Lisette had long ago ceased to receive any money for Marguerite; she was considered old enough to work, but of this the young girl knew absolutely nothing. She believed herself to be Lisette's daughter. She might have asked the Dubois to help them, but she had never been accustomed to beg; she had sat for her picture and been paid, besides receiving little gifts; she had no right to anything more, and yet now the doctor said her mother must have good soup and medicines, and there was hardly a franc left in the old stocking in which they kept their money. Marguerite, for the first time in her life, lay awake thinking; if only Jean had been there! That night Lisette was quieter, and with early morning she fell asleep; then Marguerite rose, took her sabots in her hand, fastened her fishing basket on her back, and went down to the shore.

It was low tide, and she knew that she should find crabs and mussels in abundance; these she would sell, and so add a few sous to their store. It was still so early, she hoped to be alone, for she felt very sad and desolate. What should she do if Lisette were to die, and Jean away?

She was hurrying along the sands towards a place where she knew she should find a rich harvest, when suddenly she heard herself called, "Marguerite! Marguerite!" She stopped, and looked to see from whence the voice came.

A girl about her own age was scrambling down the shingles, and soon stood on the sands in front of her, her arms a-kimbo, thus arresting her progress. She knew her well; her name was Irma Maison, and she was the rudest girl in all the village. She was gaily dressed, even at this early hour, in crimson petticoat and many-coloured woollen shawl folded across her bosom.

"She is up to some pranks," thought Marguerite, seeing she carried neither basket nor spade.

"What are you out so early for, Marguerite?" asked Irma.

"I came out early, whilst mother slept, to gather some crabs and mussels. I knew the tide would be low early to-day; and you see, Irma, one spends a lot of money in illness," answered Marguerite.

"Why do you trouble?" laughed Irma; "it is no affair of yours. Jean will come back soon and bring money."

"He may, or may not; one can never tell," answered Marguerite. "In the meantime I must do what I can. Good-morning, Irma; I am in a hurry;" and she would have moved on.

"I say, Marguerite," said Irma, still standing in front of her, "what will become of you if Lisette dies?"

"What will become of me?" answered Marguerite, the tears running down her face, "how can I tell?"

"You will be turned out of the cottage; you know it is Jean's; you have no right there."

"No right there!" said Marguerite. "What is Jean's is mine."

The girl laughed a loud, wicked laugh.

"Indeed! you think so? Why, Marguerite, all the village knows you are not Lisette's girl, only a 'foundling' she fetched from Paris."

Marguerite looked up aghast. "Not my mother?" she said.

"No! no more than she is mine," answered Irma.

Without waiting to hear a word of explanation, Marguerite turned and ran as fast as she could back to Cayeux.

CHAPTER V.—ALONE.

"My little girl, what is the matter? is Lisette worse?" The speaker was M. Dubois. He had come down to the beach early, and there, to his surprise, he had found Marguerite, her head on her knees, weeping bitterly. She lifted her tear-stained face, and looked at her friend doubtfully.

"Well, Marguerite, what is it?" he asked.

In a low voice, half broken by sobs, she told him what had happened.

"Irma Maison is a bad girl," said M. Dubois. "Go home directly, Marguerite. Your mother must be awake and wanting you. Do you forget that she has done her duty as a mother towards you, and that you owe her a daughter's care?"

"No, I do not forget," said Marguerite, rising; "it is because I love her so, it pains me."

"And yet you would grieve her now she is ill, because of that girl's idle words! Go home, Marguerite, to the mother God has given you."

Without uttering one word of protest, Marguerite prepared to obey. M. Dubois walked beside her a little way to the entrance of the village, then he stopped, saying, "Marguerite, tell nothing of what has happened to your mother; I will come and see her this afternoon."

"Very well, monsieur," she answered, and went her way.

Lisette was awake when she reached the cottage, but in high fever; a neighbour had come in, who rated Marguerite soundly for leaving her mother. "She has been calling for you, and is more anxious about you than about her son Jean," she said.

"Mother, dear mother!" said Marguerite, stooping over her.

The sick woman devoured her with her eyes. "Who will take care of thee when I am gone, my pretty Marguerite?"

"God," answered the child simply.

"True, quite true," said Lisette, and yet she sighed.

"Marguerite, I must see M. Dubois."

"He said he would come to-day, mother."

"Fetch him now directly," and she sat up in her bed, her eyes brilliant and her cheeks red with fever.

"Go," said the woman; "I will see to her till you come back."

Half an hour later M. Dubois was standing beside Lisette's bed. Marguerite was outside the cottage door, leaning against the wall weeping bitterly. As clearly as she could, Lisette told Marguerite's story to M. Dubois, and gave him all her papers, which she kept in a bag, high away out of reach, in the big cupboard.

"I promise you I will see to the child," said the artist; "she shall not suffer if I can help it;" and Lisette sank back on her pillows comforted.

"Marguerite and Jean, my children," she said



"'What are you out so early for, Marguerite?'"—*p.* 587.

softly; but only Marguerite was there. All night they watched beside her; she seemed to sleep, holding Marguerite's hand. Towards dawn she grew restless. Suddenly she sat up in bed, clasped her hands, and said quite clearly, "Look, Marguerite, look! the boat, the beautiful boat, Jean's boat!" and with a smile of mingled surprise and delight, she held out her arms to Marguerite, who threw herself into them. "Thank you, my darling," said Lisette quite distinctly; then her eyes closed, and the great wave of death passed over her, landing her soul on the shore of eternal life. "She had done what she could."

CHAPTER VI.—WON.

IT was a large, handsome studio, well lighted, the walls covered with sketches and models. Easels supporting half-finished paintings, masses of drapery lying here and there on sofas and arm-chairs; tall green plants in the corners, forming backgrounds to marble groups and statues of rare beauty. There were only two occupants of the room, an old man and a young girl. The former was sitting on a low seat before his easel, with pallet on one hand and brush in the other, putting the last touch to a picture. The young girl stood before her easel erect, with folded arms, gazing at the picture it supported.

"Master," she said at last.

"My child," answered Armand Dubois.

"You know I have had an offer for my picture?"

"Yes, I know; but it is your Salon picture—your first. I am not willing you should sell it."

"Dear master!" and the young girl turned round, and went and knelt beside him, "I must. I made a

vow long years ago, when you brought me to Paris and began to teach me to love art, that the money I should receive for the first picture I ever sold should be spent in building a boat for Jean. I am to have four thousand francs for this picture. I must keep my vow."

"It is worth double," said M. Dubois.

"You are good to say so, but I am content; it is enough to do what I want. Jean will have served his time next year. If I send an order to the ship-builder's at once, it will be ready for him by the fête day, and then we will all go down to Cayeux and see it launched."

"You have never been back all these years, Marguerite; will it not pain you?"

"No, I have got over that," she said. "I shall be glad to see the old place again;" and tears filled her eyes, and her lips trembled.

"It is well, my child; let it be as you will," said Armand Dubois. "I hope next year Léon will be with us; he has been absent nearly three years with those Algerian railways. It does not seem long to him; but what should I have done if I had not had you? He forgets I am getting old."

Marguerite laughed gently. "You will never be old, dear master."

He shook his head. "The fate of all mortals," he said; "but the heart is young still. I can feel with and for others as keenly now as I could twenty or thirty years ago. You have kept me young, Marguerite."

"Say rather your own loving artist nature has done so," she answered.

For the last eight years Marguerite had lived with the Dubois. They had brought her up to Paris after Lisette's death, and she had become as the daughter of the house. The brother and sister educated her between them. Mademoiselle Marie taught her all housewifely duties, and M. Dubois trained her mind: she was a born artist, and he gave her every opportunity for cultivating her talent. She did him full credit. It would have been difficult to recognise in the tall, graceful girl, with the fair face and regular features, the little fisher-girl of Cayeux. She was devoted to her art and her adopted father. They had lived alone since his sister's death. Léon had been absent for three years, and even before that his visits had been few and far between. He was a rising man, and had obtained several important posts: he wrote often, and his father had every reason to be satisfied with him and proud of him; but he said truly, without Marguerite his life would have been very lonely. This year her first picture had been exhibited, spoken well of, and sold. He was even prouder than she was.

CHAPTER VII.—WHAT ARE THE WILD WAVES SAYING?

There was much excitement throughout Cayeux; the great fishing boat which had been building on the beach was finished, and was to be launched. No one knew the proprietor: his name had been kept a profound secret. It was rumoured he would arrive on Saturday night from Paris, that the boat would be christened and launched on Monday morning. A tall fair girl, in a soft grey dress, with a white shady hat, walked rapidly through the streets of Cayeux. She turned up a narrow lane, and stood still looking at a low whitewashed mud cottage, with a thatched roof and a little garden in front. The door of the cottage was open, and standing, leaning against the wall, was a young sailor in a blue jersey; he saw her coming, and started. She hurried forward, and holding out both her hands over the garden gate, said, "Jean, my dear brother! welcome home."

"Thank you," he said, opening the gate, and she came in holding his hand, entered the cottage, and sat down on the low stool by the hearth where she was wont to sit as a child. He stood beside her, and they talked. It was not the first time they had met, and the outward change in Marguerite was no surprise to Jean; he knew that at heart she was the same.

"Will you come down to the beach with me?" she said at last, almost shyly.

He acquiesced, and together they strolled down to where the new boat lay.

"Jean," said Marguerite, stopping short, "did you ever hear about our mother's vision before she died?" Marguerite still called Lisette mother.

"No," he answered; "had she a vision?"

"Yes; she said she saw a boat, a beautiful boat," answered Marguerite, "and it was your boat, and turning to me she held out her arms and thanked me. Then I knew I had a mission, Jean, and I vowed I would accomplish it if possible. I prayed earnestly to God to help me, and He has done so. See, Jean, yonder is your boat—your very own, even as your mother saw it with her dying eyes;" and Marguerite, burying her face in her hands, wept.

"Is it true, really true?" said Jean huskily. "Oh, my sister Marguerite!" and he stood as one dazed, scarcely believing his eyes.

"Yes, yes, it is your own, your very own boat," said Marguerite, holding out her hands. "God bless you, Jean, and make you a prosperous man, for the sake of her who loved us both so well."

"And God bless you too, my sister Marguerite, and make you a happy woman," answered Jean, and he kissed her pure white brow reverently.

There were great rejoicings. The boat was christened *La Marguerite*. Jean willed it so; no other name would bring him luck, he said; and beautiful she looked as she put out to sea next day, her rigging all bedecked with flags, and a great wreath of "Marguerites" hanging from the prow. Léon Dubois arrived that same day, and so, as M. Dubois said, "It was a red-letter day to be remembered for ever."

Very happily the time passed by, what with excursions on the sea, and idle dreamy hours, lying on the beach watching the little fishing-smacks sail by, and the seagulls dip their white wings in the water. It was a peaceful life, and Léon Dubois felt it to be so, after knocking about the world so long. He was a very handsome man, and very clever. His life had been one of hard work, which had given him a certain stern expression, and a habit of command which awed people at first, but the bright eye and kindly

smile soon gained all hearts. His face was as sunburnt as a sailor's, and his long tawny moustache added not a little to the severity of his appearance. At first Marguerite had been shy of him, leaving father and son together; she feared lest he should feel her presence an intrusion, but he soon showed her she was mistaken, and before long she forgot to trouble about anything, even as he did. They only knew that life was a great joy from day to day and hour to hour. In that keen fresh air, impregnated with life from land and sea, body and soul expanded.

"Surely it was a good and blessed thing to live!"

"And"—said Léon, in a low voice, as he walked by Marguerite's side one evening along the shore—"to love." She started slightly, but he took her hand and held it fast. "Aye, life without love, Marguerite, is not worth much. Do you think if we did not love each other we should be as happy as we are? My darling, it is peace, it is content. I have felt from the first hour I came back your presence is my joy. Will you love me, Marguerite?"

They stopped in their walk, he waiting for her answer. She looked up doubtfully at him.

"You know!" she said. His arms were round her, his lips on hers.

"My wife," he answered; and the words were carried out to sea; and the little waves bore them back again, breaking in a long flash of phosphoric light at the lovers' feet.

METRICAL VERSIONS OF THE PSALMS.

III.—THE SCOTTISH VERSION.

IN a former paper we have shown that the first version of the Psalms employed in the Scottish churches after the Reformation was mainly that of Sternhold and Hopkins. This version, in its complete form, was printed at Edinburgh in 1564, by order of the General Assembly, and continued in use till 1650, when the version of which we have now to give an account was introduced.

The old Psalter does not appear to have won for itself in Scotland the popularity which it secured in England. As early as 1601 it was proposed, in the General Assembly held at Burntisland, to have "a revisal of the Psalms in metre;" and from this time onwards many attempts were made to supplant the original version. In 1631 there was published a translation purporting to have been made by King James VI. of Scotland, but which was, in reality, the work of Sir William Alexander, afterwards Earl of Stirling. Of this translation copies were at once sent down to the Presbyteries, with instructions to consider and report as to its suitability for public use. The result of this action was immediate and widespread opposition; nevertheless, Charles, in December, 1634, enjoined the Privy Council of Scotland "that no other Psalmes of any edition whatever be either printed heirefter within that our kingdom, or imported thither, either bound by themselff or otherways, from any forrayne parts." This enactment had no practical effect, but the king seemed determined to carry his point, and several further attempts to enforce the so-called royal version were made up to 1637, when it received its death-blow as part of the service-book known generally by the name of "Laud's Liturgy."

The results of King Charles's injudicious efforts to regulate Church government and worship in Scotland are well known to all students of ecclesiastical history. In a few days after the rejection of the prelatic liturgy of Laud, the great bulk of the people had appended their names to the National Covenant, binding themselves by solemn oath to oppose the revival of Popish errors in Scotland, and to unite "for the defence of their laws, their freedom, and their king." The commotion speedily spread throughout England as well as Scotland, and a desire for uniformity in the doctrine, discipline, and form of church government and worship throughout the three kingdoms soon became general. In furtherance of this object, the celebrated Assembly of Divines was called together by an ordinance of the English Parliament, under pressure from Scotland; and, though prohibited by a royal proclamation, it met on the 1st of July, 1643. In a few months it was joined by six Commissioners from the Church of Scotland, who were welcomed by the proloquitor in a set oration, and afterwards took an important part in the debates. Among the various means tending to secure the desired uniformity of worship, a new version of the metrical Psalms was recommended. The Scottish Psalter, as we have already seen, was somewhat different from the English; and besides this, both versions contained not a little which, owing to changes in the language, had now become obsolete. A new version was thus not only expedient, but advisable; and while the Independents were opposed to the use of any psalter in particular, the Presbyterians were unanimously in favour of such a measure, and the question was heartily entered into by the Scottish Commissioners. The result was the protracted consideration of the claims of several translations which had been sent in to the Assembly, and the adoption of one after it had been severely tested, altered, and amended. This one was what is now known as the Scottish Version, and was the work of Francis Rous.

Rous was himself a member of the Assembly, and a

man distinguished for his learning and judgment. He was a younger son of Sir Anthony Rous, and was born at Halton, in Cornwall, in 1579. He was several times returned to Parliament, and was successively a member of Cromwell's Council and his House of Lords. During the Commonwealth he was appointed Provost of Eton, and this lucrative post he held till his death, in 1658. He earned for himself the title of the "illiterate Jew of Eton," probably on account of his proposition to form the English Commonwealth after the model of the Jewish. Cromwell he is said to have looked upon as "a compound of the characters of Moses and Joshua." That he was not really illiterate is clearly proved, both by his career and by the works which he has left behind him. His "Mella Patrum," published in 1650, contains, says Chalmers, "the beauties of the Fathers of the first three centuries." The whole of his writings were collected into a folio volume issued in 1657. Rous was buried with great pomp at Eton; and his portrait is, we believe, still preserved in the Provost's lodge there.

The first edition of the Rous Psalter appeared in 1641, the second in 1643; both editions are now exceedingly rare. The edition of 1643 was the one submitted to the consideration of the Assembly of Divines, and the one which, after much alteration and amendment, was accepted by the Assembly. In 1645, the House of Commons signified its approval of the version, and there seemed to be a prospect of its speedy adoption by the English as well as Scottish Churches. At this point, however, the House of Lords began to debate the claims of a version by William Barton, and in the resulting divisions the Rous Psalter, so far as concerned its use in England, was lost sight of, the version of Tate and Brady being ultimately, as we already know, the one to supplant that of Sternhold and Hopkins.

In the meantime, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland had taken the Rous Psalter into its own independent consideration, and at its meeting in 1647, appointed a committee of four eminent churchmen, who were instructed to amend in it "such passages as were faulty, to avail themselves of the labours of other poetical writers, and to attend to the animadversions of Presbyteries." The labours of this committee were brought to a close in 1649, when the Commission of Assembly met and made the following Act:—

EDINBURGH, *November*, 1649.

"The Commission of the General Assembly having with great diligence considered the Paraphrase of the Psalms in metre, sent from the Assembly of Divines in England by our Commissioners whilst they were there, as it was corrected by former General Assemblies, Committees from them, and now at last by the brethren deputed by them at the late Assembly for that purpose; and having exactly examined the same, do approve the said paraphrase as it is now compiled, and therefore, by the power given them by the said Assembly, do appoint it to be printed and published for public use; hereby authorising the same to be the only paraphrase of the Psalms of David to be sung in the Kirk of Scotland, and discharging the old paraphrase and any other than this new paraphrase to be made use of in any congregation or family after the 1st of May, 1650: and, for uniformity in this part of the worship of God, do seriously recommend to Presbyteries to cause make a public intimation of this Act, and special care that the same be timeously put in execution and duly observed."

The Scottish Parliament added its authority in Edinburgh, in 1650, and there is mention that in the midsummer of that year the new version was used for the first time in Glasgow and in the little Fifeshire town of Largo.

No doubt it cost the Scottish people a pang to part with the old Psalter. It was the Psalm-book of Knox, Welsh, Melville, and the men who carried on the struggle with James VI. and Charles I. "It had cheered the prisoners in the dungeons of Blackness, sailed with them in their ships to France, consoled their exile, and sent its notes from Duns Law across the Merse to challenge the song of the Cavaliers." Its claims to the veneration and regard of the nation were thus by no means slight. But the tide of reform in matters both civil and religious had set in strong; and the idea of having one common form of worship would naturally outweigh such considerations of sentiment as doubtless attached to the giving up of the old Psalter.

Regarded in its literary aspect, the version of Rous is superior, in all but one particular, to that of Sternhold and Hopkins. That particular is its want of variety of metres. The early Psalter had many forms of metre; the later has but very few departures from the common measure. This is one serious defect of the Rous version; but it is not the only defect. In the words of Dr. Beattie, "the numbers are often harsh and incorrect; there are frequent obscurities, and some ambiguities in the style; Scotch idiom occurs in several places; and the old Scotch pronunciation is sometimes necessary to make out the rhyme."

All this would probably have been admitted by the past generations who made the Scottish Psalter the medium of their praise. So long as the translation was literal—and the Rous version is that at least—it was sure to please the Scottish mind, which contemplated with a feeling akin to horror the idea of adding to or detracting from the Word of God. Thus, while we point out the defects of the Psalter—its expression plain, blunt, and uncouth, its rhymes rough and rugged—it may be pleaded that these defects are more than atoned for by the Saxon strength and simplicity with which it yields the sense of the Hebrew poets. A version, it would be said, could easily be produced of greater poetic beauty —"smoother in numbers, more perfect in refinement, and more elegant in expression"; but such a version would bury out of sight that truthfulness to the original which characterises the Scottish Psalter, and which constitutes its true value in the eyes of those who use it. Leaving this view of the question out of account, the independent critic is bound to admit that the Rous Psalter is, upon the whole, the best poetical translation of the Psalms of which the English literature can boast. There is a true, manly ring about it which is never to be met with in Tate and Brady, and a smoothness which was seldom attained by the Sternhold versifiers.

If we look, however, at the Scottish version from the Scottish point of view, we shall not criticise its literary merits at all. Indeed, its survival, when all other versions have long since become practically extinct, is hardly to be accounted for by its literary

superiority; rather is it owing to the fact that it is woven into the spiritual life of the people. As a well-known essayist has said, "everything which has helped a man in his religious life, everything which associates itself in his mind with the growth of that life, is beautiful and venerable to him; in this way, productions of little or no poetical value, like the German hymns and ours, may come to be regarded as very precious." And so it is with the Scottish Psalter. The Scottish people have known it from their cradles, and, all poetical considerations out of question, have cherished it to their grave through many generations.

In 1828 an impression seems to have gone abroad that an alteration of the Psalter was in contemplation by the General Assembly of the Church. This impression had no other foundation than in the fact that a few ministers had given expression to the belief that the existing version could be greatly improved. Sir Walter Scott had, however, been asked to give his opinion on the question of a proposed change, and the result was the following admirable letter, addressed by the distinguished poet to the convener of the Assembly's Committee on Psalmody. We reproduce the letter not only because of the eminence of the writer, but because of the excellent and sympathetic feeling which it shows. "The expression of the old metrical Psalms," says Sir Walter, "though homely, is plain, forcible, and intelligible, and very often possesses a rude sort of majesty, which perhaps would be ill exchanged for mere eloquence. Their antiquity is also a circumstance striking to the imagination, and possessing a corresponding influence upon the feelings. They are the very words and accents of our early reformers—sung by them in woe and gratitude in the fields, in the churches, and on the scaffold. The parting with this very association of ideas is a serious loss to the cause of devotion, and scarce to be incurred without the certainty of corresponding advantages. But if these recollections are valuable to persons of education, they are almost indispensable to the children of the lower ranks, whose prejudices do not permit them to consider, as the words of the inspired poetry, the versions of living or modern poets, but persist, however absurdly, in identifying the original with the ancient translation. I would not have you suppose that I by any means disapprove of the late very well-chosen Paraphrases. But I have an old-fashioned taste in sacred as well as profane poetry; I cannot help preferring even Sternhold and Hopkins to Tate and Brady, and our own metrical version of the Psalms to both. I hope, therefore, they will be touched with a lenient hand." The Psalter was, however, left untouched, and it is to-day the same in every respect as when it left the Assembly's hands in 1650. It has, indeed, been "improved," but not for the benefit of the Scottish Churches. It was made the foundation of the "British Psalter," edited by Robert Boswell, and published in 1784. Boswell was a member of the denomination known as "The Glassites" (Sandemanians in England), and the "British Psalter" was compiled —we cannot say composed—for their use. In the preface the author states that he has chosen the Scottish version as being the most literal, and that while retaining the literalness, he has endeavoured to improve the metre.

In concluding our article, brief notice may be taken of the "Translations and Paraphrases of Scripture," which are appended to the Scottish Psalter for the purpose of being used in divine worship. These Paraphrases are in reality hymns, for the most part very simple, and, like the Psalms themselves, adhering rigidly to the words of Scripture. They were introduced, after much opposition, in 1781; and though at first but little used, they ultimately became very popular. Some of the translations are exceedingly good, and have deservedly found a place in the Hymnals of all denominations. Three only can be mentioned here; these are, "Where high the heavenly temple stands," by Michael Bruce; "How bright these glorious spirits shine," by William Cameron; and "Come, let us to the Lord our God," by John Morison.

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

A PEEP AT DR. PHILLIPS BROOKS'S CHURCH, BOSTON, U.S.A.

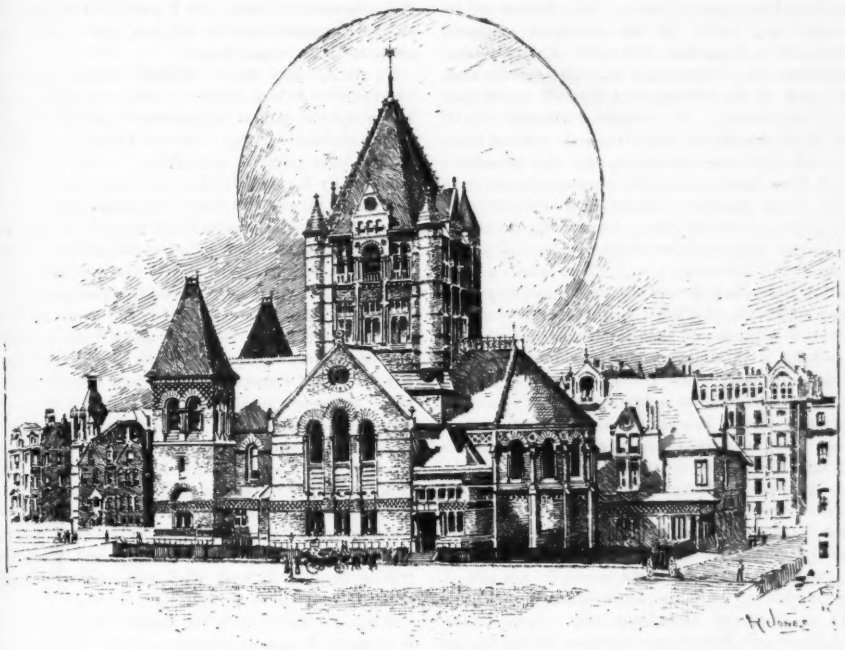
BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.

"MR. BROOKS is away in Nova Scotia," said the damsel who opened to me the door of the massively built parsonage of the eminent Boston minister.

I was sorry. He might be away some time. Useless to wait. However, it is of his work I desire to know. It has been my pleasure to listen to his voice, and to be a guest at a house where he was spending a short time. The memory of his cheery, hearty, common-sense talk will not readily fade out. I have visited his church aforetime, but I must see it once again. Let me, however, before I go further, bring away a rapid sketch of that remarkable entrance to his house, with rounded arch, with door, windows, and steps deeply shaded and quaint. One cannot fail to notice that the windows in the lower part are very small. I was afterwards told that it had been jokingly remarked that if a fire took place, and Phillips Brooks could not escape by the door, he could not get away by the windows. Indeed, not one is large enough for him to thrust his burly form through.

Before going to the church I bethink me that it will be well to call and see his assistant minister, and get from him some account of the work at Trinity. I find Mr. Allen in a house of exquisite taste, both in

arrangement and furnishing. The stairway is a work of art. I am charmed with its form as I ascend to the pleasant study. Here I learn more than perhaps Dr. Brooks would tell me of his own work.



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, BOSTON, U.S.A.

"We publish no manual of our church affairs," said the assistant minister of Trinity Church, Boston. "Dr. Brooks does not care for any 'spread and show.' We have, however, a number of good organisations. One of the most useful is the laundry, where a number of women are employed. In seven years we have paid 17,000 dollars for work they have done, and last year we realised a profit of 300 dollars. We are enabled by this organisation to give poor women something to do, and they take as naturally to laundry-work as ducks to water. It was my idea, and Dr. Brooks backs me up in it. I have to take charge of the missionary work of the church in and around Boston. I have also to see to church extension, and to care for immigrants, such as come here and have no one to meet them, and no place to which to go. I try to see that they are guided to some church. This is an important work. Only yesterday thirteen hundred came into Boston, and only nine hundred went on. This shows that a large number often stay here, and need to be looked after. The immigration work is very important."

It seems that Dr. Brooks has only about five hundred in his Sunday-school, and a Bible-class in Lent of about a hundred. The mission church has also a school with two hundred and fifty children in attendance. Dr. Brooks preaches morning and afternoon at Trinity, and in the evening at Cambridge. (Of course, he does not cross the Atlantic to our Cambridge.) Five preachers are selected to take a month each in preaching at the College Chapel. The ablest men are selected from different denominations—Episcopalian, Congregational, Baptist, or Presbyterian.

The Rector of Trinity goes every day, during his month, to conduct services, and afterwards the young men come to him with their troubles and spiritual perplexities. They love to gather round him, and perhaps he is the most popular of all who go to the new Cambridge.

He kept his church open and preached during all the hot summer. Most of the churches are closed for about three months, while the people are away at the seaside at pleasure resorts, or in Europe. Even in the heat of summer the congregation at Trinity will average a thousand.

Among other useful institutions at Trinity is a Literary Club, with a hundred members. There is a "Stereopticon" Club, for promotion of lantern entertainments. A Library with a thousand volumes is open also for the use of the congregation. It was pleasant to find that, on an average, a hundred books are in circulation.

The church is a peculiar building, occupying a very prominent position. It is a massive pile of red brick, with a lantern rising from four great piers. It cost over a hundred thousand pounds sterling.

In the quaint cloister is a piece of one of the old windows from St. Botolph's at Boston, England, the church called by the Lincolnshire people "Boston Stump."

The central tower of the church is a sort of lantern, rising from four great columns. The chancel is circular, and very wide. It has six deeply coloured windows, and is furnished with rows of dark chairs. The galleries are so introduced that they hardly seem to form part of the church, and they do not detract from its appearance. An enormous amount of gilt is used in the decoration, and a massive circle of brass goes round the sounding-board over the preacher's head. A lamp hangs down like a brazen pitcher from it. The whole pulpit is roomy, and covered with brown plush. I go up into a beautifully decorated chapel, where the social meetings and week-day services are held. It is very cosy. There is also a room below for the young people's meetings. Everything is in splendid style, and befitting the character of the man who is minister of that important church.

In talking with the sexton, who showed me over the place, he said, "Mr. Brooks is very kind, and never passes me without a kindly word."

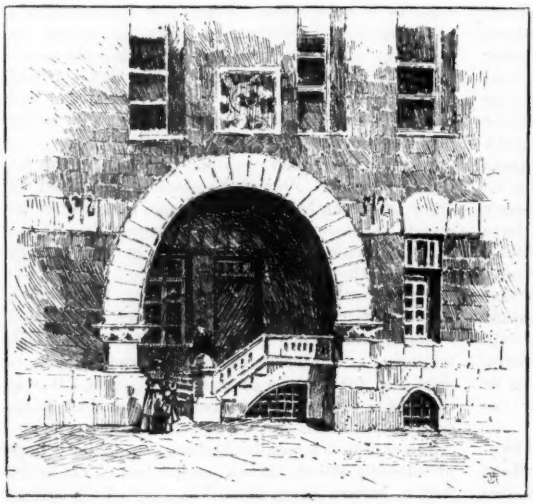
Everybody knows how rapid is the utterance, how rhetorical and original is the style, of Mr. Brooks's preaching. He is said to have to go rapidly, lest he should stammer. Though so mighty in brain and gigantic in size, he may be subject to nervous qualms.

When the late Principal Tulloch heard him in Boston he was electrified, and wrote: "I have just heard the most remarkable sermon I ever heard in my life—I use the word in no American sense—from Mr. Phillips Brooks, an Episcopal clergyman here: equal to the best of Frederick Robertson's sermons, with a vigour and force of thought which he has not always. I have never heard preaching like it, and you know how slow I am to praise preachers. So much thought and so much life combined—such a reach of mind, and such a depth of insight and soul! I was electrified. I could have got up and shouted. I shook hands with the preacher afterwards, who asked me to preach in the afternoon for him; but I would not do this." We are not surprised that he did not care to lead people even to draw comparisons.

In the lectures which Phillips Brooks gave before the Divinity School in Yale College ten years ago, he has given us capital suggestions as to his theory of preaching and working. "Truth through personality" is his description of preaching. "The truth must come really through the person; not merely over the lips, not merely into his understanding and out through his pen. It must come through his character, his affections, his whole intellectual and moral being." He has no fear that the day of the pulpit is passed. He says that when men are taking pessimistic views of the pulpit, "some morning the voice of a true preacher is heard in the land, and all the streets are full of men crowding to hear him, just exactly as were the streets of Constantinople when Chrysostom was going to preach in the Church of the Apostles, or the streets of London when Latimer was bravely telling the truth at St. Paul's." He hopes that the "pulpit droning of old saws," with the "monotonous reiteration of commonplaces and abstractions," will disappear, but he believes that the sermon, which is the "utterance of living truths by living men, was never more powerful than it is to-day," and that people "never came to it with more earnestness, or carried away from it more good results."

While in the pulpit Dr. Brooks likes gravity, he is sarcastic in speech concerning the "merely solemn ministers." He says they are "cheats and shams." As they stand with their "little knobs of prejudice down their strait coats of precision," he likens them to the "chest of drawers which Mr. Bob Sawyer showed to Mr. Winkle in his little surgery: "Dummies, my dear boy," said he to his impressed and astonished visitor; "half the drawers have nothing in them, and the other half don't open." Such a description is very, very far from applying to the satirist himself.

"A genuine respect for the people" is one of the things that Dr. Brooks most strongly insists upon. By this he means "a profound respect for them simply as men and women, a deep value for the capacity that is in them, a sense that we are theirs and not they ours." He says "we patronise the laity now that our power of domineering over them has been mercifully taken away. Many a time the tone of a clergyman who has talked of the relations of the preacher and people, setting forth with the best will in the world their mutual functions, reminds one of the sermon of the mediæval preacher who, discoursing on this same subject, on the necessary



ENTRANCE TO THE PARSONAGE.

co-operation of the clergy and laity, took his text out of Job i. 14: 'The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them.'" He hates supercilious preaching as well as the affectedly solemn, but he appreciates that which, in its real humanity and humour, he describes as "the bloom of the highest life." He does not mind seeing a smile on the faces of a congregation, sweeping across them "like the breath of a May morning." He says, "The smile that is stirred by true humour, and the smile that comes from the mere tickling of the fancy, are as different one from the other as the tears that sorrow forces from the soul are from tears you compel a man to shed by pinching him."

We do not suppose that Dr. Brooks produces his sermons without effort. He would not boast of the short time it takes to write a sermon. He puts his best into every endeavour. He condemns the minister who does not do his best, but "whose work is at loose ends—a man who treats his people with a neglect with which no doctor would treat his patients, and who writes his sermons on Saturday nights." He says, "That last I count the crowning disgrace of a man's ministry. It is dishonest. It is giving but the last flicker of the week, as it sinks in its socket, to those who, simply to talk about it as a bargain, have paid for the full light burning at its brightest." He says that which is similar to the foregoing in respect to praying as well as preaching. "A prayer must have thought in it. . . . To take the thought out of a prayer does not ensure its going up to God. It may be too light as well as too heavy to ascend. I saw once in a shop window in London a placard which simply announced 'Limp Prayers.' It described, I believe, a certain sort of binding which was for sale within, but it brought to mind many a prayer to which one had listened, in which he could not join, out of which had been left the whole backbone of thought, and to which he could attach none of his own heart's desires."

The catholicity of the subject of our sketch is one of the elements in the great influence he exerts in a democratic country like the States. The stand he took at Chicago during the Episcopal General Convention in that city gave him great favour in the eyes of the people. He pleaded most earnestly for the recognition of other Protestant bodies as essentially churches, and introduced, in a most vigorous manner, a resolution containing a message of sympathy and brotherly love to the Convocation of the Congregational Churches then also in session in that city. His motion was vetoed by the House of Bishops, but it made him honoured throughout the length and breadth of the Republic. He says out plainly what he holds really.

Head and shoulders above many of his compeers physically, mentally, and spiritually, Phillips Brooks walks Boston streets, crosses its far-famed historic common, or preaches in the noble edifice of "Trinity." He is becoming as well known in England as in America. Several times he has preached under the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, and sent his majestic voice echoing among the arches of that most reverenced of all sanctuaries, Westminster Abbey. The Queen has listened to him with delight, and her subjects at any time are ready to crowd to hear him. He is wedded to Boston, the Athens of America, or, as some delight to call it, "the Hub of the Universe." He is needed there. His manly utterances, his intellectual skill, and broad sympathies, are needed to counteract some of the latitudinarian tendencies of that remarkable city. Boston is the place where he first drew breath. He was born there in 1835. He had six brothers, and of them four are filling honoured positions in the church as ministers. He was greatly influenced by Dr. Vinton, the rector of a church which was an offshoot from the old Church of Trinity. He graduated at Harvard, and received his theological training at the seminary of Alexandria in Virginia. He became first the minister of the Church of the Advent, Philadelphia, then assistant to his friend and former pastor, Dr. Vinton, then rector of Holy Trinity, Philadelphia, where he remained until he was called to his present unique sphere in Boston. The place of his birth has become the place of his love and toil. All recent attempts to induce him to accept any other sphere have been futile. One can only hope that a life so useful may be long preserved, and an influence so potent may be widened with the years.

THE TRAITOR IN THE UPPER ROOM.

BY THE REV. J. TELFORD, B.A.

John, "leaning back as he was on Jesus' breast, saith unto Him, Lord, who is it?"—John xiii. 25.

A WHOLE world is traversed as we pass from the first to the second group of questions in the Upper Room. From Peter's jealousy for his Master's dignity to Judas' plots against his Master's life, that is indeed a descent from heaven to hell. We see the lurid contrast between unbelief without and faith within, as we study the growth of trust and love toward Jesus in the hearts of His disciples, when compared with the spirit of the Scribes and Pharisees. Here is another mournful contrast. Among the twelve there is a traitor. Christ and the Eleven are stricken to the dust by this terrible inroad of Satan into the Upper Room. Even in His glory the Saviour remembers that hour of agony. We do well to urge such a plea for mercy—

> "By the mournful word that told
> Treachery lurked within Thy fold,
> From Thy seat above the sky,
> Hear our solemn litany."

Painful though it is to read this story of Judas, it yields some solemn and much-needed warnings. We see how traitors are made, how traitors are unmasked, how traitors are separated from true disciples. God save us from knowing more about treachery than we may gather here!

THE WARNING.

IT was Jesus who felt the traitor's presence intolerable. Little did the disciples fancy that there was such an one amongst them. The art with which hypocrisy may wear the robes of discipleship seems to flash upon us here with a terrible surprise. Those simple hearted men, who had followed Christ with loyalty which makes our eyes grow dim, were not able to grasp the thought of such consummate treachery. They themselves were found wanting in the hour of trial, for all forsook their Master and fled. But the spirit was willing, if the flesh was weak. Not a man amongst them that did not echo the words of Peter, "If I must die with Thee I will not deny Thee." "He spake exceeding vehemently," "and in *like manner* spake they all."

But though the disciples were deceived, their Master's eyes had been open. "The prince of this world cometh," He said, "and hath nothing in Me." Satan was not, however, to be without his prey. Jesus watched, with such anguish as only redeeming love could feel at the wreck of an immortal soul, the ruin of one of His own followers. Whilst He washed the feet of the twelve He thought of Judas. Look at Jesus kneeling there, performing the lowliest office of love for one whose heart Satan had already made his throne. Would not the deed of his Master, the touch of His fingers, the glance of His eye, cast out the evil spirit from the worst of all "demoniacs" of the Gospel history? Even Judas might have been saved had he known and used that prayer, "Cast a look and break my heart."

The deed of love having failed to awaken remorse and penitence, there was nothing left for Jesus save to purge His floor. We seem to see the fan of which the Baptist spoke, in His hand. Christ may not suffer the Son of Perdition to sit in that hallowed place when He speaks of the many mansions in the Father's House, nor to be with Him when He pours out His inmost soul in the unutterable prayer that crowns His mediatorial work. Judas must be gone; till then, Christ's lips are sealed. Whether Judas was present at the institution of the Lord's Supper is a disputed point. Jesus seems to have established the Christian memorial whilst He celebrated the Paschal feast. We might therefore conclude that Judas was present. He did not go out till after the Supper. Yet, though the Holy of Holies is thus closed lest it should be profaned by the eyes of a traitor, some significant words are spoken. What stabs they must have given to Judas ere that darkened soul passed beyond the reach of grace! It is well to ponder over every detail of this narrative. There are some sorely tempted ones whose heart Satan is trying hard to enter. The unholy deed which would separate from Jesus is perhaps almost done. Oh, let us bar our hearts ere Satan enter in!

It was Peter's protest against Christ's condescension that gave an opening for the first appeal. True disciples, whom grace had already cleansed, needed nothing save that washing of the feet. Christ added, in a sentence that searched every heart, "And ye are clean, but not all." Judas alone knew what it meant—that wail of Christ over the guilt which had polluted a disciple's soul. Cowering there as one who would fain hide his guilt, who wished his hideous purpose concealed till the moment came for its safe accomplishing, Judas felt the eye of flame pierce him through and through. His treachery was, as yet, a secret between himself and his Master. He might still hope that his old comrades would remain in ignorance of his real character.

Was not Christ's revelation a soul-stirring appeal? The fact that He had seen through Judas' disguise showed that He was different from His disciples. Such a thought had made the woman of Samaria return to her village, saying, "Come, see a man that told me all that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" Well would it have been had this revelation made the traitor cry, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" There was mercy and grace even then, had Judas sought it with his whole heart.

A more deliberate home-thrust was made when Jesus had "taken His garments and sat down again." Judas listened whilst the significance of that act of condescension was made clear to the dullest heart. There is a new, a deeper meaning in that interpretation as we thus ponder it. The traitor's last lesson in Christ's school revealed the dignity of the love that stoops to serve. Jesus claims His place: "Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am." Yet even He was ready to serve His disciples. Could not Judas understand? The Messiah might not be such as he had vainly hoped, but all His stores of power and love were opened to His true followers. Let not Judas fancy that there was no guerdon for the friends of Jesus.

Whilst these words were still falling on his wondering ears, there came another home-thrust. One man is deliberately separated from the group. "I speak not of you all." Hardened and possessed by the Wicked One as the traitor is, Christ has no place for him. Ahithophel, whose counsels had been to David as the voice of God; the great statesman who had gone over to the perfidious Absalom, and had been cast aside after his treachery as a useless weapon—his perfidy was the type of Judas' more

awful crime. The lament of that Psalm which Judas knew so well, was to find a deeper meaning in his hideous deed—

> "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted,
> Which did eat of my bread; hath lifted up his heel against me."

Surely a comparison like this might have awaked even Judas, and brought him to repentance. Shut out from that circle though he was, Judas might have even now cried for grace: "Oh, let me enter in."

CONSTERNATION OF THE ELEVEN.

AS yet the disciples did not understand. They dimly felt that they were in the presence of some mystery which would add another terror to the hour of darkness. But Jesus could bear it no longer. The precious moments which were to brace His soul for the Cross, which were to open wells of salvation for that first company of disciples, and to the innumerable multitude who were in coming generations to share their faith (St. John xvii. 20), those moments were being lost. It was time for Judas to be gone.

Few things had moved our Lord like this man's treachery. "It was the shock of a religious nature, a kind of horror felt by His pure heart at the sight of this Satanic crime, and at the approach of its invisible author." Satan was in the Upper Room. Satan was using a disciple as his tool. "Jesus was troubled in spirit." And not only Jesus. As He spoke all that company shared the trouble. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." St. John was an old man when he wrote these reminiscences, but he still saw, across half a century of years, the wonder, the pain, the suspicion, that leaped into the eyes of his friends at these words. Peter's gaze seemed to read every soul. Friend turned to friend in amazement, as if each would satisfy himself of the fidelity of the rest. Who amongst them was so lost to gratitude, so blind to Divine Love, to Almighty Power, as to betray Him who had transformed their lives by His presence?

A horror of darkness settled on the feast. Here was trouble indeed. Not even that Upper Room was sacred. There was an enemy there—mighty, because concealed. It is a glorious burst of indignation; a noble proof of loyalty that we discern in their response to the words of Jesus. Each man is passionately anxious to wipe off the stain from his own character. What disciple could live under such a cloud? "And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began to say unto Him every one, Lord, is it I?" (St. Matt. xxvi. 22.) What searchings of heart are here! Was it possible that such a crime should stain the hands of one who even now was a disciple? Christ's words recalled many a weakness, many a murmur. Their secret faults were brought out into that awful light. Probably Christ intended them thus to fear. Their spirit gave Him no little concern. What hope of future concord when strife could break out even in that hallowed place, under the eyes of Jesus? But the fact that they put the question establishes their innocence. They were conscious of no such crime. Had their Master pointed to one of the eleven as the future traitor, they would have besought Him to let His vengeance lay them low before they sank into such a hell as that of which He spoke in "words of immeasurable ruin, words of immeasurable woe." "The Son of Man goeth, even as it is written of Him; but woe unto that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had not been born."

It is significant that Judas joined in the question. St. Matthew places an interval between his words and theirs. His question is the more awful, standing as it does after the doom Jesus had pronounced. The traitor found it necessary to keep up appearances, though he had closed his bargain with the priests. But whilst the rest said, "Is it I, Lord?" Judas would not use that title. "Is it I, Rabbi?" was his question. Jesus was not his Lord. Christ had already said, "He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, the same shall betray Me." Judas received a more definite answer. We must suppose it to have been whispered, for the rest of the company evidently remained in ignorance. But Christ's "Thou hast said," showed Judas that his old Master read the intents of his heart. He had but to speak, and the eleven were ready to act as His champions.

THE TRAITOR UNMASKED.

PETER burned to pierce the disguise of the traitor. His ready wit soon found out a device. John was leaning on Jesus' breast. He could whisper to their Master. A sign passed between the Apostles; then the beloved disciple, "leaning back as he was on Jesus' breast," asked the solemn question, "Lord, who is it?" Nor was his question left unanswered; it was probably a relief to Jesus to tell the secret. It was part of the Paschal ceremonial for the father of the family to offer those who sat with him pieces of bread or flesh dipped in a reddish sauce made of almonds, nuts, figs, and other fruits boiled in wine. These represented the fertility of the Promised Land. The colour of the sauce is said to have been a memento of the bricks of Egypt, the sweetness recalled the Divine alleviations which lightened their hard bondage. Into this sauce the bitter herbs were

dipped, as also the cakes of unleavened bread. Jesus, who presided at the meal, gave to each his portion. Hence the appointed sign. Perhaps the beloved disciple had time to whisper to Peter, but that is not probable. How the loyal heart of John must have been beating as he waited for the sign which should unmask the traitor! At last it was given. Judas completed his course with Jesus by breaking bread with Him whom he was soon to betray with a kiss. Here was another appeal to his conscience. If he had been heartbroken at receiving it, he might yet have found pardon. His conduct sealed his doom. "And after the sop, then entered Satan into him." The murderous thought had been there before; now Satan himself more fully entered. The man had chosen another master.

There was nothing left save to bid him depart. It is almost as if Christ cast a mantle round the traitor to protect him from the rage and hate of the Eleven. Their eyes seem to have been holden. When the command was given, "That thou doest, do quickly," they regarded it as some commission which he was to execute for the band. So Judas stepped out of the lighted room. He had scarcely a moment before accepted the sop which Christ offered. Such was the prophecy. He had eaten the bread, now he was lifting up his heel against his Master. Christ had given John the clue to the scene; He hurried Judas away before the company was aware of its significance. There were two swords in the room. The disciples had anticipated their Master's counsel, "He that hath none, let him sell his cloak and buy a sword." A few hours later Peter used one of them on the high priest's servant; he would scarcely have hesitated to use it on Judas had he understood the plots of that son of perdition.

The traitor's end need not long detain us here. He had already made his bargain. Mary lavished on the feet of Jesus the precious ointment which cost three hundred pence. Judas sold Him to His enemies for thirty pieces of silver. Dismissed from the Upper Room, he went at once to his new masters. They recognised that the long-sought opportunity was come. Preparations were hastened. Then Judas went out to Gethsemane, accompanied by "a great multitude, with swords and staves." The sign was given. Judas stepped for the last time into the presence of his old Master with the words, "Hail! Rabbi," and the greeting which made Jesus ask, "Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" Then Christ spoke His farewell word to the traitor, "Friend, do that for which thou art come."

A terrible awaking followed the condemnation of Jesus. The eyes of Judas were opened—he saw his crime; he confessed the purity of Christ. The price of treachery was brought back to the priests with that mournful confession, "I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood." But Judas found that he was too late. His paymasters kept no conscience of their own. They watched unmoved the despair of Judas. The thirty pieces of silver rattled on the floor at their feet, and whilst they yet looked one on another, Judas went out to accomplish his doom. All Jerusalem was soon ringing with the story of the traitor and his bitter end.

HOW JUDAS BECAME A TRAITOR.



EONARDO DA VINCI'S masterpiece in the refectory at Milan has faded, but that "Last Supper" has become one of the best-known pictures in Christendom. Judas is the only man in the company whose face is wrapped in shadow. On the rest there falls the dawning of a better day; on him alone rests the darkness of an endless night. He clutches the bag, he upsets the salt—a graphic touch due to local superstitions. The portrait is said to have cost the painter a whole year's study in the lowest quarter of the city. Every feature of that wondrous face declares, so it has been thought, that he is the traitor. One may safely say, however, that Judas could not have had such a face. It could not have been cloaked. St. John's "Lord, who is it?" would then have been an idle question. The man's countenance would have made his plot an open secret. Yet we may not quarrel with Da Vinci's portrait. It is a prophecy. Gazing on this face we learn what a man becomes when Satan enters into his heart.

How, then, did Judas become a traitor? It was self-seeking that wrecked his life. Love of the world made him set self before his Master. "Judas was the only southern Jew among the twelve—the only man brought up, as it were, under the shadow of the Temple." The men from the north, whom Christ called from their fishing-nets or other toil to His service, were cast in a different mould. All shared the prevailing views as to the Messiah's Kingdom—they were to be great through the triumph of Jesus. "In the minds of the others," Dr. Geikie says, "the dream was loyally subordinated to love and duty to the Master; in his, self seized and held abidingly the first place. The mildew of his soul had spread apace. . . . Gain became a passion with him, till, under the very eyes of his Master, he embezzled, as treasurer, the petty funds in his hands." When Christ's way grew darker, Judas felt that there was no time to lose. Avarice gave him keener foresight than the rest. He made up his mind—not unlikely whilst Jesus described Mary's deed of love as the anointing for His burial—that he would not lose his chance of profit, even though it meant the betrayal of his Master.

Whatever else the story of Judas teaches, let it show us to what lengths the love of self may lead. At one time Judas was a loyal disciple. But at

best his ambition was but to climb with Jesus to earthly fame and prosperity. This it was that steeled his heart. Whilst virtue was going out from Jesus to the sick and sinning, Judas was plotting for himself. Christ saw and felt all this. "Have I not chosen you twelve?" He asked, "and one of you is a devil." (St. John vi. 70.) Steward and almoner—a disciple and a messenger—Judas is the saddest illustration in history of the fact that a man surrounded by the influences of grace, living in the very presence of Jesus, may sink step by step to the depths of infamy.

It is not enough to be with Christ. We must observe His sayings. We must deny ourselves and take up our cross if we are to be true disciples. We must beware of yielding to temptation—beware most of all of living to ourselves. That downward path Judas trod, and when the hour was come—when all the Divine drawings had been resisted, when not even the feet-washing could open his eyes to the infinite love of Jesus—then Satan entered into his heart. The place was ready for him. He was lord and master, now. That entering in of Satan may open our eyes to the wages of sin. Set beside that phrase the words of another disciple. Both were in the Upper Room, but what a gulf divided them, what a vaster gulf divides them for ever! "We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but He that was begotten of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth not." That is the only way to preserve ourselves unspotted amid all temptations. What havoc Satan works in human lives is written for us all in this story of Judas.

The parable of the tares here received its most striking confirmation. Christ alone knew the character of Judas. He had long patience, but the hour of separation came, as it must come, sooner or later, for every hypocrite. We are warned to strip off disguises from ourselves, to cry to Him who called even Judas "friend," for grace to see ourselves as He sees us, to turn to Him for cleansing. This also we may learn. If we allow Satan to close our eyes, even he will not do it for ever. When the tool has done its work it will be cast aside. Satan has no pity for his victims. Poor Judas! the destroyer opened his eyes when he knew that no backward step was possible. What cared he for Judas? He left him to his conscience, and his conscience goaded him to his doom. "Good were it for that man if he had never been born."

"ON THE SLY."

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.

MR. GEOFFREY SIPPIT, who has been partaking of what does not belong to him, is an example of the evil which is generally connected with doing things "on the sly."

Sly doings often begin very early in the history of human life, and, unless they are detected and checked, they often result in something very ugly in after life. "Sly-boots" is a very common name as applied to the quite young, and I have no doubt—as far as the adjective part, "sly," is concerned—is very well deserved in many cases. Even in the cradle slyness begins, and it develops afterwards in more and more substantial ways as the after processes of short-coating, knickerbockering, and trowsering give place to one another in their turn. Well would it be if timely warnings, from a loving parent's lips, were heard and heeded in life's early days.

I may be allowed to remark parenthetically that I do not profess to give any explanation of the association of the noun "boots" with the adjective "sly;" why the formula does not mean sly-shoes or sly-slippers, or why not sly-Bluchers, Wellingtons, or high-lows, I cannot tell; I accept it as I do many other names and formulæ, content to let their origin remain in mystery.

Aye; "slyness" seems embodied in mankind, more or less, and the "more" means in many people a good deal.

The old serpent was sly. He was very sly in those first dealings of his in the Garden of Eden; and some of his poison, in this direction as in many others, seems to have entered our first parents' blood, and come down to ours. We generally put off all slyness on the fox, poor fellow; he has to carry that as well as his brush; but I think there is a touch of the fox in all mankind; and many a sly thing is done concerning which the doers thereof would be more excusable if they had a brush.

For example: if Mr. Geoffrey Sippit were really a fox, with only just the appearance of a man; if, under the grand lappets of his coat, he had his brush neatly folded up and stowed away; then, knowing well that that champagne was not made of sour grapes, and that it was well within his reach, he would be more excusable for taking a jorum of it, though it were not his, than he is now.

Geoffrey Sippit's principle all through life had been, "It doesn't matter if you're not found out." "Many things which may not be done in sight may be done on the sly." And on this principle he had hitherto gone through life. But it is a long

lane that has no turning, and there is no bad principle that works out well to the end. To say the least of these, they have stings in their tails.

Geoffrey worked his principles in all directions—with his parents, and his schoolmaster, and his employers, and everyone with whom he had to do. Geoffrey Sippit began with lumps of sugar at home, proceeded to pipe and tobacco at school, went on further to helping himself with his employer's time and property as he grew older; and finally finished by being driven to his wit's end to get a piece of bread.

It had been Mr. Sippit's misfortune to have lived a long time as butler with an old lady, and to do pretty nearly what he liked in the place. But he did it all on the sly. And amongst Mr. Sippit's doings was wine-drinking; he just took it on the sly, and managed so artfully that he was never found out.

Poor soul! when told by Mr. Sippit that more wine had to be ordered in, she could not make out where what had been there had gone. It must have drained away through a leak which Mr. Sippit said was somewhere in the cellar, though for the life of him he could not find it out.

But old ladies don't live for ever, and Geoffrey Sippit's mistress died, and he had to seek another place. He found one with a nobleman who entertained a great deal, which was just what would suit him. Mr. Sippit knew that there would be a good deal of wine going, and that would exactly fall in with his ideas. Why should not some of it come his way?—on the sly.

And so it did for a while, but not for very long. One day there was to be a large dinner-party, and Mr. Sippit had to make all needful preparations in his department. And a part of these preparations consisted in getting ready the wine. Dearly would Mr. S. have liked to attack one of those bottles openly—to have made some of its contents fizz, and splutter, and fume, first of all into a glass, and thence down his throat. But the experiment might not be successful; and if he were caught he must certainly come to grief.

And to grief he did come. The champagne proved too strong for his caution one day. Mr. Sippit had done a good deal from time to time in the way of glass-draining, and of bottle-draining too; but a whole bottle he had never hitherto attacked.

All pitchers which go too often to the well are sure to be broken at last; and the day came for Mr. Sippit to break, or to be broken, whichever you like. The champagne was on the sideboard ready for dinner, and Mr. Sippit himself was arrayed ready for dinner too. Why should not the two readies come together? It might be done on the sly—one glass might be taken on the sly—the cork could be put in quickly again; that bottle need not be used until the last, when folk had had nearly enough, and would not be so particular as at first; it might even pass as having been opened, but scarcely wanted. There was no one near, so Mr. Geoffrey would help himself "on the sly."

The bottle was accordingly uncorked. Mr. Geoffrey kept his eye on the door through which anyone was likely to come; fizz went the champagne into the glass, fizz went it down Mr. Geoffrey's throat—and some doctors would tell you, fizz it went inside—and he smacked his lips and thought that he himself was much the better, and that his master was not much the worse. Now, when people do wrong and want to be sure of not being found out, they ought to be able not only to cock their eye in one direction or two, as you see Mr. Sippit's cocked in the picture before you, but they ought to be able to look all round, all at once, and even to look round the corner. I am not talking now of anything moral, and of one's not being found out, or rather seen all through from beginning to end, by an eye above; I am speaking merely of one's being seen or found out by one's fellow-men. Upon what extraordinary little bits of evidence many a man is hanged! Most people who do evil, do so thinking they will never be found out. Mr. Sippit ought to have cocked both eyes, and to have done it in an impossible, or at any rate unusual, kind of way too—viz., at right angles—if he were to make sure of not being found out. As it happened, he was having his champagne on the sly only so far as his own imagination was concerned; for there was another door which he ought to have kept his eye upon also. At that door Mr. Sippit's master was just about to enter, when he saw his servant's head thrown back, and the glass to his mouth, at sight of which he quickly drew back, and softly closed the door again. And so, though he thought he was safe on the sly, Mr. Sippit was seen by an unobserved eye; and these tricks he no longer had chances to try, for the next day he was dismissed, and no character would his master give him.

One person and another wrote about him, but the plain unvarnished truth was told in reply, and he had to drop down from one poor situation to another, until at last he became a pauper, and there was an end of Mr. Sippit.

Geoffrey Sippit made two mistakes when he went taking that champagne on the sly: he thought if his master did not see him it did not matter; but he forgot that there were two who did see him, and these were God, and himself. These two are looking at all times, and in every place, and we can do nothing really on the sly as regards them.

Now, there are some few thoughts connected with this slydom on which I should like to say a few words.

What a folly it is to suppose that God is not privy to all we do, and all we think too! There is no "on the sly" with Him. Folk, when they look everywhere else, forget to look up. There was a man who went to steal corn from his neighbour's field. He took his little boy with him to keep a look-out, so as to give warning in case anyone should come along. Before commencing, he looked all round,

XUM



"Well would it be if timely warnings from a loving parent's lips were heard and heeded in life's early days."—*p.* 599.

first one way and then the other; and not seeing any person, he was just about to fill his bag, when the son cried out, "Father, there is one way you haven't looked yet." The father supposed that someone was coming, and asked his son which way he meant? The boy answered, "You forgot to look up!" The word struck home, as indeed it could scarce do otherwise, and, conscience-stricken, the man took the boy by the hand, and went home, leaving his neighbour's corn where it was.

It was on the very ground of His being able to see at all times and in all places that the Indians of South America would have nothing to do with the Christian's God. "You tell us," they said to the first missionaries, "that the God of the Christians knows everything, that nothing is hidden from Him, that He is everywhere, and sees all that is done. Now we do not desire a God so sharp-sighted; we choose to live with freedom in our woods, without having a perpetual observer of our actions over our heads."

As long as God is an all-seeing God, there is no such thing as doing anything really on the sly. And we can't get rid of God's sight. There was a girl who went into one of her master's rooms to steal. In that room was a portrait, the eyes of which seemed to follow her wherever she went; so in order that she might steal without this rebuke, she took down the portrait and cut out its eyes.

But this is not all. A man sees himself. He has an inner eye that he cannot escape from, that sees and knows the badness and wrongness of what is being done. No doubt that eye may be blinded by an obstinate continuance in evil; our eye may become evil, the light that is in us may become darkness, and then how great will be that darkness! But I am not writing now for those who are in that state, but for those who have lowered their moral standard so that they will do *some* things on the sly, which they ought not to do at all.

We should never be able to do on the sly what cannot be done openly without a loss of self-respect.

Self-respect should have so watchful an eye that it would be impossible for a man to go out "on the sly" from it. Wherever a man goes he carries himself; and he ought to carry his good self as well as his bad self—the principle that would make him flee from the evil, as well as that which would make him do it. Self-respect is very different from self-esteem: the latter generally puffs a man up with pride, and often makes him make a fool of himself; the former is, under God, a mighty power to keep him straight.

There are some persons who in the name of religion would destroy "self" in every form. But to destroy "self" is to destroy the actual man. God gave a man a "self," and He intended him to take care of that self; and while it is no doubt a part of the great whole of humanity, it is also complete in itself, just as a sand-grain is a part of the sea-shore, but it is also a grain in all respects complete; or as a tree is a part of the forest, but it is a tree perfect in itself, with its own roots and leaves, and its own individual perfect life. The "Ego"—the "I"—I must respect him; I must not try to play the artful dodger with him; I must not try to "do" him; I may not go out on the sly from him. I must have an eye to watch myself, and an ear to listen to myself. I must feel that I have a position too noble to do this and that, on the sly, that I would not do in the open.

Self-respect is a lawful power, 't is a mighty power, 't is an extensive power, 't is an omnipresent power. We ought to be angry when we find our bad self trying to be sly with us. We are ever so much more cunning than we think; people are thought very badly of who cheat others, but that man is to be far worse thought of, who cheats himself.

"On the sly!" The whole thing is full of folly. As if the nature of a thing were altered because we do not choose to look at it; or because we choose to look at it in a particular way, which is not the right one. The nature of things I find to be, generally speaking, pretty stiff; and the nature of the moralities I find to be very stiff indeed. Go at them openly and honestly, above board, and try to bend them or to break them, and you will find what a hard task you have undertaken. They say, "We are; and we shall remain as we are." Then, if we want to violate these moralities, if we are determined to have or to do what should not be either had or done, we twist them in some way or other so as to accomplish our purpose—we circumvent the morality; we go out "on the sly."

"Sandy, if this weren't Sabbath, what would ye take for that calf?" Sandy's questioner was dealing with the fourth commandment "on the sly." The slyness hurts us; that with which we were sly remains unchanged.

A great deal of this allowance of doing things "on the sly" comes from men's having a false standard by which they set their opinions. Their standard is this: mere human opinion about anything, and not the absolute nature of the thing itself. What follows is, that, so long as men keep square outwardly with opinion, they care little as to fact. So, then, provided only it be withdrawn from the censure of public opinion, or that of anyone they are bound to respect, they do not mind doing it "on the sly." The man who has no motive but respect for opinion or authority will never be kept straight. However straight he might be kept in the outer tenor of his life, he will never be in its spirit and reality. Once let him slip away from it—from the eye which he thinks is on him—and he is ready for whatever he desires "on the sly." There is a great deal of truth in the saying about "Kissing the evil one through a gridiron."

A vast number of the things which people do on the sly are small things—small in themselves, but with great results. You remember it was the LITTLE foxes which destroyed the vines—sly little

creatures, able to do tremendous mischief. These small things are pegs on which great things hang. When we trace back the great things of our life for good or evil, we find almost every one of them dependent on something very small. If such a little thing had not happened, such and such a great thing (for good or evil, as the case may be) would not have happened either.

The deterioration of our character generally comes by "littles," and it is in littles that people generally act "on the sly."

Now as to these littles, no one on earth can tell what they will eventually do. No one can tell how big a tree will grow from a little seed. People trifle with things because they are small. There are many people who to-day would do this and that on the sly, in littles, who perhaps would not dream of going out on the sly in more important matters; but they little know what they will do by-and-bye. "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" and that very thing he did. It was, perhaps, the first sly taking of a bit of sugar that made the after thief.

But to come back to our friend Sippit just for a moment. I want to know, Sippit, how it was that you came to take that champagne? You old rogue! you did it because you *could* do it. "The power to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done," we are told; you had that champagne in your power, and you came to grief. You thought you could do it on the sly (though it turned out you could not), and you did it. The "can" was with you, but not the "will" to control the "can." You thought the "slyness" of the affair would carry you through, but you see there is such a thing as being too clever by half; and this was the case with you.

Now life is full of "cans"—of possibilities—all of which have to be controlled by the "will." If we were to do all the "cans" which are with us every day, the world would be in a fine state. We all of us can kill, steal, lie, and do the most outrageous things almost every moment of our life. At the present moment I can go down-stairs and bang all my worthy cook's saucepans and mysterious apparatus about, and frighten her—poor soul!—out of her seven senses. But it is not my will to do so, especially as—though I don't know what it is to be—I am expecting some refection for the inner man in about an hour hence. You are quite safe, cook; do your duty in that state of life to which you are called, do it for my sake and for your own. I have a good will towards you, and though you live in the midst of the most tremendous "cans"—including my mincing you up with your own chopper, or punching you into an indistinct kind of fog with your own rolling-pin—no terrible "can" will hurt you. Good soul! you never even thought of such a thing—no; but I'm merely telling you of the possibilities of things, and how they are prevented from coming about.

Yes! good readers, we do live in the midst of the most tremendous possibilities. They are open for our wills to act on—willing the good, and willing not the bad. They must all be met by our wills. And if we let our wills become weakened, and deteriorated, by not standing up against evil and resisting temptation, but by doing in an underhand way—on the sly—what we would not do openly, there is no knowing to what extent we may lose—and how soon—that power of will.

Our thought will be, not to reject the doing of this and that at once, but to think how we *can* do it on the sly. Opportunities enough will in all probability present themselves; we shall grow in craft, as we do in anything else that we practise. We shall lose our own self-respect; and with it one of our great safeguards.

Bread eaten in secret, and stolen waters, might be pleasant, but we know from Scripture whose is the authority for that; and we know how ill such things are found to agree with a man at the last.

I have been speaking of the human will, the will which the Almighty has given every one of us who is counted amongst reasonable beings at all. But I must speak of that will as interpenetrated with the Divine will. That is the way to have your wills: strong to do good, strong to resist evil. The Holy Spirit is the great mover and confirmer of the human will for good.

But what is the end of this going or doing "on the sly?" *Cui bono?*—how will it work out?

What do you say, friend Sippit? Champagne doesn't come your way now. You're dressed altogether differently from what you were when I first made your acquaintance. You now wear a kind of brownish-grey, or greyish-brown, a kind of twilight colour; I don't know exactly how to describe it. And there are a great many living in the same place with you, all of whom wear the same colour and the same cut. Unburden your soul to me, and for old acquaintance' sake tell me where you are.

"In the workhus."

In the workhouse, Sippit! And how in the world did you get there?

"Well, to stop you bothering about it, it was all through trying it on the sly, when my guvn'r was too 'cute for me, and I lost my character, and went from bad to worse, until I'm landed here for life. 'T was all through a glass of champagne I took as I thought on the sly; and now instead of champagne 't is 'skilly.'"

No strange thing happened to you, Sippit. The sly folk are generally found out, and in some way sooner or later come to grief at last; it may not be to-day or to-morrow, in this way or in that, with this person or with that, but there's an ugly end somehow, and in some way.

And here we part company, and I hope in more senses than one; for I am persuaded that there is a heap of misery, disappointment, and shame wrapped up in that too common sentence and practice

"ON THE SLY."

THE TENDER MERCIES OF PHILIP II.

(A NEW BOOK OF MARTYRS.—IV.)

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., LL.D., ETC. ETC.



"Dirk Willemson extended his hand to his enemy."—*p.* 607.

IT was in 1555 that Philip II. succeeded his father, Charles V., as ruler of the Netherlands. The abdication of Charles when little over fifty years of age, and his retirement to the Abbey of St. Just, in Spain, was a strange proceeding, whether it was due to mortified ambition, as some say; or to an evil conscience, as the Protestants alleged; or to an honest desire to occupy his mind more with the things of eternity, according to the most favourable explanation of the step. But the change of ruler brought no relief to the oppressed Protestants of the Netherlands. The very first act of Philip was to confirm his father's edict authorising the Inquisition to punish heretics in the most summary way, and even enlarging the powers which his father's edict of 1550 had conferred. The old horror at the very idea of the Spanish Inquisition was spread through the kingdom, for though the people of the Netherlands were not unfamiliar with inquisitors and inquisition, the *Spanish* Inquisition had such an infernal repute that its very name caused a thrill of horror.

And so the work of butchering God's saints went on. One of the first and most interesting victims was one Angelus Merula, born at the Brill in 1482. While priest of Horfleet, he had earnestly studied the Scriptures, seen the errors of Rome, and begun to preach

"heretical sentiments." Among other "heresies," he taught his people that there is nothing necessary to salvation but what is to be found in the Word of God; that faith without charity was not a true faith; that men ought to live according to the rules of the Gospel, without following any other rule; that those who parted with their estates to beg were not the true poor; that the "Salve Regina" was a blasphemous canticle, since it ascribed to a mere creature what belongs only to God and His Son Jesus Christ. Summoned to the Hague, he found a little catechism prepared for him, consisting of a hundred and eight questions, framed out of his manuscripts, to all of which he was required to give answers. Merula was greatly loved and respected by the people; he had built a hospital for the poor at the Brill, and his good deeds, his learning, and his high character were in everyone's mouth. The inquisitors were nonplussed, for they could not get him to recant, and they were afraid to burn him; so they had recourse to a trick so mean and paltry that only the most despicable of judges could have ever entertained it.

Merula was flattered on the ground of his great usefulness, and was pressed not to allow his great influence with the people to be cut short. And he was assured that if he would only own that he had been rash in trying to change some customs which were in their nature indifferent, his life would be spared, and he would be allowed to return to his people. To this he assented. He was accordingly brought out and placed on a scaffold, and a paper was read which he could not follow, owing to his deafness and the low tone in which it was read. In reality it consisted of the main articles of his belief, with an abjuration of them and of all the heresies of Luther, and of every opinion contrary to the faith of Rome. In the paper he professed regret for all his errors, and promised the most absolute submission to the authorities of the Church. Fancying that the paper referred only to the trifling matters which he had agreed to surrender, he declared his assent to all that it contained. Before signing the paper he desired to read it, but the inquisitors pleaded haste and the excited state of the people. Merula, in his simplicity, not only agreed to renounce his belief, but also consented that his manuscripts should be burnt, that he should be degraded from his benefice, should read his recantation from the pulpit of his church on a Sunday, should be imprisoned for the rest of his life, should lament his sins to the end of his days, and last, not least, should pay the cost of his suit!

The people were horror-struck, and could not account for the sad fall of their favourite minister. Merula, on discovering the trick, was almost demented. "O my God! is it possible that those calumniators should deceive me in such a shameful manner? Have I really abjured Thy truth? I, with a foot in the grave, and, as I may say, half dead? No, my God, never! Such a thought never for a moment came into my mind." He was carried to Louvain, and obliged to live on bread and water every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. But silenced he would not be. The king ordered him to be imprisoned privately at Mons, and his trial brought to an end. The poor man was thrown into a dreadful dungeon, his case was declared to be a relapse, and he was ordered to be burnt. A nephew, greatly attached to him, who had been trying to find him out, arrived at Mons just as they were leading him to the stake. The dungeon, with its filth, vermin, and other abominations, had so reduced him that his nephew hardly knew him. "My son," exclaimed the old man, delighted to see him, "this is the hour when God will have me seal with my blood the truth I have learned in His Word. I am ready to be offered, a pure victim, to Christ. My soul longs to be with God. You have been always faithful to me. You would have been the heir of my estate. I entreat you to bear the loss of that inheritance with the same firmness as I bear the loss of my life. You are of age—marry the woman I designed for you. Put your trust in God. Take care of the hospital which I have founded at the Brill for the poor. I hope the poor will be allowed to enjoy quietly what I have conferred upon them, and that the Attorney-fiscal of the State will be less unmerciful to them than the inquisitors have been to me."

The parting between the uncle and the nephew was inexpressibly tender and affecting. Merula marched on between a monk and the executioner, exhorting the people to love the truth. When he came to the stake, he asked leave to pray. His request was granted. Kneeling down close to the stake and crossing his arms, he poured out his soul in fervent supplication. Suddenly he fell over. "He is afraid to die," was the thought of his enemies. No, it was not that. It was not the fear of death, but death itself. His spirit found its way to God sooner than even his enemies intended. He was not, for God took him.*

Philip had honoured the Low Countries with his presence for four or five years; in 1559 he bade them farewell, on the eve of his departure for his Spanish dominions. The Government of the Netherlands was entrusted to Margaret, Duchess of Parma, natural daughter of Charles V. All the provinces were convoked on the 7th of August at Ghent, to receive the parting communication and farewell of the king. In the presence of a very brilliant assembly the Bishop of Arras arose, and delivered, in the name of his Sovereign, an elaborate address of instruction and farewell. The great object of the discourse was to make known his majesty's determination to trample out every vestige of heresy, wherever it should appear, by the prompt slaughter of all heretics, whoever they might be.

The country, he said, was greatly infested by various "new reprobate and damnable sects"; as these sects, proceeding from the foul fiend, father of discord, had not failed to keep these kingdoms in perpetual dissension and misery, to the manifest displeasure of God Almighty; as his majesty was desirous to avert such terrible evils from his own realm, according to his duty to the Lord God, who would demand reckoning with him hereafter for the welfare of the provinces; as all experience showed that change of religion ever brought desolation and confusion to the commonweal; as low persons,

* See "Brandt's History of the Reformation in the Low Countries," vol. i.

beggars, and vagabonds, under colour of religion, were accustomed to traverse the land for the purpose of plunder and disturbance; therefore, and for other reasons, he had commanded the Regent Margaret of Parma, for the sake of religion and the glory of God, "*accurately and exactly to cause to be enforced the edicts and decrees made of his Imperial Majesty, and renewed by his present Majesty, for the extirpation of all sects and heresies.*" *

On the same day on which this assembly was held, the king had addressed a letter to the Grand Council of Malines, the supreme council of the provinces, and to the provincial councils of the whole country, enjoining them to pay the strictest attention to the edicts, burning, hanging, and burying alive all heretics without compunction, and without respect of persons. In the hands of Anthony Perrenol, then Bishop of Arras, afterwards Archbishop of Malines, and commonly known as Cardinal Granvelle, these sanguinary edicts were not allowed to become a dead letter. He was a man of the highest ability, of whom it is said the king was fit to be only his clerk. He has been called "the Inquisitor King." Of his agents, Peter Titelmann acquired a pre-eminence like that of Graham of Claverhouse afterwards in Scotland. "Contemporary chronicles," says Motley, "give a picture of him as of some grotesque yet terrible goblin, careering through the country by night or day, alone on horseback, smiting the trembling peasants on the head with a great club, spreading dismay far and wide, dragging suspected persons from their firesides or their beds, and thrusting them into dungeons, arresting, torturing, strangling, burning, with hardly the shadow of warrant, information, or process." "How dare you go about alone and unprotected in such work, while I need a strong force for mine?" a secular sheriff once asked him. "Because you deal with bad people," was the reply, "while I seize only the innocent and virtuous, who make no resistance, and allow themselves to be taken like lambs."

This savage monster burned men and women right and left, for mere words, or, in the case of those only suspected, for their secret thoughts. Hearing that a schoolmaster was addicted to reading the Bible, he summoned the man before him, accused him of heresy, and demanded that he should recant. The schoolmaster refused. "Do you not love your wife and children?" asked the inquisitor.—"God knows," said the other, "that if the whole world were of gold, and my own, I would give it all only to have them with me, even had I to live on bread and water and in bondage."—"You have, then, only to renounce your errors."—"Neither for wife, children, nor all the world, can I renounce my God and His truth," answered the schoolmaster. He was forthwith sentenced to the stake, strangled, and thrown into the flames.†

"At about the same time," says Motley, summarising from contemporary writers, "Thomas Calberg, of Tourney, tapestry weaver, within the jurisdiction of this same inquisitor, was convicted of having copied some hymns from a book printed in German. He was burned alive. Another man, whose name has perished, was hacked to death with seven blows of a rusty sword in presence of his wife, who was so horror-stricken that she died on the spot before her husband."

It would be too painful to record the awful tortures to which the heretics were often subjected before they were put to death. It has been said of the Spanish Inquisition:—"The torture took place at midnight, in a gloomy chamber, dimly lighted by torches. The victim—whether man, matron, or tender virgin—was stripped naked, and stretched on the wooden bench. Water, weights, fire, pulleys, screws—all the apparatus by which the sinews could be stretched without cracking, the bones bruised without breaking, and the body racked exquisitely without giving up its ghost—was put into operation. The period during which the torture might be inflicted from day to day was unlimited in duration. Individuals have borne the torture and the dungeon fifteen years, and have been burned at the stake at last."

A more rapid process was resorted to in the case of one Bertrand de Blas, who dared one Christmas Day to tear the wafer from the hands of the officiating priest, demand indignantly whether *that* was the Lord Jesus Christ, and trample it under foot. He made no attempt to escape. He was put thrice to the torture to reveal his accomplices, but he had none. He was then dragged on a hurdle, with his mouth closed with an iron gag, to the market-place. His right hand and foot were then burned and twisted off between two red-hot irons. His tongue was torn out by the roots, and because he still endeavoured to call on the name of the Lord, the iron gag was again applied. With his arms and legs fastened together behind his back, he was then hooked by the middle of his body to an iron chain, and made to swing to and fro over a slow fire till he was entirely roasted. His life lasted almost to the end of these ingenious tortures, but his fortitude lasted as long as his life.

While the Duke of Alva, equally remarkable for his ability and his cruelty, ruled the country, he is said to have boasted that he had brought eighteen thousand six hundred of the people to the scaffold. The number who had perished otherwise defied computation. His dealings with heretics are thus described by Motley:—"The gibbet and the stake were loaded with daily victims. The records of the period are foul with the perpetually renewed barbarities exercised against the new religion." Nurses were charged to report every case of birth, that the baby might be duly baptised by the curates. Spies were to watch at the administration of the sacraments to see who made gestures of disrespect or disbelief. They were also to watch at the beds of the dying, and report all who had the wickedness to die without applying for the last sacraments. The estates of such culprits were to be confiscated and their bodies dragged to the place of execution. The Christian spirit of the martyrs sometimes showed itself in an interesting way. A poor Anabaptist, flying from a pursuer, had to cross a frozen lake, on which the ice had begun to give way. He succeeded in reaching the opposite shore in safety, but his pursuer fell into the water, uttering a piercing

* See Motley's "Rise of the Dutch Republic," Part I., chap. iii.
† Crespin, Brandt, etc.

cry for help. Dirk Willemson turned, crossed the cracking ice, extended his hand to his enemy, and brought him safe to the shore. The miserable wretch, afraid of his superiors, arrested his preserver, who was burned to death on the 16th of May following (1567), under the most awful lingering tortures. The high wind blew the flames off the upper part of his body, so that while the lower part was consumed the upper part remained. He was heard calling out, "O Lord! O my God!" till at last the burgomaster ordered the executioner to put an end to his life.

It is seldom that religious persecution is carried on solely in the interests of the Church. Greed has often a great share in the business. This was seen remarkably in the Scotch persecution of the seventeenth century, when informers and persecutors contrived to solace themselves for their exertions by ample slices of the fines or forfeited estates. So it was, too, in the Netherlands. In at least one memorable case, greed gained the victory even over the faith. In Utrecht, on the occasion of a review of troops in 1568, an old lady, the Vrow van Dieman, was beheaded, though a devout Catholic, for the sin of having given a night's lodging in her house, eighteen months before, to a preacher of the name of Arendsoon. In reality it was not herself, but her son-in-law, that had been guilty of this hideous crime. But the lady was rich, and her estates would bring in a very handsome sum. The example of a rich lady of more than eighty-four years suffering death for so slight an offence would frighten all humbler people, and make them beware of giving the smallest cause of offence. She went bravely to the scaffold, deriding the greed that killed the calf because it was fat, and hoping that the executioner's sword was sharp enough for her tough old neck.

The Duke of Alva's victims were not confined to heretics. It was for their patriotism that Count Horn and Count Egmont suffered, and many, many more. Noblemen were sometimes executed *en masse*; most of them were Protestants. Brandt gives the case of the barons of Batenburg, and sixteen or seventeen other noblemen, executed together (1568), of whom eleven were Protestants. The duke's son, Don Frederic de Toledo, showed ample capacity to rival his father in cruelty; surprising the town of Zutphen, he caused fifteen hundred burghers to be hanged on trees, or drowned in the river, and the town to be set on fire at eight different places. The other burghers purchased their lives with great sums of money.

The persecution went on with more or less activity for many years. But the longest lane has a turning at last. In 1595, Anne Vanderhove, a maidservant, was buried alive near Brussels. After she had been laid in the grave, they first covered her feet with earth, and by little and little her body, up to the neck. Some Jesuits then asked her whether she was willing to return to the pale of the Church, but she answered with firmness: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall save it unto life everlasting." Her prayers were rising to God when the executioner covered her face. She had not the comfort of being strangled. The historian Brandt adds a circumstance of incredible brutality: the gravedigger leapt into the grave and trampled it down, till the groans of the poor woman rose on the ears of the horrified spectators. The historian seems to have reached the very climax of horrors when he unexpectedly concludes: "The woman just now mentioned is the last person that was put to death in the Low Countries on account of religion."

"I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write: Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

THE GROANS AND HOPES OF CREATION.*

BY THE REV. J. R. MACDUFF, D.D.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Rom. viii. 19—22.

IN the preceding context, the Apostle was speaking of the glory in reserve for believers, and which would more than compensate for present suffering. He proceeds to unfold, in the verses of our text, the cheering truth, that this coming immunity from degradation and bondage is to be shared by the inanimate creation—that the material world, too, is to enjoy a bright golden age and era all its own. It has been partaker with the sons of God in their tribulation: it shall be made to participate "in the liberty of their glory." (Revised Version.)

There are three topics here brought before us:—

I. The original condition of creation;

II. Its present state; and

III. Its future prospects.

Let us briefly consider these in succession:—

I. We have the *Original condition* of the "creature;" or, as that should be rendered, in harmony with the identical word used in verses 21 and 22, of the "*creation*." It is here affirmed the creation was

* Preached at the Porta del Popolo, Rome.

"*made subject to vanity—not willingly*" (or "by its will"—R.V.). This implies, not only a time when it was not under such subjection, but that, by some sudden and involuntary calamity, a yoke was put upon it. We know that such was verily the case—when it had no vestiges of such a curse or blight. It was morally, as well as materially, fair and lovely—a bright image and reflection of Paradise above. The morning stars sang together in jubilant strains over its birth, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. It bears still, on every side, manifold and conspicuous traces of primeval loveliness, beauty, and honour. As many an old ruin in this city and land of hoary memories—temples and towers and colonnades crumbled with the decay of ages;—as these dismantled and shattered wrecks give evidence of former glory, so is there abundance left in this temple of Nature to tell what it must have been when fresh from the hand of its Almighty Sculptor, and when over its virgin portico was written "*Holiness to the Lord.*" Who that looks around on its valleys and plains and rivers, its harvests of golden grain, its groves of choral song, the sun lighting it up by day, the moon hanging over it its silver lamp by night—but must pronounce it a glorious shrine and sanctuary for Deity—a befitting palace for God? Yes, and if man had remained intact in his allegiance, retaining the moral image of his Maker, fulfilling his destiny as the high priest in this sublime sanctuary, then could we have said with the Psalmist, "In His temple doth every *one* (yea, and every *thing*) speak of His glory."

II. But this leads me to note—the *present condition* of our world. It is "*made subject to vanity;*" it "*groaneth and travaileth in pain.*"

By an act in which creation had no part, sin entered. A withering blight has passed over it. The ground has been cursed, but for the unceasing toil of man, to perpetual sterility. The thorn and the thistle are the constant remembrancers of doom. "Wherever," to borrow the words of another, "the civilising arts of life are wanting, Nature falls back into arid wastes, wintry desolations, and sends forth pestilence with all its train of diseases—from vegetation gone to decay, to stagnant waters exhaling pollution."

The word "vanity," in the 20th verse, signifies the same thing as that rendered "corruption" in verse 21st. It means that the creation was alienated from its original design by the introduction of evil. This old Bible, which so many in these days venture to pronounce *effete*, arraigning the truth of its cosmogony, is in reality the only interpreter of otherwise baffling moral mysteries. That discredited word, "the Fall," is the only solvent of the mournful problem. Earth is doomed to servitude "by reason of him who hath subjected it."* "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death hath passed over all men, for that all have sinned." This habitation of ours, originally made a storehouse and magazine for Jehovah's glory, bears only too faithfully and vividly the impress of misery and degradation. Much of it is prostituted to minister to the vilest passions of man. Its affluence is poured into the lap of the unthankful, often to subserve the lust of avarice or pride or ambition. Its very bowels have been ransacked—its mines dug, its ores extracted—for the human race, accomplishing mutual destruction. Spots stud its surface fearfully memorable (where more memorable than in this sunny land and queen of cities?) as the scenes of carnage. The very monuments and cenotaphs, reared to perpetuate the glories of conquest—arch and pillar and statue—are the humiliating vouchers of earth being "subject to vanity." Look at the seas which begirt her continents, intended by a gracious and bountiful God to be the highway of the nations, the medium of wafting the products of one clime to another. Hundreds of navies freighted with the instruments of death have floated on their bosom. Skeleton hands, still grasping the cold steel, are lying deep down in their unfathomed caves; while angry surges and fierce tempests sweep their surface, and carry the tidings of wailing and widowhood to bereft hearts and lonely dwellings. What shall we say, still further, of the base affront which this same bounteous and beauteous creation is compelled to offer to its God? Its very productions foully utilised to dishonour Him; its stocks and stones converted into objects of adoration; its soil soaked with the blood of victims sacrificed in honour of dumb idols; men worshipping and serving the *creation* more than the Creator? Look at India, with its 330 millions of deities, belying by its deeds of darkness the proud name of "climes of the sun," its barbaric pearl and gold showered at the feet of incarnations of lust; its sky polluted with the smoke of foul incense; the air of heaven, the emblem of purity, mingled with frantic shouts over rites of iniquity; among ourselves, too, that air often burdened with the curse and the blasphemy. Go where we may, whether in the realms of heathendom or lands boasting a nobler birthright, the very sun and moon which shone on the world which, fresh from its Maker's hands, was pronounced very good, now gaze ashamed on scenes of guilt and crime. They light up with an unwilling radiance the home of rebels.

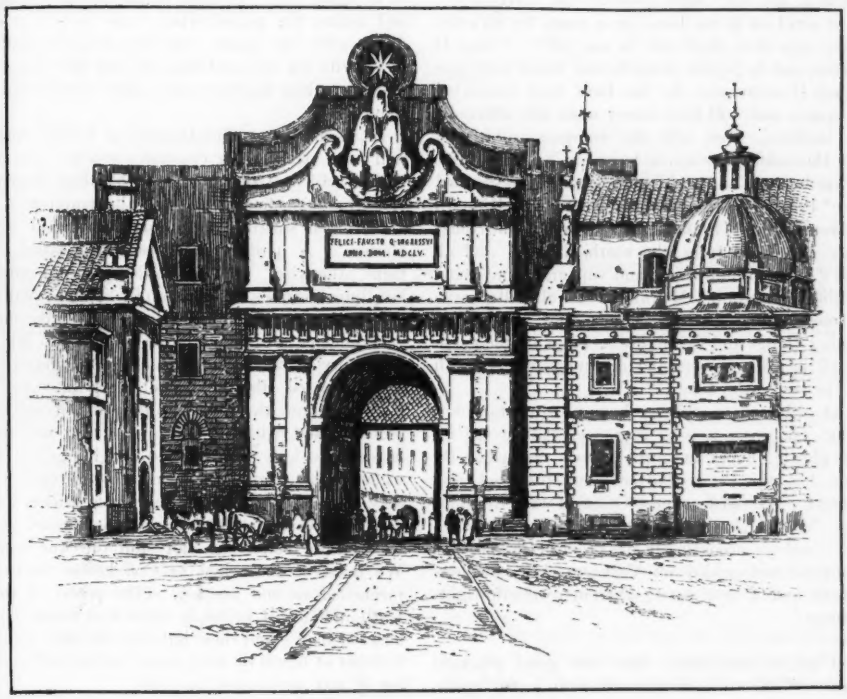
Nor is this universal subjection to vanity confined to the human race alone. The lower animals—the dumb creation—have shared in it. They are too often the victims of man's oppression and cruelty—the companions of his toil abused as his drudges. Thus, field and street, camp and battle-ground, jungle and forest, resound with fresh proclamations and attestations that earth is under "the bondage of corruption."

Then, turn to another and direr phase. Need I speak of the memorials which meet us on every side,

* This is the rendering in the Revised Version, putting the full stop at "it." There ending the sentence, and connecting "in hope" with the next clause.

more peculiarly specified in the verse of the Apostle just quoted? Sin, which has effected so fearful a subjection, has carried, above all, *mortality* in its train. The world's surface is crowded with sepulchres—one vast *Necropolis*—one long Appian Way to the gates of the city of Death. A prophet's "Valley of Vision," it may be called, more a mausoleum for the departed than a home for the living. Significant was the Seer's threefold cry, "O Earth! Earth! Earth!" *From* earth we spring, *of* earth we are made, and *to* earth we shall return. Yes, creature *from the bondage of corruption, and translated into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God*" (R.V.). It is like a sunbeam lighting on a waste of waters, or coming forth from a storm-wreathed sky. Rather, it recalls the silver trumpet of jubilee sounding the year of release. "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound."

There is a day coming when a now subject world shall be made to fulfil its high original destiny in showing forth God's glory, and when man and his dwelling shall be alike baptised in a new element of



THE PORTA DEL POPOLO, ROME.

of God, in the midst of all thy pride of life, thy gilded pageantry, thou art, after all, but a piece of painted dust. The fall of the great capitals of antiquity is humiliating and saddening enough; but what Vanity is equal to thine? "*As for man, his days are as grass.*" Ah, every old monument and catacomb around us here, every gravestone in our home cemeteries, every nodding plume of death in our home streets, is a silent preacher that "creation has been made subject to vanity."

But, blessed be God! for fallen man and His fallen abode there are bright and cheering anticipations. I proceed now to speak—

III. *Of the prospects of Creation*—its final restoration—"*In hope that the creation shall be delivered* love. A period will be entered on whose characteristic shall be "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost;" and when, instead of clouds of unhallowed incense rising from ten thousand Baal-shrines, "incense and a pure offering shall ascend" to the God of Christianity "from the rising to the setting sun."

The Psalmist, in announcing this happy reign, tells us how joyfully it will be welcomed by a groaning and travailing creation, as if all Nature waited in anxious suspense for its arrival. Now, this world is like an instrument all unstrung and tuneless; then, it will be an Æolian harp warbling its restored harmonies—sweet music from every breath that passes over it. "The Lord," says he, "shall judge

the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice; let the earth be glad; let the sea roar and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord."

Let the prophet Isaiah announce the advent of the same glorious period. He makes material things vocal; he puts a tongue of rapture into hill and wood and forest:—"The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." "Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth, and break forth into singing, O mountains, for the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted." Yes, brethren, then will the summons addressed three thousand years ago to universal Nature, to rise and do homage to its Maker, be joyously responded to:—"Praise ye Him, sun and moon! praise Him, all ye stars of light! Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens! Praise the Lord from the earth, dragons and all deeps; fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling His word. Mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle; creeping things and flying fowl; kings of the earth and all people; princes and all judges of the earth . . . praise ye the Lord!"

And although on this we have no time to enter, let me ask, in a passing sentence, whence are all these glowing hopes and anticipations derived? By whom has this new charter been procured and ratified? We must connect Creation with Redemption. "Behold," says Christ, "I make all things new," "and we, according to HIS promise (the promise purchased and sealed on Calvary), look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Let me, in conclusion, draw one great practical lesson. While we look forward with joyful hearts to creation's second birth — its new-born liberty —let us seek to know the true nature of the emancipation for which she sighs. As sin was the essence of the curse, so deliverance from sin is the essence of the freedom. In other respects, we have seen that creation requires no deliverance. Its materialism we may truly pronounce a materialism fit for heaven. We would assuredly ask—for a promised period of millennial bliss—no lovelier landscapes, no sunnier skies, no brighter firmament than in this gifted land of our present sojourn. We would ask no softer music than is warbled in grove and woodland in our own favoured country, or by the stream which there sings its way through copse and dell to its ocean home. Only get *sin* expelled; and with sea, air, earth, and heavens remaining as they are, this Paradise lost becomes in a moment Paradise regained. Emancipation from *sin* is the secret and condition of her liberty. O seek to get *that* expelled: seek to get an empire of purity and peace established in your own hearts—an empire consisting in the supremacy of holy affections and heavenly dispositions—making God's love the master-principle of your souls, and the glory of God the main end of your being. If we would now taste the essence of the bliss of a millennial day of glory, let us seek to feel and to manifest the regenerating influence of Christ's glorious Gospel. By even now having our citizenship in heaven—living under the sovereignty of that lofty motive, to walk and act so as to please God—we shall be advancing ever nearer and nearer the period when "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them!"

Be assured, no other theories of human freedom will be a panacea for creation's wrongs. No other balsam will heal the wounds of bleeding humanity. No other expedient will hush the trumpet of war and banish wasting and destruction from earth's borders. A philosophy, falsely so called, may think otherwise. The Secularist may propound his levelling doctrines. He may talk of the equality of rights, the demolition of class, the subversion of governments, the annihilation of creeds. This he may glory in, as the high road to the halcyon reign of unbounded liberty. Alas! poor dreamers! an older authority they affect to despise thus solves the problem, and with its words of truth and soberness stamps folly on their vain imaginings:—"From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts which war in your members?" Yes; hushed first must be the war *within*, before we can stop the war *without*. We must be reconciled to God before we can be reconciled to one another. The power of Gospel truth and Gospel principle must first transform the heart of man; and then, but not till then, shall the trumpet of battle be hung mute in the hall, and the art of war be studied no more.

And if God be speaking to us by events in our own distant homes, let us not spurn the lesson nor reject the warning. The creation, the creature is "subject to *vanity!*" VANITY; yes, He is now writing that word on the wrecks of commerce, and the collapse of earthly treasure. He is writing it on what we thought towers of strength, which have turned into air-castles; glittering heaps of plenty, which have vanished like the baubles of an hour. "Oh ye sons of men," says one who was no stranger to altered times, fluctuating fortunes, "Oh ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame: how long will ye love vanity and seek after lies?" Men and brethren, as we see others reaping the whirlwind, are we still to persist in sowing to the wind? Are we still to walk in the vain show, or are we to make the surer investment for eternity, and to lay up the better riches of heaven? "*The*

gold of that land is good!" We have been listening to the clank of the chain which proclaims the world's unwilling bondage. But the man who is united by faith to the world's Great Deliverer and Emancipator can even now exult in the liberty of the text. No liberty is worth the name save this. No possession is worth garnering save this. But *with* this blessed possession and glorious heritage, he will be able to rise above all adverse circumstances. A Christian merchant, conscious of clean hands and a pure heart, actuated by lofty integrity in all his doings, has been plunged into reverses. By no crime, but by misfortune, he feels himself hurled from the pinnacles of earthly prosperity. The fabric he had taken a lifetime to rear is crumbling in ruins. Tidings of disaster have come from afar on the lightning-wires. His ships have foundered at sea; his goods are rotting in their store; his workmen are gathered in silent groups around the factory doors; his worldly trade is ruined, his worldly credit gone. "*But he shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.*" "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever!" O magnificent reversion, which no crash of earth's precarious fortunes can impoverish or destroy—"THE LIBERTY OF THE GLORY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD!"

DOROTHY'S VOCATION.

BY EVELYN EVERETT GREEN, AUTHOR OF "MONICA," "OLIVER LANGTON'S WARD," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER IV.—AN ENIGMA.

DOROTHY found, as time slipped by, that life had become somewhat different for her since the advent of these country cousins, as her sisters still persisted in calling them. They had been out when Mrs. Seymour had called at the house; they had taken care to return her call when they knew that she was abroad with Dorothy, and on the one occasion they had asked her to the house she had been engaged and unable to come.

The Miss Templetons, feeling they had now done all that propriety demanded as far as their poor relation was concerned, proceeded to dismiss her from their minds and leave her to Dorothy's tender mercies. The very fact that their younger sister had taken so great a liking to this kinswoman of theirs, seemed proof positive that she was not "their style." They and Dorothy never liked the same people, and it was hardly probable that they would begin to do so now.

Dorothy, for her part, saw Mrs. Seymour almost every day, and each day increased the warm liking that had sprung up from the first between them. The old lady was not very familiar with town life and its ways, and the noise and bustle of the streets were somewhat bewildering to her. She had, of course, a good deal of shopping to do—what country matron has not, who comes up to town only on rare occasions?—and so far very little of it had been accomplished.

"I do not like shopping alone, my dear," she had said; "at least, not here; and though Ralph is always at my beck and call, ready to declare shopping the aim and object of his life, I cannot bring my mind to inflict it upon him. It is bad enough for him to be debarred from so much he would like to be doing, without being called upon to sacrifice himself farther."

"He always seems very content, I think," answered Dorothy, laughing. "Idleness seems to suit him very well."

"Ralph has a wonderful disposition, my dear," said the fond mother. "Though, I suppose, it is not for me to say it. I have never known him out of temper in my life."

"Isn't that rather monotonous sometimes?" asked Dorothy, with a gleam of mischief in her merry eyes; for she had long ago discovered the special weakness of her cousin, and delighted to tease her sometimes about her only son; and Mrs. Seymour, who half suspected as much, smiled herself as she answered—

"Well, my dear, perhaps it is because I am a dull old woman myself, but somehow I never find Ralph monotonous."

Dorothy began to find that she did not either. He was their companion on a great many of their expeditions, and never missed attending them when their destination was a concert or a picture-gallery. The girl had an enthusiasm for art, and could spend hours amid good pictures without weariness, but she had never before known what it was to find herself with companions who shared her predilections. Her sisters always hurried her through a gallery with impatient haste, and unless she had been alone she had never before been able to enjoy pictures. Now she discovered what it was like to look at and discuss them with a keen and competent critic. It very soon became clear that Mrs. Seymour and her son were very cultured people. It was not mere art-jargon that they talked, picked up at second-hand from reviews or from overheard conversations. They observed and judged for themselves; plainly they had travelled, and had visited all the finest picture-galleries in Europe. Mrs. Seymour often wearied before the young people had drunk their fill, and then she would sit down in some quiet nook, leaving Ralph and

Dorothy to wander about at will; and his keen criticisms, together with the vein of covert satire that gave piquancy to his idlest words, amused and interested Dorothy as much as it had at first surprised her.

She had, however, by degrees quite lost the first impression that these kinsfolk were either poor relations or rustically uncultured. It was obvious that there was no lack of means with them, and still less was there any lack of refinement or *savoir faire*. Dorothy sometimes found herself wondering if they were not in some respects a cut above the people with whom she had been in the habit of associating; at least, they were far more to her taste. But she was too young as yet to have learned any very definite standard by which to judge men and things, and she had not got beyond the stage of knowing whom she liked, without being able to define why it was she liked them.

One thing, at least, that attracted her greatly was the loving bond of union which existed between mother and son. Family affection was not highly developed in the Templeton family—at least, amongst its senior members. The father and elder daughters were bound together by ties of mutual interest and community of taste; but there was no display of attachment on either side, whilst Dorothy was herself conscious of a distinct sense of antagonism towards all her relatives except the children. The deep and tender love between Ralph and his mother was a positive revelation to her, none the less so that it was veiled on his side beneath a playfully teasing manner that appeared one of his most marked characteristics.

Another thing that struck Dorothy quite as much, was the more serious view of life and its responsibilities taken by these kinsfolk of hers than by the people with whom she had been hitherto surrounded—views very much more in harmony with her own.



"'May I sit next you, please?'"—*p.* 614.

Several times, when she and Mrs. Seymour were out shopping together, without Ralph's somewhat doubtful assistance, the mother would explain to Dorothy what had called him away. Perhaps he had gone to look over some new model dwelling-houses, to inquire into the latest sanitary arrangements, and get hints as to the best method of housing the poor; or perhaps he was visiting some institution for the blind, in order to gain an insight into the method of teaching them, and see what industries were best suited to their capacities. Sometimes a hospital or convalescent home was his destination, occasionally even a prison or reformatory.

"You see, Ralph feels a good deal of responsibility now that he has come of age. His father arranged

that he should not come into the full possession of things till he was five-and-twenty, which was wise, as it would have harassed his college life to have had so much depending upon him," explained Mrs. Seymour one day. "There is so much to think of, and a good deal to be done—I suppose it always is so after a long minority—and Ralph cannot bear doing things by halves, or by proxy either. He must understand it all himself. That is one reason he is so willing to stay here a few months; he feels that London is, after all, the best centre for learning everything; and although things are different in the country, still, one can learn a great deal here. It is a great trust for a young man. I only hope that my dear boy may be able to carry it out as it should be done—as his dear father would have done had he lived."

It may appear as if Dorothy was very stupid to misunderstand the drift of this observation, but misunderstand it she certainly did. She was not worldly-wise, and she had heard so definitely that the Seymours were quite poor and insignificant, that she did not for a moment believe that he could be the owner of any property. She had heard of the agents appointed by gentlemen landowners to superintend their estates, and she jumped at once to the conclusion that Mr. Seymour had been an agent for some nobleman or gentleman, and that his son had been lately appointed to succeed him. That explained a good deal, she thought; and, to make assurance doubly sure, she asked if Ralph had some property to manage.

"Yes, my love, a rather fine property; and it is a great responsibility for so young a man; but I trust he may be enabled to do his duty by all. He does his best, I am sure. He looks upon it as I do—as a very sacred trust—though he would not tell you so. He is very reserved about his deeper feelings."

Dorothy understood everything now, she thought, even to the comfortable income evidently enjoyed by mother and son. Ralph's occasional expeditions down to the country "to look after things" were fully explained, as were other allusions to cottage-building and improvement of land that had sometimes puzzled her before, when she had been listening to conversations between mother and son.

When Ralph incidentally learned that she had a "district" of her own amongst the poor of the parish, he teased her unmercifully for about ten minutes, and ended by asking her quite seriously if she would let him make the round of it with her one day. Dorothy looked at Mrs. Seymour in perplexity, but received only a placid smile in reply.

"He is not making fun of you, my dear, though I do not wonder at your thinking it, for he is a sad boy in his love of teasing; but he really does want to find out all he can with regard to the state of the poor, and I am sure he would like to visit your people very much."

Dorothy was neither ceremonious nor self-conscious, and made no objection to this plan, which was carried out in due course a few days later. Ralph surprised her by coming out altogether in a new light; he laid aside his lazy, languid air of raillery, and talked to the poor with a quiet courtesy and appreciation of their difficulties that astonished Dorothy not a little. He had wise practical suggestions to offer in one or two cases, and made one woman eternally grateful by promising to arrange for the transporting of a sickly lad (who had been obliged to give up his place behind the counter of a grocer's shop) into the country, where he could learn gardening, for which he had a passion, under a capable man; and if his health should be re-established by country air, as was most probable, he would in all likelihood make his way with ease in life.

Dorothy was, of course, delighted, and very grateful, but she only got teasing answers to her thanks and raptures. She was well used to Ralph by this time, and could give as good as she got in wordy battles with him; but she never quite succeeded in making him out, or in "piecing him together," as she called it. It was difficult to realise that this lazy, long-limbed youth, lolling on the sofa and teasing his mother, or poking fun at her in his sleepy, nonchalant fashion, could be the same active, heroic man who had deliberately hazarded his own life only a few months ago to save some little children from a fearful death. (That story had not made much impression on Dorothy at the time, but it haunted her afterwards, and especially so in company with Ralph.) Neither could she quite realise him as a man with earnest purposes at work within him, or with a capacity for self-denial and hard work. Altogether he was decidedly an enigma to her, and though she was not always certain that she quite liked him, at least she found him interesting; and as he had persisted in assuming the easy cousinly relations with her that their kinship certainly did not warrant, she let him have his own way: as, indeed, was almost a necessity, for Master Ralph had had a trick of getting that from his cradle upwards; and his invisible strength of will, and cool, silent insistence generally won him the day whenever he chose to exert it.

What pleased and surprised Dorothy as much as anything else about these relations of hers was the quiet, "old-fashioned" way they kept their Sundays—a way much more in keeping with the girl's own views than anything she had been accustomed to see. Her sisters used the day as a sort of breathing-space after the labours of one week, and before the fatigues of a second. Sometimes they went over to church, and generally they went out in the evening to some *réunion* of friends that Dorothy called a "party," though they said it was "no such thing."

Dorothy never went anywhere herself on that day. She attended church regularly with the children, and spent most of her time with them, trying, not unsuccessfully, to make them love the day, which, but for her, would have been sadly dull and colourless, as it unfortunately is in the lives of many children, especially in towns.

She found out with satisfaction that her new friends entirely shared her "old-fashioned" views on these points. Her sisters laughed scornfully at their declining an invitation to dinner there on a Sunday evening on account of the day, but expressed themselves much relieved at such a decision.

"Evidently they are not in the least our style," cried Mabel. "I do hate cut-and-dried old fogies of their sort; they are a perfect enigma to me."

CHAPTER V.—THE CHILDREN'S FAVOURITE.

'REALLY, Dolly?"

"Yes, really, Winnie. Don't you want to go?"

'Oh, yes, I think so; but I don't think we've ever been out to tea with grown-up people before. May I sit next you, please?"

"Me too," said solemn Bernie, edging up close to his sister. "Me sit next 'oo too."

"We'll see all about that when we get there," was the smiling answer. "Bertie, you're not shy, are you?"

"N-no," answered the eldest of the quartette, somewhat dubiously; and Wilfred boldly asserted that *he* wasn't; yet it was plain that the idea of going out to tea with an old lady "older than papa," and a grown-up gentleman, was a little appalling to them all, and the fact that these new people were cousins did not seem to them to make matters any better.

"I don't call grown-up people cousins," asserted Wilfred. "The Fosters have got cousins, and they're just about the same age as *them* and as us. I don't think cousins count if they're old and big."

"Well, you tell them all that when you get there," answered Dorothy, laughing; "and now run away to nurse and get your best clothes on, for it is almost time we started."

Dorothy was not unjustly proud of her little charges as she ushered them up-stairs into the now familiar drawing-room of the private hotel inhabited by the Seymours. They were pretty, gentle-mannered children; and, thanks to her efforts, and those of their nurse, they were prettily and becomingly dressed—the boys in picturesque knickerbocker suits, little Winnie in white with a crimson sash. Mrs. Seymour's reception of the children was so gentle and motherly that it went far to reassure their childish minds and banish trepidation; whilst Ralph, watching the scene with his sleepy, humorous smile, looked to Dorothy as if he were in one of his mischievous moods.

He verified the surmise on this head by promptly seizing upon the indignant and half-frightened Bernie, and carrying him off captive to a distant sofa, whence a great sound of scrimmaging promptly arose; and gradually the other two boys gravitated towards that end of the room, where a regular game seemed soon to be set on foot.

Dorothy had looked rather doubtful at seeing the shy, solemn Bernie carried off so unceremoniously from under the shelter of her wing; but Mrs. Seymour read the look, and answered it by a reassuring smile.

"He will be quite safe with Ralph; children always take to him at once."

Such, in fact, seemed to be the case, and even Winnie slipped down presently from Mrs. Seymour's knee, and trotted off to join the game at the other end of the room. The game seemed somewhat nondescript in character, though of a very entrancing kind. It consisted mainly in making this tall new cousin lie down on the sofa and feign sleep, whilst all kinds of liberties were taken with him in his somnolent state. When his youthful tormentors became too daring or aggressive, a sudden awakening would be the result, and the sleeping giant would make a rapid snatch at one of them and chase them as far as the window curtains, behind which was "home." If he failed to catch one he retreated, growling, amid peals of delighted laughter; if he succeeded, his captive was perched upon the arm of the sofa and instructed to "keep the flies off" whilst he slept again; and as soon as the enemy slumbered, an escape was promptly effected. This game, which was quite new and altogether entrancing, kept the children in a state of eager excitement and delight till the time when tea was announced as ready down-stairs. Ralph proceeded to seat his last captive, Bernie, on his shoulder and march off with him in triumph, Winnie clinging delightedly to his disengaged hand, and Bertie and Wilfred following closely in his wake.

"He is such a capital hand with children!" explained Mrs. Seymour, as she brought up the rear with Dorothy. "Nobody in our parts dreams of giving a children's party unless Ralph has been secured beforehand."

Dorothy was used to the fond mother's gentle eulogies, and rather enjoyed them. In this case they seemed justified by facts, and the girl was pleased, for her little charges came out in their very best light beneath the influence of Ralph's presence—their shyness all melting away as if it had never existed, whilst they never became in the least uproarious, their enjoyment being evinced in a very thorough yet gentle and childish fashion.

"Please may we come again?" asked Winnie, as she received Mrs. Seymour's good-bye kiss; and there was quite a little buzz of excitement as the answer was readily given—

"Indeed you may, dear children. You shall come your very next half-holiday afternoon if sister Dorothy will bring you."

They seemed hardly to think it worth while to ask that—Dolly's good-will was taken for granted; but there was an eager turning towards Ralph.

"Will you be here? Will you play at giants again? Say yes!"

"You'll see whether I will or not when you come; if you don't take care, I'll have a great green dragon to guard my castle. You're not half as much afraid of a giant as you ought to be."

The children ran away with little shrieks of half-terrified, half-delighted laughter as Ralph pursued them to the door with threats of the green dragon; and all the week the talk was of him, mixed with wondering speculations as to if he really *would* have a dragon, and appeals to Dorothy as to whether there *were* any dragons now.

But when on the following Wednesday afternoon they were again ushered into the room where such a pleasant visit had been paid the previous week, what should they see but the giant lying fast asleep upon the sofa, with a great green dragon encircling his long limbs in its gleaming folds, with its terrible head and great red tongue actually lying on his breast.

Awe-struck and breathless, the children stared at him, clinging closely together as they advanced on tip-toe to inspect this shiny green monster, whose presence was but half expected by them.

"They won't be frightened, I hope, my dear," said Mrs. Seymour in a low tone to Dorothy. "Ralph got

the horrid thing made at a shop in Regent Street, and though it is only cardboard, and won't stand much handling, it looks horribly lifelike. It's got a rattle in its tail, and its eyes can open and roll. He nearly frightened me with it in the dark yesterday; but he will have his own way."

"I think children love being frightened up to a certain point," answered Dorothy, captivated herself somewhat by the size and appearance of the green dragon; and it seemed as if her words were verified by the event, for the children were even more enthralled by the charms of the game after the addition of the dragon than they had been before, especially as he hampered his master's movements a good deal, and gave them a better chance of escape, and warned them by the rattle of his tail or the rolling of his eyes when *he* was awake and about to rouse the giant.

"It is very good of you, Ralph, to give up so much time to playing with the children," Dorothy said, as they took their departure; to which he responded with a look she very well knew.

"Is it, indeed? I'm so glad! I like above all things to be admired and thought self-sacrificing, and particularly so when I am indulging puerile tastes of which I am secretly rather ashamed. When do we really grow out of our babyhood? I believe my mother would delight to dress and undress a doll now, if she wasn't ashamed of the weakness. I often see grandmothers much more interested in the process than the grandchildren they are instructing."

Dorothy laughed lightly.

"Then the green dragon is your pet toy, bought for your own edification?"

"Exactly; he sleeps at the foot of my bed, and would be put under my pillow if he would go. It's so nice to have a good excuse for one's own juvenility when one is ashamed of it."

The next event of this somewhat eventful June was a request from Mrs. Seymour that Dorothy would be her companion in some social gaieties to which she and her son had been invited.

"You see, my dear, our friends have found us out, and although we intended to keep quite quiet, it seems impossible to grieve people by declining everything. Ralph is not very strong yet, but he cannot be called an invalid in any ordinary sense of the word, and he won't have invitations declined on the score of his health. He says it would sound like humbug, and so perhaps it would. We must go to some few places, and it would be such a comfort to me to have you there. I think an old woman is out of place in gay scenes without a young girl to take care of. Will you ask your father to spare you as much as he can? He will know that I shall ask you into no society to which any exception could be taken."

Dorothy smiled at such an idea; she had already begun to perceive that the Seymours were a great deal more fastidious about their friends than her own people could boast of being. To the latter, wealth was a sure passport, whatever the antecedents had been; but the country cousins took that into small account—they judged by a different standard.

"Go! of course you can go," said Claudia, with a smile of covert scorn upon her lips as Dorothy propounded her question at dessert that night. It was the father who had been appealed to, but Claudia always reserved the right of answering such questions for him. She was not a little pleased at any scheme which should take Dorothy, so to speak, off their hands. Both she and Mabel were of opinion that three sisters were a nuisance anywhere, especially as they had no brother to weigh in the opposite scale, and their father was no longer a young man. Now that Dorothy was "out," she could not always be left at home; and yet neither of the elder sisters would be content to be left out. It was a happy chance that took the girl to pastures new—at least, for this season.

"And if she does get stamped by association with people a cut below our set, I don't see that it will matter much," said Mabel in private to her sister. "It will be all the easier to get rid of her somehow. If she gets unfit for society, she must find some vocation in earnest, and stick to it."

"Just so, and the more she mixes with these eccentric, enthusiastic sort of people, the more willing she will be, in all likelihood, to do so. This son of Mrs. Seymour's seems an extraordinary kind of young man, poking his nose into prisons and reformatories, and disgusting places of that kind. He had better end by marrying Dorothy, as they seem so suited to one another. Certainly, we will throw no hindrance in the way of their acquaintance."

"Certainly not," assented the other.

So Dorothy found herself free to make her own plans, and live her own life, in perfect independence of her nearest relatives; and to accompany Mrs. Seymour whenever she was asked to do so, which was increasingly often as time slipped by.

The first thing the girl noticed was the very refined and cultivated tone of the people with whom she was now brought into contact—thinking men and women who had a reputation, in many cases, for literary eminence or scientific research; and as Dorothy had a real thirst for learning, and had read widely and intelligently, she was delighted to find herself amongst people who talked of other things than the passing fashions of the hour, or the shallow society gossip that always bored and irritated her. She made a quiet little success of her own, though of this she was quite unaware; and her name began to appear on the cards of invitation addressed to Mrs. Seymour, almost as if she belonged to that lady by right.

Although Mr. Templeton's elder daughters did not know how favourable an impression Dorothy was producing wherever she appeared, they learned enough to raise within them a certain amount of jealous discontent. They thought their younger sister inclined to be pushing and forward, and would have been glad, had such a thing been possible, to get her safely out of the way.

This feeling caused them to contemplate with a certain amount of tolerant satisfaction a confidence made to them about this time by their father. He came to them in the drawing-room one day, looking somewhat disturbed and perplexed; and in answer to a question from his eldest daughter admitted that something had occurred to surprise him.

"It 's about Dorothy," he said, finding that she was



"Claudia was silent, turning matters over in her own mind quietly."

not present; "I suppose you might as well be told. You know Sopely, the old man who has made such a colossal fortune in tallow, or cheese, or something like that?—well, he came to me just now in my study to propose a match between Dorothy and his son, who, it seems, has been immensely taken with her. Do you know the cub?"

"We've met him sometimes," answered Mabel. "He 's not half as vulgar as the parents. He 's been to Oxford or Cambridge, and got a sort of polish. I thought he followed Dorothy about rather persistently once or twice. I daresay she may like him—Dorothy is not particular. She may have encouraged him, very likely."

"The young man is very much in earnest, it seems, though apparently he has not ventured to approach the subject himself. His father has come to me about it. He is prepared to make the most handsome settlements, and all that. Money seems no object whatever, if only the young man can get what he wants. It 's not a connection I should care about, in many ways. What do you say to it, Claudia?"

Claudia was silent, turning matters over in her own mind quietly.

"It is difficult to pronounce an opinion straight off; but, of course, there are advantages in any match where there is so much money. Dorothy might do worse. I always have a feeling that she will marry beneath her if she marries at all; and in that case she had better make the *mésalliance* with money than without."

"Does she care about the young fellow?"

"I have no idea. She never mentions his name; but, of course, she hardly would do, if she thought he was paying her attention."

"But what am I to say to the father?"

"What does he want you to say?"

"He wants me to give my consent to the match, if his son can succeed in gaining the good-will of the lady. Of course, as a practical man, he is aware that he is no match in birth for her; and that if, when it came to the point, I should refuse my consent, it is no use his boy's setting his heart upon it, and wasting his time in useless pursuit. I said I must think the matter over and write to him later; but I really don't know what to say. I confess I have no particular desire for such a connection; but, then, he could keep her like a princess. You have a good head on your shoulders, Claudia; what do you think?"

Claudia reviewed the situation rapidly.

"If I were you, papa, I should give my consent—provided, of course, that Dorothy cares about the young man enough to wish to marry him. You commit yourself to nothing very serious by that; for I think you must know Dorothy's disposition by this time. If she should herself decide to marry this man, it is most unlikely that any arguments of yours or ours would stop her; whilst if she refuses him, no harm is done, and no one is compromised. I should give the sanction asked for, undoubtedly; for, really, the child might do worse, and with her peculiar temperament will be scarcely likely to do better."

As Mr. Templeton always found it easier to say yes than no, this advice was quite to his liking. He commended Claudia's sound sense, and went away to compose his letter, whilst that young woman turned to her sister and said—

"After all, better the tallow-chandler with money than the country cousin without."

Mabel laughed.

"There's something in that, to be sure. I wonder what it is people find in her. I confess I don't understand it myself. But I should not object to see her married off and done for."

"Well, perhaps that will happen before so very long, if she can only make choice between her two admirers."

"Shall you say anything to her?"

"About this proposal? No, I think not; she is better left to her own devices. It may be just as well to let her go on as she is doing now. He evidently flatters himself he is being encouraged, and it is unnecessary to alarm her and put her on her guard."

Mabel looked up quickly.

"You mean——?"

"I mean that Dorothy must learn, as other people

have to learn, that she cannot go on playing fast and loose with impunity. She evidently prides herself on her arch vivacity and power of repartee, and attracts people round her and gives them every encouragement. If one of these admirers expects more of her, it is her fault, not theirs, and she must take the consequences of her own folly. It is useless warning Dorothy; she never will take advice; but if she receives a definite offer, and then seems inclined to play fast and loose, we can come down upon her with some show of authority. She has an immense idea of duty. I believe she would almost marry from a sense of duty, if she could be made to understand it clearly."

Mabel looked with a sort of admiration at her sister. It seemed to her that Claudia's tactics were very clever.

"Give her line, and let her entangle herself hopelessly," she murmured to herself. "Not a bad idea. We certainly want Dorothy removed out of our daily path."

They wanted this very much more in the course of a few days.

CHAPTER VI.—A TERRIBLE BLOW.

"It is a sad pity we cannot get cards for Lady Forrester's garden-party to-morrow," said Claudia one evening, as the three sisters sat together in the drawing-room after dinner—all, for a wonder, being at home. "I can't think how it is. One generally has no difficulty when one's mind is set on a thing.'

"But why should you care about going to a place you're not asked to?" questioned the unsophisticated Dorothy, "and where you don't know the hostess even? I should think it was very stupid."

Neither sister deigned to notice this childish remark. Claudia continued in an aggrieved tone—

"Mrs. Dalrymple said that the great catch of the season was to be there, too—at least, the greatest catch out of the ranks of the nobility. I don't know that I have heard of him before, but they say he has a fine old property, and some ten or twelve thousand a year, and has come to London to look out for a wife. Mr. Moore was the name, I think—wasn't it, Mabel?"

"I couldn't quite catch it, we were going over such a rough piece of road at the time, but I fancied it began with an S."

"Well, anyhow, whatever the name is, the fact remains that he is very wealthy, and in want of a wife. Mrs. Dalrymple said she would introduce me the first opportunity. It is tiresome we cannot get cards for to-morrow. He is very good-looking, and distinguished in his air and manner, she says. I can't quite think how it is we have never met him before."

"We shall be certain to do so before very long," answered Mabel confidently, by no means displeased at the prospect of the encounter. Both Mr. Templeton's elder daughters were decidedly good-looking girls—Claudia in the serene and Mabel in the vivacious style of beauty; but they had been out for many seasons, and yet had not succeeded in accomplishing their great object in life—that of obtaining a handsome establishment for themselves. They were still, however, full of hope and confidence, in nowise afraid that their charms were fading—confident, in the many evidences around them, that women who have passed their girlhood and first youth, are often much more attractive than they have been during the more immature stages of development. Claudia and Mabel quite passed over the fact that this increasing charm, which is woman's highest attribute, is dependent on something beyond mere physical beauty; that it arises from beauty of character, unselfish sweetness of disposition, refinement of mind, and the development of the powers of thought and intellect. They did not pause to ask whether the idle, selfish, pleasure-seeking life they lived would be likely to create in them this coveted power to charm and fascinate. They judged far too superficially, and were too lazily self-satisfied, to attempt any close analysis, or even an ordinary amount of observation. They fancied that victory must lie before them in some form or another, and now turned their attention towards this new star, as they had often done towards others before him.

Dorothy, however, paid little heed to the idle talk upon the subject that occupied her sisters during the best part of the evening. She was deep in a book of philosophical essays that Ralph had lent her, and was enjoying it all the more because it was a little beyond



"Looking down smiling at the girl on his arm."—*p.* 619.

her grasp, and kept her attention on the stretch the whole time.

Several passages were marked to be talked over with Ralph on the first opportunity; for Dorothy had begun to find out that this lazy young man was anything but lazy-headed, and had read and thought and studied to no small purpose. The things that puzzled her sadly, all seemed as clear as daylight to him, and he had a terse, apposite way of putting them before her that made instruction from him a positive pleasure; and the absence of all effort or sense of superiority gave a distinct and characteristic flavour to his method of conveying information.

Already several new worlds were opening before Dorothy, and whenever she could get the time she was eager to follow up the beginnings that had been made. She did not neglect any of her many little nameless duties on this account. The children and her poor people were looked after just as before, and she was always ready to accompany Mrs. Seymour wherever she wished; but when there was leisure to do so, she plunged eagerly into new studies, and felt her mind expanding, and her range of vision increased in a fashion that was a positive delight.

Rolling easily along a suburban road next day, in the comfortable landau that was always at Mrs. Seymour's disposal, Dorothy asked what was their destination.

"We are going to a garden-party at Lady Forrester's, my dear. Lord Forrester was one of my husband's greatest friends, and his sons were at college with Ralph. They have a lovely garden at Twickenham, and a fine old Tudor house; but perhaps you know the place?"

A little smile of amusement was dimpling Dorothy's face, not unseen by the watchful Ralph.

"No, I have never been there before. We do not know the Forresters."

"Lady Forrester was asking about you the other evening; she sent you a special invitation."

"That was very kind," said Dorothy simply, thinking, however, that it would perhaps be better to say nothing of such kindness to her sisters.

"You play tennis, of course?" said Ralph, as they approached their destination.

"Oh, yes, I play rather well. I belong to a club in the next gardens, and last year I won the tournament."

"Of course you play well—one can see that with half an eye. I am going to ask you to be my partner to-day. I've not played yet this season, but I feel a kind of yearning to wield my bat again."

"But, my dear boy, ought you to?" gently remonstrated his mother. "You are not to exert yourself, you know."

"No fear, mother. I have not the smallest intention of doing so. Dorothy will have all the exertion. I shall merely stand by the net and take what comes to me."

Dorothy laughed gaily, and before very long she found herself standing up to play, upon a lawn as smooth and soft as velvet, with a gaily dressed crowd grouped about the players, watching them with more or less of interest. In her hand she held a new bat of workman-like appearance, and with the magic name of a first-rate maker upon it. Ralph had brought it to her, hoping it would suit her; and he had a similar bat himself, somewhat more heavily weighted.

As Dorothy afterwards told him, as they stood victorious together, "it played of itself;" and she confided to him that to own one like this had been for long the aim and object of her life.

"When you've got a good thing, stick to it," he answered, in his lazy way. "That's an excellent motto through life. Now come and have an ice. We'll play again later. It seems to me that you and I could play a love sett against most of the couples here."

"Modest!" answered Dorothy, laughing, as she let him lead her away.

It was altogether a very pleasant party. Ralph took her in hand more than usual; made the tour with her of grounds and greenhouses, played tennis as her partner, and with nobody else; and ended by carrying off the bat that had so won her admiration.

"He got it for you, my dear," Mrs. Seymour explained. "He heard you say the other day that you were wanting a new one. Ralph thinks he is such a connoisseur in such matters that it is a charity to allow him to exercise his talents."

So Dorothy thanked Ralph in her frank, childlike fashion, and carried her prize home in triumph. It had been a very pleasant party, and Lady Forrester, in speaking to the girl, hoped (with a little smile not altogether understood) that she should see more of her later. Dorothy was in very gay spirits that evening, but she hardly knew whether or not to say anything to her sisters as to where she had been. She wished to act in the way that would give them least annoyance, and yet be quite straightforward, for she had a hatred of the smallest tinge of deceit. Luckily for her the matter was easily settled.

"I went with the Seymours to-day to——" she was beginning, when Claudia, who was very cross that day, cut her snappishly short.

"Pray do not inflict upon us the doings of your precious Seymours. Go where you like, and do what you like, but spare us the subsequent story of your doings."

So Dorothy subsided gladly enough, feeling sure her story would only have aroused jealousy and anger, even though she had hardly spoken to anyone but Ralph, and had not, so far as she knew, so much as caught a glimpse of the wealthy Mr. Moore.

A few days later Claudia and Mabel were at a crowded *soirée*, and were seated in a comfortable recess with their friend Mrs. Dalrymple. The latter was quite a new acquaintance, with whom the girls had struck up a great friendship on the strength of many tastes in common, and a fellow-feeling in social matters that was pleasant to all parties.

Mrs. Dalrymple was somewhat loud in voice and manner, and, like many people of her type, exceedingly good-natured when it pleased her to be so, and very fond of having a voice in everybody's business, and a finger in her neighbour's pie.

"My dears, *he* is to be here to-night," she said in

loud confidential whispers, and they knew at once who was meant by that emphatic "he." "But, do you know, I am almost afraid he is already engaged to be married. Everyone was saying so at Lady Forrester's the other day, and certainly he did pay her very marked attention—a very pretty girl, too, but I did not catch the name; people said she was a relation, and went about a good deal with them. But then, it may not be true, of course. Rumours always do get so quickly about when there is money in the case. Ah! they must be here, I think, for that is certainly his mother over there—that pretty old lady in black satin with the wonderful lace; but I do not see him anywhere."

Claudia and Mabel both felt something of a simultaneous shock, although they felt that it *must* be a mistake. They had both of them by this time seen Mrs. Seymour, who had once had a cup of tea in their drawing-room, and had once called on their reception day; but Ralph had not been with her either time. They had treated her with but scant courtesy, and they had felt somewhat annoyed at seeing her in the rooms that night.

Yet Mrs. Dalrymple seemed to be looking straight across at her, and nobody else was dressed in black satin and lace—nobody, at least, in that particular group. Moreover, the hostess and one or two people, decidedly the best born in the company, were paying distinct court to her, and she was receiving their advances with a quiet high-bred ease and courtesy that bespoke in the most emphatic way the true English gentlewoman.

Claudia turned hot and cold at once.

"Which did you say was Mrs. Moore?"

"Seymour, my dear—Seymour; there, opposite to us; the old lady with the wavy white hair. She has the sweetest face, I think, and they say she has the most beautiful diamonds of any commoner in the country, though she never wears them. I suppose they are being kept for the son's wife. I believe it was rather unexpected, their stepping into such a fine property, though it is long enough ago now. Some people say her husband was quite a poor country gentleman when she married him, and that she is not in the least ashamed of having once been poor. People with an income like that, and an old name, too, have no cause to be ashamed of anything, of course. Well, they carry off the position well, at any rate, now. They both have the air of having been born to the purple, although some people say they are mighty particular and strait-laced in their ways — much more so than is the fashion nowadays. Well, well! they can afford to pick and choose, I suppose. Oh, yes, there is the son—that very tall, good-looking young man, with the clever face and sleepy-looking grey eyes, there, coming this way, and looking down smiling at the girl on his arm. And—why, yes—it is the very same he paid such attentions to at Lady Forrester's. I am afraid it is a gone case; and she is certainly charmingly pretty."

Claudia turned suddenly pale, whilst Mabel went crimson to the roots of her hair.

The tall young man, the owner of this handsome property, the "catch" of the season, was none other than the despised country cousin, the son of Mrs. Seymour; and the girl to whom he was said to be already engaged was actually their own sister Dorothy!

(To be continued.)

THE SEVEN LEAVES OF THE VINE.

THOUGHTS UPON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF OUR LORD UPON THE CROSS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. WILLIAM ALEXANDER, D.D., D.C.L., LORD BISHOP OF DERRY AND RAPHOE.

THE SEVENTH WORD FROM THE CROSS.

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost."—ST. LUKE xxiii. 46.

THE crucifixion had begun about nine o'clock. During the terrible preparation for execution, just as the cross was about to be lifted up, with its sacred burden attached, He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." After some considerable interval came the second utterance—to the penitent thief—"Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." It was near twelve o'clock, as the seismic darkness was gathering over the landscape, that the third sentence of human affection fell from His lips: "Woman, behold thy son—behold thy mother." Just as the three hours' darkness was beginning to break, the fourth utterance expresses at once the awful reality of the dereliction, and the fact that it was now over, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani.*" The three others follow in rapid succession—"I thirst"; "It is finished"; "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

There are two remarks which should be made upon the seven words taken collectively:—

1. As regards the Evangelists. Of the seven last utterances, St. Matthew and St. Mark give one only; St. Luke three, and St. John three. No Evangelist (except in the case of the third) records a saying from the Cross which is preserved by another. No Evangelist gives all the seven. Here, as elsewhere, Bengel's beautiful principle applies, that "the four

books are four voices, which conjointly make up one symphony."

And of such a symphony in this case there is one most important use. These brief sentences, taken together, imply the necessary doctrine and consolation for every Christian man in the last hours of mortality.

The first requisite for every man under the shadow of death is *pardon*—the great Pardon, with its little earthly reflection in our hearts—God's forgiveness of our sins, our forgiveness of all sins against *us*. The second step of preparation is the meditation upon the rest of Paradise, and the blessed hope of being there with Christ—"for ever with the Lord." The third utterance may well teach us that it is a false spirituality which would affect to be above love and care for the provision of the earthly will, above the disposition (so far as our action can influence it) of those whom we hold most dear. The fourth, the cry of dereliction, has a warning for us that, not seldom, even in the case of servants of God, there may be at least temporary darkness of feeling, storms of emotional agitation, soothed and absorbed, we may trust, at last, in the fulness of perfect peace. The fifth word speaks literally of the physical pain of our feverish and suffering humanity; mystically it may seem to express desire of sacramental communion with God, and yearning for the refreshment of His presence. Then, as the sixth degree in the progress to a holy death, there comes a fresh and entire laying of our marred work on the one perfect and finished Work. And, last of all, the calm sweetness of a spirit offered to a reconciled Father. The seventh word, as we have noticed, is recorded by St. Luke only; but it is implied and stated historically by St. John, when he says, "He gave up His Spirit." *

The principal things which the seventh word teaches us are these:—

1. It shows us the view of death which was taken by Jesus.

In the general view of that great mystery there are two deficiencies. Death is looked upon simply as fate—irresistible and irrevocable necessity. And the life beyond the grave, so far as it is contemplated at all, is regarded as an impersonal absorption into the universal life, or as a positivist immortality of a subjective character—a place in the memory and affection of those who survive us. But our Lord has no feeling of being dragged by an iron chain. His death comes from a Father's love. Equally does the word tell us that He has the assurance of life in definite personality, the true life of the *spirit* after the body has gone down into the dust of death. "Father, into Thy hand," He says, "I commend," I entrust as a deposit in full assurance that it will be safely kept and faithfully returned. It is the free, spontaneous, personal, unhesitating surrender of that part of the sanctified nature which is peculiarly superhuman, and clings most closely to the Father, whose dearest possession on earth it is.* The seventh word is the great consciousness of David,† rising to the assurance of immortality, appropriated by Christ with a fulness which David could never reach. Whatsoever is to be deposited by any of the sons of God is safe. How trustfully, then, can the Son of God deposit His life with Him who is the Father of Life, the great fountain of spiritual existence!

Who can doubt that we, who must all enter upon the solemn mystery of death, were intended to draw comfort and brightness from this view of death given us by the dying Lord? The spirit and body came to be called "my deposit," "that which I have committed unto Him," from a sweet and solemn reminiscence of the last sentence upon the Cross.‡

The deposit must be safe which is lodged with such a depositary, and vested with such a trustee. Blessed is he who can call God his Father with his latest breath, and imitate Christ, if not in the magnificence of the investment, yet with some faint degree of the filial confidence with which it is lodged.

2. A second lesson derivable from this seventh word is the use to be made of Scripture during the approach of death.

Scripture is not only a rule of faith, but a rule of life. Not only of life. One chief employment of it is for the dying. Of the seven last words, *four* are literally or allusively from the Psalms. To separate the Old Testament, and especially the Psalter, from the knowledge of eternal life beyond the grave is to dissociate it from the interpretation of our Lord.

What variety there is in Scripture of words suitable for the spirit in the last hours of human existence! Christian Churches have beautiful hints to take from each other. When the aged Emperor of Germany was dying a use was made of the *Nunc Dimittis* perfectly in accordance with the occasion on which it was originally uttered; yet, which almost surprises us. How many of us are wont to associate it exclusively with a quiet, half-exultant thanksgiving for the saving fulness of knowledge contained in the New Testament chapter! The Song of Simeon was repeated as the great soldier was passing away. The final blessing also at the Emperor's last moment lingers on the heart, and gives a fresh association to the beautiful verse, "The Lord preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth

* *παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα* (sc. *τῷ θεῷ*) (St. John xix. 30). In Stier's "Words of the Lord Jesus" (vol. viii.) the reader may find a beautiful and interesting, if somewhat fanciful, application of the order of the seven last words to the exigences of the Church in the successive crises of her history.

* The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of God as the Father, not of *souls* but of *spirits*. "Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of *spirits*, and live?" (Hebrews xii. 9.)

† Ps. xxxi. 5.

‡ *παραθήσομαι* (St. Luke xxiii. 46) *τὴν παραθήκην μου* (2 Tim. i. 12). *ὡς πιστῷ κτίστῃ παρατιθέσθωσαν τὰς ψυχὰς ἑαυτῶν* (1 Pet. iv. 19).

for evermore."* A great poet has spoken (with exaggeration bordering upon irreverence, it must be allowed) of one whose short life did not admit of much speech, but whose speech was touched with the magic light of genius—

> "dear as sacramental wine
> To dying lips was all he said."

But about Scripture words there is no exaggeration in saying that they are sacramental words. Wonderful, too, is it to note how in sickness, and as they draw near death, people brought up under Christian influences speak Bible language as if instinctively; something in the same way as the language of a foreign country seems to come naturally to our lips as we draw near to its shore.

3. Finally, this last word supplies one answer to an objection not seldom made to the Atonement.

How the Atonement effects the objects for which it was wrought we are nowhere told. It is unwise and perilous to press particular images of it too far. But the whole course of natural society is full of the *principle* of *mediation*—of benefits brought to us or of evils averted by the instrumentality, often by the sufferings, of others. These sufferings are nearly always borne reluctantly, sometimes with utter repugnance. But this last word attests how *willingly* Jesus died; how true were His own repeated declarations that "He lays down His life"; that "no man taketh it from Him, but He layeth it down of Himself." †

The writer desires to conclude with some lines which sum up—feebly enough, but in the best poor shape which he can devise—his most matured thoughts upon the Seven Last Words of Jesus from the Cross. He has, however, introduced one important change in the order in which the lines originally stood:—

* * * * * *

O kingly silence of our Lord!
O wordless wonder of the Word!
O hush, that while all Heaven is awed,
Makes music in the ear of God!
Silence—yet with a sevenfold stroke
Seven times a wondrous bell there broke
Upon the Cross, when Jesus spoke.
One word, one priestly word, He saith—
The advocacy of the death,

The mediation by the Throne
Wordless beginneth with that tone.
All the long music of the plea
That ever intercedes for me
Is set upon the selfsame key.

One royal word—though love prevails
To hold Him faster than the nails,
And though the dying lips are white
As foam seen through a dusky night:
That hand doth Paradise unbar,
Those pale lips tell of a world afar.
Where perfect absolutions are.

One word, one human word—we lift
Our adoration for the gift
Which proves that, dying, well He knew
Our very nature through and through.
Silver the Lord hath not, nor gold,
Yet His great legacy behold—
The Virgin to the virgin-soul'd.

Three hours of an unfathom'd pain,
Of drops falling like summer rain,
Earth's sympathy and heaven's eclipse—
Three hours the pale and dying lips
By their mysterious silence teach
Things far more beautiful than speech
In depth or height can ever reach.

One word, the *Eli* twice wailed o'er—
'T is anguish, but 't is something more.
Mysteriously the whole world's sin,
His and not His, is blended in.
It is a broken heart whose prayer
Crieth as from an altar-stair
To One who is, and is not, there.

One word, one gentle word. In pain
He condescendeth to complain—
Burning, from whose sweet will are born
The dewinesses of the morn.
The Fountain which is last and first,
The Fountain whence life's river burst,
The Fountain waileth out, "I thirst."

One royal word of glorious thought.
A hundred threads are interwrought
In it—the thirty years and three,
The bitter travail of the Tree,
Are finished—finished, too, we scan
All types and prophecies—the plan
Of the long history of man.

One word, one happy word—we note
The clouds over Calvary float
In distances, till fleck or spot
In the immaculate sky is not;
And on the Cross peace falls like balm;
And the Lord's soul is yet more calm
Than the *commendo* of His psalm.*

* Psalm cxxi. 8.
† St. John x. 15–18.

* "St. Augustine's Holiday, and Other Poems"—part of a poem entitled "Music or Words?" (pp. 82–85).

SOME LITTLE KNOWN BIBLES.—III.

BY THE REV. S. A. SWAINE.

THE present paper, which will conclude this series of notices, will not deal so much with Bibles proper—unless, indeed, we use the word in its etymological sense—as with parts of Bibles, ancient manuscript devotional works, and similar relics. We begin with the celebrated Codex Cottonianus, whose history is so interesting and fate so deplorable. Several of the fragments, which are all that remain of it, are preserved in the Library of this Baptist institution at Bristol. Written upon one hundred and sixty-five leaves of vellum, it was rendered quite unique by its having no fewer than two hundred and fifty pictures in illustration of the text. Twenty-two of them have been engraved. Anyone examining these fragments will notice that they are shrivelled and burnt. The explanation is as follows:—The entire manuscript was brought to England in the reign of Henry VIII., by two Greek bishops from Philippi, and given by them to that monarch. It was placed in the Cottonian Library, and was there when the disastrous fire occurred in 1731. During the progress of the conflagration a man, it is said, was offered £100 if he would rescue this manuscript from the flames. Tempted by the offer, he entered the burning pile. Having made his way into the room where it was, he was blinded by smoke, and brought out in mistake a document of comparatively little value. The curator was waiting outside to receive it, and immediately discovered the unfortunate mistake. Rushing in again, the man found that the flames had actually seized the precious writing of which he was in quest, and he could only recover the burning fragments. To Tischendorf's "Reliquiæ ex Incendio Ereptæ Codicis Celeberrimi" the late learned principal of the College, Dr. Gotch, has published a "Supplement," in which he deals with these Cottonian fragments, and has given plates of them. In the preface he says:—"Amongst the 'curiosities' were certain fragments in Greek characters, which were described in a catalogue printed in the year 1759 as 'some pieces of an old copy of the Septuagint, said to have been found in the ruins of the city of Herculaneum.' Nothing more was known or thought of these fragments until, about the year 1834, I found, by comparing them with the two plates published by the Antiquarian Society, that they were fragments of the celebrated Codex Cottonianus, preserved from the fire which, in 1731, destroyed a large portion of the Cottonian Library. What had become of other fragments seems to have been unknown. In 1778 the Rev. Dr. Henry Owen published the very accurate collation of the Cottonian MS. which had been made by Grabe in 1703, and which is still preserved in the Bodleian Library. Dr. Owen states in his preface that the fragments which had been preserved from the flames were lost. In the catalogue of the Cottonian Library, published by the British Museum in 1802, and edited by Mr. Joseph Planta, then Principal Librarian, it is stated that eighteen fragments are all that now remain, and that none of those engraved by the Antiquarian Society are amongst them. This statement was repeated by Hartwell Horne (himself one of the assistant librarians of the British Museum) in his 'Introduction to the Critical Study of the Scriptures,' until he was informed by myself in 1834 or 1835, of the existence of the fragments in the Baptist Museum at Bristol. In later editions he added a note to this effect, without, however, altering the statement in his text. . . . When I undertook, five or six years ago, at the suggestion of the Rev. F. H. Scrivener, D.D., to transcribe and print the few Bristol fragments, I did not at all anticipate that I was entering on a work that would cost me so much time and labour. But, having begun, I was desirous of making the 'Supplement' as complete as possible." That the "Supplement" is as complete as it is possible for learning, pains, and patience to make it, is manifest by an examination of this splendidly got-up book.

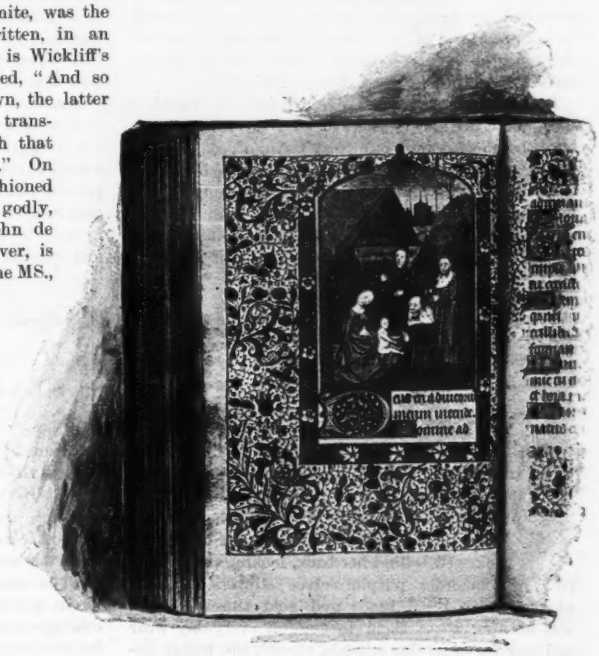


FRAGMENT OF THE CODEX COTTONIANUS.



WYCLIFFE'S VERSION OF ST. MATTHEW AND ACTS

Among other manuscript treasures are two beautiful Wycliffian MSS. One of these contains the Epistles as in our English New Testaments, with the apocryphal Epistle to the Laodiceans following Colossians, *the Book of Acts* ("Deedis") following Hebrews and the Book of Revelation—that is, it did originally; but now it is imperfect. It begins in the middle of the sixth chapter of Romans. On a blank leaf is written:—"Vid. Weever's ffuneral Monuments, pag. 152, where you may see some part of this Book quoted. He says one Richard, a Hermite, was the Translator." On a blank leaf is written, in an ancient style of writing, "I think it is Wickliff's translation;" to which Dr. Gifford added, "And so does also A. Gifford." Then, lower down, the latter has written:—"That this is Wickliffe's translation appears from comparing it with that published by Lewis in fol. MDCCXXXI." On another blank leaf, written in an old-fashioned but beautiful hand, is an account of a "godly, learned, and aged servant of God," John de Trévisae, of Cornwall. No claim, however, is made that he had anything to do with the MS., though it is said that he translated the Old and New Testaments into English. The other Wycliffe MS. contains the Gospel of St. Matthew and the Book of Acts. Though doubt has been thrown upon its genuineness by the compiler of the Library catalogue—for what reason does not appear; he simply says, "NotWycliffe's"—a comparison of it with the Wycliffe versions given by Mombert shows that he was mistaken. It should be remarked that there were variations, sometimes considerable, in the Wycliffe MSS. It would seem that the gentleman referred to, finding that there were differences between this and some Wycliffe MS. with which he compared it, hurriedly came to the conclusion that the claim made for it could not be sustained. An inscription informs us that it was presented to the Lord Wilton Cobham, John Oldcastle—more generally known as Lord Cobham—the famous Lollard who suffered death for the Gospel's sake in St. Giles's Fields in 1417. The donor was a certain "FitzHenry, atte [some place too faded to make out]." By Lord Cobham the book was



AN ILLUMINATED MISSAL.

"bequeathed by wille" to Sir H. Brooke, and afterwards handed down to several successive generations by special bequest, till it came into the possession of Sir Benjamin Maddox, and finally into that of the committee of this institution at Bristol. This is sufficient to show the value set upon it by the noble family in whose possession it remained for so long a time.

In the manuscript department there is an illuminated missal which cannot fail to call forth the admiration of the visitor. Its pages are thick with gold, and the colours are as bright to-day as when first laid on by the artist. The illuminations which adorn it could probably not be surpassed by the most accomplished artist in this branch of art that the nineteenth century can boast.

Here is a relic of honest old Hugh Latimer. It is his well-worn copy of "The History of Francis Spira," on the title-page of which is his autograph. This book was much prized by our English Reformers, and was sometimes quoted by writers of the later Puritan school. The subject of the history was an Italian, who, having been converted from the errors of Romanism, afterwards, under stress of persecution, recanted. The story is very distressing, for it tells how a few weeks afterwards, having, as he believed, committed the sin against the Holy Ghost which is unpardonable, he died, from no physical malady, but from sheer agony and horror of mind, declaring that he was smitten by the hand of God and doomed to perdition.

Scarcely less interesting is a memorial-of the "glorious dreamer," who, dying two hundred years ago, bequeathed his matchless allegory to a grateful world. It is in the form of an old well-worn concordance of the Scriptures, on the inner cover of which are inscribed the words, "John Bunyan, his Book."

Possibly a copy of the first edition of "Paradise Lost," here delighting the eye of the book-lover, was once the possession of our great Puritan poet himself. "Our great epic poem," says an anonymous writer, "was first published in ten books, not twelve as we now have it. The alterations were made in the second edition, and additional lines were inserted in several places. The following are some of the additions made to the second edition. In the fifth book the following lines have been inserted in the description of the angelic banquet:—

> "On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets crowned,
> They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
> Quaff immortality, and joy secure
> Of surfeit, where full measures only bound
> Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who showered
> With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy."

At the commencement of the eighth book, descriptive of a pause in the address of the angelic visitant, we have added:—

> "The angel ended, and in Adam's ear
> So charming left his voice, that he awhile
> Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear;
> Then, as new-waked, thus gratefully replied."

And again, at the beginning of the twelfth book, which in the first edition formed part of the tenth—

> "As one who in his journey baits at noon,
> Though bent on speed, so here the archangel paused,
> Betwixt the world destroyed, and world restored,
> If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
> Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumed."

Now, in the copy of the first edition in the Museum at Bristol, these and other alterations and additions are inserted in writing on the margin of the volume, *precisely as they would be if made by the author*. The traditional history of the volume affirms that they were so made—that is, of course, at Milton's dictation. Dr. Gifford, who lived at a period not very remote from the date of publication, seems to have added the volume to his collection with this belief. And the writer of this notice having shown it to a gentleman whose judgment in such matters carries great weight, one of the chief authorities in this department of the British Museum, was told by him that it had every appearance of authenticity.

But here we must stay our pen, although the subject is by no means exhausted. If any reader would like to pursue investigation further, he can do so by a visit to the institution which is fortunate enough to possess the treasures now described, as well as much that is ancient, rare, and curious besides. The Library is open to visitors every day of the week, Saturday and Sunday excepted, from three till five o'clock.

THE CURATE'S SLIPPERS.

"SLIPPERS, are they? I thought they were intended for mantelpiece ornaments, or public exhibition under a glass case, Grace."

Marjorie Duncanson had some cause for her remark. She was standing, her hands clasped behind her back, looking down at a pair of elaborate purple velvet slippers, lavishly adorned with pearl beads and gold tinsel. There was nothing about them to suggest every-day wear and tear for every-day mortals, though the maker apparently held a different opinion.

"They are not any too good for the person who is to have them," she answered, regarding them thoughtfully, with her head on one side. "You have not seen him yet, Marjorie—it's our new curate, Mr. Thorn."

"Oh!" Marjorie's lips shut up tightly for a second; "and he wears finery of that kind?"

"I'm sure he never had a handsomer pair," said Grace, a little ruffled; "it is the first thing I have ever given him, so I made up my mind it should not be anything shabby-looking."

"And you have thoroughly succeeded," laughed

Marjorie. "Does the gentleman expect gifts from all his hearers?"

"Of course he doesn't; but you have not seen him yet," with an air of making allowance for a great misfortune. "His house is rather a long way from here—Acacia Villa: it's the other side of the railway station. He is very nice-looking, too."

A slender, fair-haired man, not quite in his first youth—"washed-out-looking" promptly decided Marjorie, who did not approve of fair-haired men, and saw no reason for making any exception in this particular case. Grace was eagerly giving him a tragic account of her last adventure in district visiting.



"She picked them up and regarded them soberly."—*p.* 627.

"I don t doubt that, Grace; but there is no hurry about seeing the hero. I am not an impatient person."

However, as it happened, that statement was not to be tested at present. That same day, as the two were returning from some expedition, Grace diligently pointing out the different landmarks to her new acquaintance, they encountered the prospective owner of the slippers. Marjorie observed a clerical-looking personage at some distance, and guessed who it was by the flutter in Grace's ribbons. She surveyed him curiously as he turned to speak to Grace after the brief introduction.

"Is Miss Duncanson going to join in the work?" asked the curate presently, looking round at her. He had a rather pleasant voice in speaking.

"No," was the curt response. "Miss Duncanson has no qualification whatever in that direction."

"But it is possible to learn," he suggested.

"Not when one has no wish to learn. You are very well provided for in the way of assistance already, Mr. Thorn."

"There are never too many workers in that field, Miss Duncanson."

But Mr. Thorn did not press the point; he went his

way up the road. Grace turned upon Marjorie quite indignantly.

"You did not take trouble to be very polite, I must say, Marjorie."

"It was not at all necessary, dear; the good man is well aware of his value; and if he were not, those slippers would speedily enlighten him, and atone for the denseness of a mere outsider."

And a mere outsider Marjorie elected to remain, though she and her father came to church on Sundays, and duly listened to the sermons. Mr. Duncanson had only recently bought a country house, chiefly for the sake of the quiet Sundays. His week from Monday morning to Saturday afternoon was swallowed up by the noisy, grimy ironworks in the smoky city, lying like a cloud on the horizon. He was an exceedingly shrewd, sensible, genial man, when anyone did manage to penetrate through the thick shell of business that cased him in from the idle public, and Marjorie had inherited a fair share of his views and ideas. Accustomed all her life to hard-headed business men, the advent of a curate addicted to embroidered velvet slippers did not rouse in her those sentiments of respectful admiration it might under other circumstances. Mr. Thorn was doubtless a very worthy person, but Marjorie preferred a man with more "grit" in his composition.

And yet—who shall account for these things? It was March, early March, when the Duncansons came to live in Moorfoot; the swelling brown buds on the great chestnut-trees were just waking up from their long winter sleep: by the time they had blossomed out into tall spires of pinky white it began to dawn upon Marjorie, to her utter amazement, that something else had wakened up to life also, and as unconsciously as the flowers.

The how or wherefore of it she could not explain, any more than she could the unfurling of those waving fans on the trees above. A chance word or two here, a meeting there, a casual stroll under the chestnuts that were the pride and glory of the whole village—such insignificant trifles all, to lead up to anything. Marjorie wandered away across the flat country meadows one of those hot summer afternoons, with a puzzled sense of discomfiture that was a very new sensation in her sensible, straightforward career.

At the stile into the lane she came upon the cause of it—Mr. Thorn. He generally went on his way after that chance word or two, but to-day he turned about and walked on beside her.

"I should like a word of advice from you, Miss Duncanson, upon a matter that concerns me rather closely," he broke forth, after they had travelled the length of two fields with one solitary observation upon the weather.

"Very well," laughed Marjorie; "I am said to be decidedly clever at that kind of thing."

There was no shadow of an answering smile on Mr. Thorn's face; it had never looked more serious in the pulpit; he took a crumpled letter from his pocket: "I have had an intimation lately from the bishop's chaplain that if I cared to apply for the Cathcart living, there would be a fair chance for me."

"Well?"

"Well, it depends upon you—this place does for me quite well; I've only myself to think of, but that one is a fair living, and if—if I could hope that there might be someone else—I have been thinking—hoping——"

Mr. Thorn had got beyond his depth; he was flushing and stammering like a girl; Marjorie broke in sharply—abruptly—

"That is a matter I cannot possibly give an opinion upon; under *no* circumstances could it affect me in any way."

Marjorie marched home, her head very erect, full of indignation against herself as well as Mr. Thorn; how much better than Grace Ford was she, after all? A curate! a man who wore velvet slippers, and was deluged with flattery and finery of every kind. No; she would be Marjorie Duncanson to the end of the chapter first.

A day or two went by. Thinking it over more quietly, Marjorie rather wished she had stated her views with a little more civility; it had certainly not been meant as an insult, and apart from that inordinate vanity, there was nothing really objectionable about the man. "It was all those tiresome slippers: they gave me a feeling against him from the first," she remarked to herself by way of extenuation. "But there was no need to lose my temper with him; it was not good manners, to say the least of it."

That was the end of the first stage; the next was to forget all about it. Mr. Thorn appeared to accomplish that part without any trouble; for one thing, he had a very busy post, with ample work for two men, and there is no remedy like hard work for the generality of grievances. Mr. Duncanson's house lay midway between the church and Acacia Villa, consequently Marjorie often saw the curate hurrying past, but she never—and for some reason best known to herself, she watched diligently to that end—she never once detected a glance in the direction of her windows.

One little incident about this time further helped to complicate matters. Going into town one day to visit one of their old friends, Marjorie noticed that she was wearing a pair of purple slippers, the same design, she was nearly certain, of the pair Grace Ford had worked. Marjorie's eyes unconsciously wandered to them again and again, till at last Mrs. Ingles held out her feet for inspection.

"You seem greatly attracted with my new slippers, Marjorie," she said laughingly; "if that is to be the general impression about them, I shall feel they were a good investment."

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Ingles; it was because they were so like a pair I saw out at Moorfoot a little while since, only those were for a gentleman."

"And I believe these were intended for a gentleman originally: at least, I understood it was one who disposed of them; he said they were of no manner of use to him. I saw them in a little shop in the Borough Road, and got them wonderfully cheap too; you see, I have a large foot for a woman."

Marjorie made some polite rejoinder concerning the said foot, and the conversation drifted away in another direction, but she privately made up her mind to find

out the truth of the matter the first opportunity that presented itself.

But no opportunity came her way; the leaves crumpled up and faded off the trees, the long bright summer slipped by, and Marjorie still found that the forgetting process was not completed yet. She wondered at herself often for the uneasiness and discomfort it had brought her. "I don't know whether I shall ever get another offer from anyone else," she remarked to herself reflectively once; "but if I do, this ought to be a warning to me to decline with civility and dignity. I've never felt really myself since."

One grey, chilly afternoon in the middle of November, Marjorie went to have a chat with Grace Ford. Grace had been in London for some weeks, and was sure to be brimming over with news. Marjorie found her lying on the sofa with a bandaged foot, the outcome of slipping down-stairs in a high-heeled boot the day before.

"Papa says it's a lesson for me," said Grace; "he believes in the good old-fashioned flat sole of the days before heels were invented. It's rather provoking too; I wanted to go over to Acacia Villa to-day with some medicine for Mrs. Smithers."

"Who is Mrs. Smithers?"

"Mr. Thorn's landlady. She has neuralgia; she generally has it, for that matter. I promised her some two or three days ago, but I was too busy to go."

"More fancy work?" queried Marjorie.

"Oh no," laughed Grace; "it will have to be towels and table-cloths now, and you have no idea how interesting those things can be, when they are for yourself, Marjorie."

"Towels and table-cloths!" echoed the visitor; "has it come to that, Grace?"

"It has indeed. He does not want to wait longer than Christmas, so I ordered a lot of things while we were in London."

"Has he been there too? it must have been a very brief visit."

"Visit!" cried Grace; "he lives there."

"Mr. Thorn?"

"What put that into your head?" retorted Grace. "I mean Dr. Wyld. I thought mamma had told you."

"I have scarcely seen Mrs. Ford since you went," said Marjorie, in a mystified tone. "I knew you were going to visit Mrs. Wyld, that was all."

"That was all then—but——"

"But you improved the time to some purpose. Poor Mr. Thorn! no more slippers for him from your quarter; another star has eclipsed him."

"I don't believe he knows which quarter they came from," said Grace carelessly. "I sent them by parcel post and without any name; he has never mentioned them, at any rate. Never mind him now; I want to tell you all about Charlie," which Grace proceeded to do to her heart's content till it grew dusk, and Marjorie got up and began to button on her gloves: then a sudden idea occurred to her hostess.

"Marjorie, would you mind leaving that bottle at Mrs. Smithers'? It won't take you five minutes out of your way."

"Very well," agreed Marjorie. "Mr. Thorn is gone to town, I know; he always goes on Thursdays."

"Does he?" said Grace indifferently. "It would not matter much if he hadn't; he has only two rooms: you needn't see him at all."

And, so for the first time since she came to Meorfoot, Marjorie set her face towards Acacia Villa.

The acacias were conspicuous by their absence. one attenuated "monkey-puzzle" decorated the front garden. Marjorie glanced at the dark, deserted-looking sitting-room window as she rang the bell with an energy not calculated to soothe Mrs. Smithers' aggravated nerves, though it brought her promptly to the door.

She marshalled her visitor into the kitchen with sundry groans and apologies. "It's this neuralgia, miss—it takes the heart out of one. I've no spirit to look after things. If it wasn't that Mr. Thorn's so little trouble I'd have to tell him to go."

"Still, a lodger of any kind must be something additional, I should think."

"He never cares what's set before him, miss. I've had men that kept me on the go from morning to night, and no thanks for it either."

It did not strike Marjorie that Mrs. Smithers was a person greatly addicted to giving thanks on her own account.

"And there's my glasses gone," went on the afflicted one, taking up the bottle, "and not one word of the directions can I read without them. Oh, I remember I had them to settle Mr. Thorn's bill after breakfast: they'll be on his chimney."

With another sigh Mrs. Smithers rose up from her chair.

"Allow me to get them," interposed Marjorie. "I have quick eyes for lost properties."

And for other things too. She crossed the narrow hall into the curate's sitting-room, and took in the whole in one comprehensive sweep: not the pretty temple of fancy work and easy comfort she had in her own mind from the first credited him with owning—bare and bleak, littered with papers and books and dust, a few dying cinders in the rusty grate: no man in any degree given to the consideration of number one would have tenanted it for twenty-four hours.

Marjorie went over to the "chimney" for the glasses; by the fender in the fading light she stumbled over something—Mr. Thorn's slippers; she picked them up, and regarded them soberly—coarse, strong leather, black originally, but worn to a dingy nondescript hue now. Long years of service lay behind them, more might lie before them. Marjorie put them down gently, almost respectfully, and went back to the kitchen.

"Here are your spectacles, Mrs. Smithers. Don't trouble to come to the door; I will let myself out. I hope that bottle will do you good."

Up the solitary road went Marjorie; it was later than she had fancied, and it behoved her to make haste home. Half-way she came into collision with

some person proceeding the opposite way, and drew back with a startled exclamation.

"Why, Miss Duncanson, this is late for you to be out alone! I did not expect to meet you to-night."

He had turned about and was walking back with her; Marjorie raised no objection. Mr. Thorn glanced at her once or twice, wondering what had disturbed her. Miss Duncanson was usually remarkable for her stately self-composure, but he asked no questions, and in unbroken silence they marched the length of the lane; there she suddenly broke it.

"Mr. Thorn, had you not a present of a pair of purple velvet slippers last winter?"

"I had."

"Have you them still?"

They were passing a gas-lamp. Marjorie, looking up for an answer, saw the curate's face flush dark red.

"I don't think I ever yet did a mean action but I was safe to be found out by some means or other," he said ruefully. "No, I haven't got them—I sold them."

"Oh!"

"I wanted a small sum in a hurry, badly; I had promised a poor wretch to help him with his passage-money to Canada, and he went sooner than I counted upon. They were not exactly the kind of shoes for a man who had any other occupation in life than admiring his own toes, and I got ten shillings for them, which was of much more use to me."

Marjorie offered no comment. "It's not possible that they came from you?" asked Mr. Thorn, breaking another uncomfortable pause.

"I! No, I never did anything like that in my life, but—but I saw those slippers before I saw you, and I took it for granted you were that kind of person—that you liked all that finery and nonsense."

It was not a particularly clear explanation, and reflected scant credit on Marjorie's early education and training.

"But did it matter to you what kind of person I was?" demanded Mr. Thorn severely. "Under no circumstances could it possibly affect you in any way, as you told me yourself in this same lane."

No answer, not even one feeble effort to defend her views or stand by her colours.

"Could it make any difference now?" he asked, coming to a full stop at Mr. Duncanson's garden gate.

"I don't know," she answered with great meekness; "it—it might." SARAH PITT.

THE "QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

85. What happened to Eli when he heard the news that the Ark of God had been taken by the Philistines?

86. About what did the Jews mock Christ when He hung upon the cross?

87. What duty did Moses especially impress upon Joshua before entering the Land of Canaan?

88. In what way did Moses strive to keep before the Israelites a remembrance of the law which he had given to them?

89. When the Jews murmured because the woman poured ointment on the head of Jesus, what answer did He give them which was similar to a declaration God had given to their forefathers?

90. In what way was the remembrance of the miraculous passage of the Jordan kept in the minds of the Israelites?

91. In what way was Moses preserved by God when an infant, and prepared for his future work?

92. What does St. Paul say must be the foundation of our trust in God?

93. Why did the soldiers break the legs of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus?

94. In what words did the angels at the Sepulchre remind the women that they should have expected the resurrection of Jesus instead of coming to embalm His body?

95. In what passage does St. Paul set forth the teaching of our Lord as expressed in the words, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors?"

96. Quote some words of David in which, like St. Paul, he speaks of joy as the effect of a holy life.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 559.

73. St. Matt. xxvi. 23.

74. "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven? And they murmured at Him." (St. John vi. 41, 42.)

75. "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him." (Rev. i. 7.)

76. "Thou art my hope, O Lord God; thou art my trust from my youth." (Ps. lxxi. 5.)

77. "I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting." (Is. l. 6.)

78. St. Peter, who says, "If when ye do well and suffer for it ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." (1 Peter ii. 20.)

79. We are told Judas knew the place where to find Jesus, "for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with His disciples." (St. John xviii. 2.)

80. As the sign of His love and care for us, "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." (Heb. xii. 6.)

81. In answer to the question, Art Thou the Christ? Jesus said, "I am, and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." (St. Mark xiv. 62.)

82. "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head." (Ps. lxix. 4.)
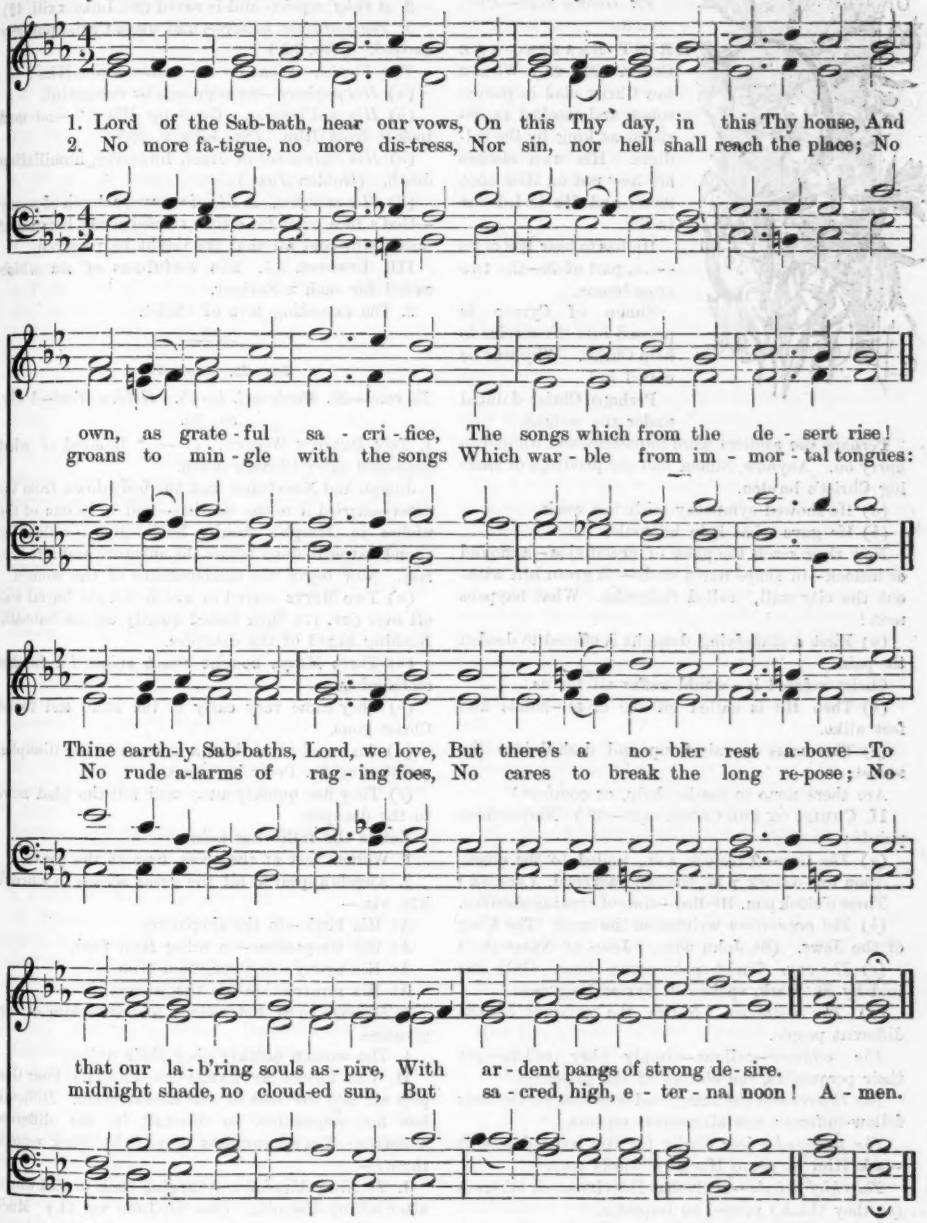
83. He took the blood of the sacrifice and sprinkled it upon the people. (Ex. xxiv. 8.)

84. The righteousness of the saints who have been purified in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. xix. 8.)

"Lord of the Sabbath."

Words by PHILIP DODDRIDGE, 1736.

Music by JOSEPH C. BRIDGE, M.A., Mus.D., Oxon.
(Organist of Chester Cathedral.)



SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.



JUNE 16. JESUS CRUCIFIED.

To read—St. Mark xv. 21—39. *Golden Text—Phil. ii.* 8.

CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS. (21—23.) We last saw Christ clad in purple robes, and mocked in derision as king by the soldiers. His own clothes are now put on Him once more, and He is led out to die.

He has to bear His cross—*i.e.*, part of it—the two cross-beams.

Simon of Cyrene is pressed into the service to help Christ. Why was he called in?

Perhaps Christ fainted under the weight.

Perhaps the soldiers were impatient, and wanted to hurry on. Anyhow, Simon had the privilege of sharing Christ's burden.

(*a*) He showed sympathy with the weak.

(*b*) He gave what help he could.

Now they reach the place of crucifixion—a mound or hillock—in shape like a skull—"a green hill without the city wall," called Golgotha. What happens next?

(*a*) First a stupefying draught is offered to deaden the pain.

Christ refused it—would suffer all for us.

(*b*) Then He is nailed on the cross—hands and feet alike.

(*c*) The cross is raised up and dashed into the socket.

Are there none to soothe, help, or comfort?

II. CHRIST ON THE CROSS. (24—39.) Notice these points:—

(*a*) *The time*—9 o'clock a.m., nailed to the cross. Noon to 3 o'clock p.m., the sun darkened. (Ver. 33.) Three o'clock p.m. He died—time of evening sacrifice.

(*b*) *The accusation* written on the cross. The King of the Jews. (St. John adds, "Jesus of Nazareth.")

(*c*) *The cry.* Christ spake seven times. Only one told by St. Mark, spoken in Syriac language.

(*d*) *The witnesses.* Notice the conduct of the different people.

The soldiers—callous—simply obey orders—get their perquisites, the clothes of the prisoners.

The thieves—in the same condemnation, revile their fellow-sufferer; one afterwards repents.

The passers-by jeer Christ for His boasted powers—ask Him to prove His own words true.

The chief priests—exult that He who saved others is (as they think) proved an impostor.

Is there, then, no immediate result from the crucifixion? See—

1. *A soldier*—moved by pity—offers wine (vinegar), which Christ accepts.

2. *A thief* repents and is saved (St. Luke xxiii. 42).

3. *The centurion* believes, and owns Christ publicly as God. (Ver. 39.)

The Victim. What do we notice about Him?

(*a*) *His patience*—no reproach or complaint.

(*b*) *His willingness.* Gave up His life—no man took it from Him. (St. John x. 18.)

(*c*) *His endurance* of cruel, lingering, humiliating death. (Golden Text.)

(*d*) *His sacrifice.* A life of sorrow, a death of agony—God's face even for a time turned away because of man's sin—and all that we might be forgiven.

III. LESSONS. 1. The sinfulness of sin which called for such a Saviour.

2. The exceeding love of Christ.

JUNE 23. JESUS RISEN.

To read—St. Mark xvi. 1—13. *Golden Text—1 Cor. xv.* 20.

I. THE DEVOUT WOMEN. (1—8.) Remind of what happened after Christ's death.

Joseph and Nicodemus took the body down from the cross—carried it to the Garden—laid it in one of the niches in Joseph's family burial-place—rolled the round flat mill-stone before the entrance and left it to rest. Now begin the ministrations of the women.

(*a*) Two Marys stayed to watch till the burial was all over (xv. 47), then rested quietly on the Sabbath. Nothing heard of the disciples.

(*b*) Three Marys bought sweet spices for further embalming.

(*c*) They came very early to the tomb and found Christ gone.

(*d*) An angel gives them a message to the disciples, mentioning St. Peter by name.

(*e*) They flee quickly away and tell the glad news to the disciples.

Notice the following points—

1. Women last at the cross, first at the grave.

2. Angels appear at all the great scenes in Christ's life, viz.—

At His birth—to the shepherds.

At His temptation—to bring Him food.

At His agony—to strengthen Him.

At His resurrection—to the women.

3. Message to St. Peter alone to assure him of forgiveness.

4. The women quickly obey their orders.

II. THE THREE APPEARANCES. (9—14.) Four Gospels all tell the tale of the Resurrection. Difficult, but not impossible, to dovetail in the different accounts. Ten appearances in all. St. Mark records three:—

1. *To Mary Magdalene*—turning back to seek Christ after telling disciples. (See St. John xx. 14.) Much forgiven, loved much, longed to see her Lord.

2. *To two disciples.* Story told at length by St.

Luke (xxiv. 13, etc.). He talked and ate bread with them, and then they knew him.

3. *To the eleven at Jerusalem.* See St. John xx. 18.

So Christ proved His resurrection in various ways.

(*a*) To St. Peter—by message of forgiveness. (Is. xliii. 25.)

(*b*) St. Mary Magdalene—by His voice—calling His own sheep by name. (St. John x. 3.)

(*c*) To the two disciples—in the breaking of bread—*i.e.*, the Lord's Supper.

(*d*) To the Apostles—in bodily form, showing His wounds.

III. THE LESSONS. Why did Christ rise from the dead?

1. *To conquer death*, man's last great enemy. (1 Cor. xv. 24.) Therefore His body did not see corruption. (Acts ii. 31.)

2. *To complete our salvation.* He died for sin, and rose again for our justification. (Rom. iv. 25.)

3. *To be an earnest of man's resurrection.* "Because I live, ye shall live also."

4. *To teach us to seek things above.* (Col. iii. 1.)

JUNE 30. REVIEW OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS.

Golden Text—Rom. iv. 25.

HAVE had twelve lessons on our Lord's life, from His entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to His resurrection—a period of eight days—each containing its own special lessons.

I. PALM SUNDAY. Christ made triumphal entry to Jerusalem. Hailed by multitudes. Children, too, singing songs of welcome. Four days afterwards the same people shouted, "Crucify Him!"

Lesson. The danger of impressions which do not lead to action.

II. MONDAY. Fig-tree withered. Temple cleansed for second time.

Lessons. 1. Fruit looked for in lives.

2. Reverence in God's house.

III. TUESDAY. Last teachings in the Temple. Scribes and Pharisees put to silence. Christ anointed by Mary.

Lessons. 1. Hearken diligently unto Me.

2. He that rejecteth Me, rejecteth Him that sent Me.

3. She hath done what she could.

IV. WEDNESDAY. Christ sold by Judas. Retirement at house of Mary and Martha at Bethany.

Lessons. 1. Love of money root of all evil.

2. Come and rest awhile apart.

V. THURSDAY. The Lord's Supper. Agony in the Garden. Betrayal by Judas. Desertion by disciples.

Lessons. 1. I am the bread of life.

2. Not my will but Thine be done.

3. The love of many shall wax cold.

VI. GOOD FRIDAY. Trial before the High Priest. Denial by St. Peter. Trial before Pilate. Crucifixion, death, and burial.

Lessons. 1. He is despised and rejected of men.

2. Whoso shall be ashamed of Me, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed.

3 Behold the man.

4. By Thy Cross and passion, by Thy death and burial, good Lord, deliver us.

VII. SATURDAY. Resting in the grave.

Lesson. He giveth His beloved sleep.

VIII. EASTER SUNDAY. Resurrection.

Lesson. In Christ shall all be made alive.

These are the lessons from the *events*. What have we learnt from the mind and character of Christ?

1. *His yearning* over the lost, *e.g.*, rebuking and exhorting Scribes, Pharisees, and people to the last.

2. *His tenderness* to the penitent, *e.g.*, accepting Mary's offering, sending special message to St. Peter.

3. *His warnings, e.g.*, to the Jews about the fate of Jerusalem, to all about the end of the world.

4. *His patience*—during all His sufferings, two trials, and death.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES. THIRD QUARTER.

LESSONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

JULY 7TH. SAMUEL CALLED OF GOD.

To read—1 *Sam. iii.* 1—14. *Golden Text—ver.* 10.

I. SAMUEL'S WORK. (1—3.) Remind of Samuel's past history.

(*a*) His parents, Elkanah and Hannah, pious Jews, attending yearly feasts at Shiloh.

(*b*) His mother, childless, prays earnestly in God's house for a son.

(*c*) Hannah's prayer heard, Samuel (*asked of God*) born and solemnly dedicated to the Lord.

Read now of his daily work and his special call.

1. *His daily work.* General ministering in the Tabernacle as a Levite or attendant of the priests, *e.g.*, opening the doors daily (ver. 15), lighting and cleansing the lamps, mixing spices for incense.

His dress a linen ephod ordered by God (Ex. xxviii. 4), made by his mother. (ii. 19.)

2. *His special work.* Waiting upon and attending to Eli in place of his sons, "who made themselves vile."

II. SAMUEL'S CALL. (4—10.) Must picture the Tabernacle at the close of day.

Priests, Levites, and congregation departed.

Lamps burning low, nearly out.

Eli, old and feeble, gone to rest in room joining the Tabernacle.

Samuel, the child, lies down to sleep.

Suddenly a voice heard calling him by name.

He rises at once, runs to Eli, asks his will. Is told to lie down again. Same thing happens again and again.

Eli understands it is God's voice—tells him what to say.

God again calls—Samuel answers.

What does all this show on Samuel's part?

1. *Readiness* to obey Eli instantly.

2. *Docility* to carry out his wishes.

3. *Honour* to the old man who was to him as a father.

III. SAMUEL'S MESSAGE. (11—14.) The punishment of Eli's house because of his sons' sin. This punishment will be—

(*a*) *Severe.* All who hear it will be amazed.

(*b*) *Lasting.* His house put away for ever.

(*c*) *Final.* Not to be appeased by sacrifices.

(*d*) *Just*, because he did not restrain his sons after God had warned him. (ii. 27.)

What does this teach about God?

1. He is a holy God, who cannot overlook sin.

2. He is a just God, who punishes wickedness.

3. He is a merciful God, who first gives warning.

IV. LESSONS. 1. Children can serve God like Samuel. They can be—

(*a*) *Attentive* to daily duties.

(*b*) *Obedient* to parents and all set over them.

2. Children are called by God.

(*a*) Conscience tells when are doing right or wrong.

(*b*) God's Word directs life and conduct.

(*c*) God's Holy Spirit speaks to the heart.

3. Children have a message from God.

(*a*) To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.

(*b*) Now is the day of salvation.

JULY 14. THE SORROWFUL DEATH OF ELI

To read—1 *Sam. iv.* 1—18. *Golden Text*—1 *Sam. iii.* 13.

I. THE BATTLE LOST. (1—9.) Samuel, now grown to be a man—is established in his office as prophet. (iii. 20.) Bad days in Israel.

(*a*) *Eli* old, and feeble in body and mind.

(*b*) *His sons*, the priests, stole the sacrifices. (ii. 16.)

(*c*) *People* fell off from religious ways.

(*d*) *God* withdrew from the people.

(*e*) *Samuel* alone faithful—as light in dark place.

Now follows punishment. God let enemies prevail against them. Who were they?

The Philistines in south-west, same as formerly smitten by Samson. (Judges xv. 15.)

Israelites often fought battles before. How had they proceeded?

(*a*) Fought under a trusty leader; *e.g.*, Joshua.

(*b*) Prayed for success; *e.g.*, Moses on the hill-top.

(*c*) Been assured by God of victory, as at Red Sea.

Now, no leader, no prayer, no help from God. What did they do?

(*a*) Fetched the Ark from the Tabernacle.

(*b*) Shouted with a great shout.

Why did they do this?

(*a*) To copy proceedings at Jericho. (Jos. vi. 4.)

(*b*) Hoped the Ark would act as a charm.

But forgot that the Ark without the presence of God was nothing.

What was the effect on the Philistines?

They were incited to fresh exertions.

They gained a great victory.

II. THE ARK LOST. (10—18.) See the sad effects of the battle—

(*a*) Israelites utterly routed, 30,000 killed.

(*b*) The two priests, Eli's sons, among the slain.

(*c*) Worst of all—the Ark of God taken.

Now news carried to Shiloh. What is Eli doing?

Sitting by wayside, watching for news.

Trembling for the Ark, his special care.

The loss of this affects him more than all the rest. He stumbles, falls, breaks his neck, dies. Poor Eli!

What an accumulation of troubles in one day—

(*a*) High-priest and priests dead—a family swept away.

(*b*) The symbol of God's presence dishonoured.

(*c*) The glory departed from Israel. (ver. 22.)

III. LESSONS. 1. Outward symbols, of themselves, are useless.

2. Depart from God, and He will depart from you.

3. A foolish son is the calamity of his father. (Prov. xix. 13.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE READING SOCIETY.

DAILY READINGS BEARING ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

JUNE 10—JULY 14.

JUNE.	MORNING.	EVENING.
10.	St. Matthew xxvii. 32—44.	St. Matthew xxvii. 45—56.
11.	St. Luke xxiii. 33—47.	Philippians ii., to ver. 11.
12.	St. John xix., 14—24.	St. John xix. 25—37.
13.	Psalm xxii., to ver. 19.	Daniel ix., from ver. 16.
14.	Psalm xxxi., to ver. 16.	Romans vi., to ver. 12.
15.	Numbers xxi. 4—9; St. John iii. 14—21.	Isaiah liii.
16.	St. Mark xv. 21—39.	St. Mark xvi. 1—13.
17.	St. Matthew xxviii., to ver. 10.	St. Matthew xxviii, ver. 11.
18.	St. Luke xxiv., to ver. 12.	St. Luke xxiv. 13—32.
19.	St. Luke xxiv., from ver. 33.	St. John xx., to ver. 17.
20.	St. John xx., from ver. 18.	Colossians iii., to ver. 17.
21.	1 Corinthians xv., to ver. 14.	1 Corinthians xv. 15—28.
22.	1 Corinthians xv. 29—45.	1 Corinthians xv. 46—58.
23.	St. Mark xvi. 1—13.	Isaiah lii.
24.	St. Mark xi. 1—11.	St. Mark xii. 1—12.
25.	St. Mark xii. 28—37.	St. Mark xiii. 1—13.
26.	St. Mark xiii. 24—37.	St. Mark xiv. 1—9.
27.	St. Mark xiv. 12—26.	St. Mark xiv. 43—54.
28.	St. Mark xiv. 55—72.	St. Mark xv. 1—20.
29.	St. Mark xv. 21—39.	St. Mark xvi 1—13.
30.	(*Review Sunday.*) Acts. xiii. 26—39.	1 Samuel iii. 1—14.
JULY.		
1.	1 Samuel i, from ver. 24; ii., from 7—11, 18, 19.	Amos viii.
2.	Psalm lxxiv., to ver. 12.	1 Samuel iii., from ver. 15; 1 Samuel vii, from ver. 8.
3.	Leviticus xxiv. 1—4; 2 Chronicles xiii. 8—16.	1 Samuel ii., from ver. 27.
4.	Numbers xv. 22—31.	Isaiah xxii., from ver. 12.
5.	Exodus ii., to ver. 14.	Acts ix., to ver. 16.
6.	St. Mark i. vers. 14, 20; ii. ver. 14; Acts xxvi. 12—20.	Isaiah vi.
7.	1 Samuel iii. 1—14.	1 Sam. iv. 1—18.
8.	Isaiah lix.	Deuteronomy xi. 18—28.
9.	Joshua iv., to ver. 11.	Deuteronomy xxxi. 16—27.
10.	Jeremiah xvi., from ver. 10.	1 Corinthians ix., from ver. 24; x., to ver. 13.
11.	Galatians v., from ver. 21; vi., to ver. 9.	Psalm xxxii.
12.	Romans vi., from ver. 12.	1 Peter iv., from ver. 12.
13.	Proverbs xxix., to ver. 18.	Ephesians vi., 1—4, 10—17.
14.	1 Samuel iv. 1—18.	1 Sam. vii. 1—17.

XUM

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.



A CHINESE BETROTHAL.

A CHINESE BETROTHAL.

BUT where are the young couple? We had just arrived in China, and, eager to see something of native social life, had gladly accepted an invitation to be present at a betrothal ceremony, the more gladly that in both contracting parties we felt an interest. [So writes a missionary in Shanghai, who goes on to tell the story of the betrothal she witnessed.] The bridegroom-elect had been from early childhood connected with our Mission, was a decidedly Christian youth, and was now enrolled among our native helpers; and the maiden, also a Christian, was an assistant teacher in a Chinese boarding-school, carried on by valued fellow-workers. Well, we had to learn that the young people were "nowhere" as regarded that day's proceedings—nowhere, at least with reference to each other—an exchange of presents was to be their only intercourse; and presently, at the doorway of the aforesaid school, there arrived four Chinamen carrying trays laden with offerings from the *fiancé*, consisting of a mass of small boxes, baskets, flowers, made of gay-coloured and gilded cardboard, wire, and paper. All were deposited on a table ready draped for the purpose, and then female friends bore them to the retreat of the bride. Thereinto we were allowed, by special favour, also to penetrate. It was the private room of one of the lady managers of the school. Here the damsel and her mother were supposed to be bewailing the event of the day, with its prognostication of parting; and to the question, "Are you very happy?" the girl replied, "You should not ask me that." But certainly two more contented countenances could not have been seen, and no wonder, since, as we were told, the girl's father was a drunkard, and her home wretched in consequence. She stood with her back to us, facing a couch where many of her gifts were spread out, but it was merely by stealthy glances she noticed them. The only objects representing any value were two glass boxes containing each six dollars, fastened singly to the bottom with silken threads, amidst nuts of many kinds, painted or covered with silk; there were pea-nuts in pairs, one large, one small, bound together in emblem of the betrothal tie. We were next called to inspect the gifts provided by the lady for her suitor. A black

satin hat, knee-boots of black cloth, a blue silk waist-scarf, and watch-pocket embroidered with gold and silver braid—all destined to be worn on the wedding-day. These were now placed on the trays which had borne his presents to her, and which we now observed were covered with handsome silken cloths, lined with a different colour, and finished with gay borderings. Indeed, the elaborate painstaking and skill, and, from an Oriental point of view, the tastefulness shown in every detail of the day's ceremonial, struck us greatly. Also we were impressed with the conviction that it would be no less undesirable than impossible to uproot the national customs of this people in our efforts to implant Christianity, save in so far as such customs savour of idolatry. The gentleman, meanwhile, at his home in the neighbouring native city, was entertaining his kinsmen and near friends, including some of our missionary party. The marriage is to follow in a year, and the young *fiancée* is steadily pursuing her school-work, her face beaming with happiness which she is now under no obligation to conceal.

A MAGAZINE FOR THE BLIND.

It will be remembered that not long since allusion was made in these pages to Moon's type for the blind. Now, we would desire to call the attention of the reader to the "Braille" type, a more recent mode of finger-reading. This has been chosen by the editors and publishers of a new magazine called *Santa Lucia*, as "the most modern, the most convenient, and the most generally useful of all those now in vogue;" so says the prospectus. The letters and abbreviations are pricked by a peculiar instrument and method, which are sufficiently simple to enable the sighted to print books for the sightless; thus giving occupation to many who have leisure to help in good works, and affording pleasure to those afflicted with blindness. The originators of *Santa Lucia* have long been engaged in this gratuitous and interesting occupation, and it gradually dawned upon them that a magazine of a higher class than those at present obtainable by the blind would be of great benefit to them. Accordingly they have, at great labour and expense, commenced a work which will be, it is hoped, beneficial and permanent. They have obtained permission from numerous publishing firms—Messrs. Cassell amongst them—to reproduce copyright works, and from many high-class authors to reprint in "Braille" their productions. Thus they have started with a fair hope of success, and their first number, which appeared in March last, promised well for its successors. This monthly magazine will be sent post free for two shillings to subscribers in all parts of the United Kingdom. It is feared that the price will exclude many readers of "Braille," greedy as are all the blind of intellectual food; therefore a sort of appeal is made in the following terms by the editors:—"Subscriptions for copies for the use of those whose means do not enable them to subscribe on their own account are respectfully solicited." These editors deserve every support in their energetic and spirited undertaking. All communications are to be made direct to the Misses Hodgkin, Childwall, Richmond-on-Thames.



A BLIND READER.

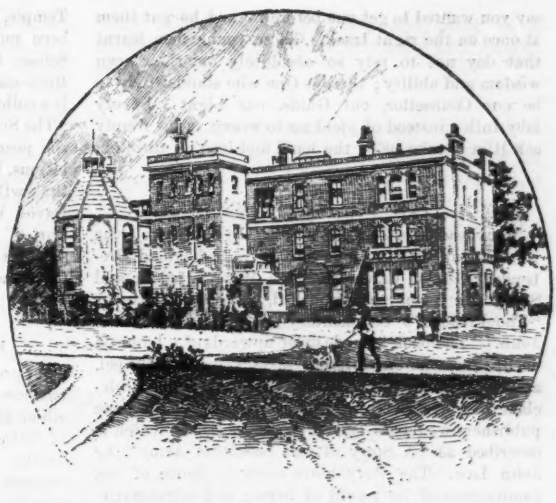
WHAT MONEY CANNOT DO.

A young Indian chief once remarked at a religious meeting that there is a very fine gentleman, of shy and modest character, sleeping a great deal of his time, when he ought to be about doing good, and that gentleman's name is *Mr. Gold*. Great and wondrous things this Mr. Gold can accomplish—holy and blessed things when working in the name of the Lord. But the poet has wisely warned us not to let the horse run away with the horseman; dollars are not almighty, therefore let us not bow down to them and worship them, nor reverence our fellow-creatures simply because they have put money in their purse. Little Paul Dombey asked a question we sometimes seem in danger of forgetting—"Papa, what is money, after all? What can it do?" There are grand and glorious ends that money cannot attain; there are flowers of rest and joy that no golden guineas could buy, and that may belong to the poorest without money and without price. We heard once of a would-be minister who paid some labourers to attend a service he proposed conducting; but when the good man's eyes were closed in prayer, his congregation filed quietly out. Money has no power whatever to confer the grace of God upon human hearts, or to obtain the presence of the Holy Spirit amid any congregation; nor can money bribe the solemn presence of death, or smooth the dying bed, or comfort the traveller through the Shadow-valley. When we are entering His presence Who calls us to give an account of our stewardship, stocks and shares and dividends, even if secretly idolised of old, are judged more truly then. May the richest, as well as the poorest among us, be able at that hour to say simply, with one whom God was calling from earth's passing show, "I am ready; I am wrapped round in Christ."

XUM

A CONVALESCENT HOME FOR SCARLET FEVER PATIENTS.

Five or six years ago, when scarlet fever patients were discharged from hospitals, their only retreat was their own homes, or a sea-side lodging. Here they spread infection, and found convalescence almost as hard to bear as disease. Thanks to Miss Mary Wardell, there is now a remedy for this state of things. Ten years ago she began, in prayer and faith, to arouse public sympathy for a class of sufferers hitherto overlooked, and with the aid of innumerable medical men, to enlist people of all ranks in her volunteer force. The result has been a noble Institution at Stanmore, where tabooed scarlet fever patients may take refuge during their period of enforced convalescence. Hither come rich and poor, old and young, the lame and the blind; for, alas! this terrible disease too often ends in spinal complaint, or loss of sight. Several children have been sent from orphanages, blinded for life by the awful malady. One of them, a mite of three, used to call the matron "Mamma," and Miss Wardell "The Lady Mamma," recognising the latter by the rings on her fingers. Some time after she left the Home, cured, she knew her benefactress by this touching token. The difficulties have seemed insurmountable, but they have been overcome. Naturally the neighbours resisted the placing of a sanatorium of the kind in their midst; but the inmates are literally blockaded by grounds and lodge, beyond which they may not pass during the month of probation. Moreover, an orchard into which they are not allowed to enter serves as neutral ground between the public and patients. A private omnibus fetches the latter from their infected spheres, and its circuit is certainly a wide one. We count nearly a hundred places, in one of the modest reports, whence the 306 cases enumerated in the current year were brought to Stanmore. Among these were private patients, who could afford to pay the three guineas a week for their first-floor accommodation, but the greater number, we imagine, were ordinary patients, of whom the adults paid fifteen shillings, the children twelve shillings. And the children preponderated—they always do! The children! Here, as elsewhere, some have come victims of cruelty or neglect; and one poor little cripple has had to be supported by Miss Wardell and other kind friends since her comparative restoration. To the children is mainly due the foundation of the Home; for Miss Wardell found that no institution would receive a couple in whom she was interested, and she could not bear to think of them spreading scarlet fever from their one miserable East-End room. A Bible-woman, too, who had caught the disease in her ministrations, lay heavily on this good lady's heart and conscience; and so she set to work to collect £12,000. Thus began "The Mary Wardell Convalescent Home for Scarlet Fever," which was eventually opened in June, 1884, by the Prince and Princess of Wales, and has done grand work ever since in restoring those overtaken by the disease, and preventing its spread among the public. *Of course*, it wants funds, and perhaps some generous reader will send a subscription or donation to Miss Mary Wardell, 55, Stanley Gardens, Belsize, London, N.W.



THE MARY WARDELL CONVALESCENT HOME, STANMORE.

"TAKE IT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER."

Worry hurts us more than *work*, and as Christians we have no right to be the victims of worry, anxious care, depression, and forebodings. Instead of complaints, let us try supplications; instead of brooding over difficulties, let us tell them to Jesus, and spread out our needs within "the presence-chamber of the Almighty," where alone peace and strength abide. Some Christian people appear to hold we are invariably bound to be stoical, and express no sorrow or regret whatever, because God chooses all; but He who was all-human as well as all-Divine knows that the floods overwhelm us sometimes, and that when we seem in the lowest depths. He who wept with the troubled hearts at Bethany does not bid us remain stoics in the hour of tribulation. Let the tears have their course if need be—probe the troubles to their depths—but do not attempt to do so *alone*. Why stay away from the Mercy-Seat at the shadow-time? Why not seek the only Heart that can comfort, and help, and guide? We remember once hearing a speaker tell how in his youth he and a young companion became lost in the maze at Hampton Court; they wandered about tired and discouraged, but they felt sure they would find their way out presently, and they thought it would seem foolish to ask direction, though they saw an old man working not far off. All their efforts, however proved unavailing, and at last they came with red faces to ask the old man if he could possibly tell them how to get out of the maze. "Why," he answered, "that's just what I am here for; why did you not

say you wanted to get out before?" and he put them at once on the right track. Those young men learnt that day not to rely so absolutely on their own wisdom and ability; there is One who stands ready to be our Counsellor, our Guide, our Light in every labyrinth; instead of yielding to worry, let us simply ask Him to take us by the hand and lead us through.

FOR OLD AND YOUNG.

Many readers of THE QUIVER will be glad to welcome the helpful little volume by our valued friend Prebendary Gordon Calthrop, which Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton have just published, under the title of "The Preacher's Commentary on the Gospel of St. John." The book is made up of upwards of a hundred outline sermons on different texts from this Gospel, and many of them would be found useful by Bible-class teachers as well as by preachers.—From the same publishers we have received "Captain Lobe," which is described as "A Story of the Salvation Army," by John Law. The story bears every evidence of the genuineness of its record of heroic and self-denying work among the most depraved and, humanly speaking, most hopeless classes of the East End. The author's judgments are often severe, but perhaps not unduly so.—Some few months ago we referred to Canon Bell's "Winter on the Nile," and advised teachers to get and read the book as one which was likely to be of service to them. We are glad to see now, from the same publishers (Hodder and Stoughton), a new edition of the same author's "Gleanings from a Tour in Palestine and the East." No doubt the field is not a new one, but teachers cannot know too much of the land which is, above all other lands of earth, the Holy Land to them.—"Conquests of the Cross" is the title of a new work which Messrs. Cassell are now issuing in monthly numbers, and which appeals to all readers of THE QUIVER, for it tells of the history and progress of missionary endeavour all the world over. We hear on all hands of urgent appeals for increased subscriptions to our missionary societies: we trust that this shining record of noble zeal will have the effect of arousing friends at home, that the Cross of Christ may still go on "conquering and to conquer."—All who are interested in night-schools—and we know that large numbers of our readers are—must welcome the new issue of "Cassell's Popular Educator." The work has been thoroughly revised, and largely rewritten, so that it is now thoroughly abreast of the times and their manifold requirements.—"Helpful Thoughts for our Young Working Sisters" (J. Nisbet and Co.) is a series of very practical and useful meditations, twenty-five in number. The lesson, drawn from the story of the "little lad" who bore Jonathan's arrows, of the value of little duties well done, seems to us very valuable. Perhaps this is one of the most useful of the series.—In "Seven Promises Expounded" (same publishers) we have a series of clear expositions of the promises to the Angels of the Seven Churches, by the Rev. Dr. Donald Fraser. This work ought to prove useful to preachers.—Sunday-school teachers will welcome a very simple illustrated description of "Herod's Temple," by the Rev. J. G. Kitchin, which has just been published by the Church of England Sunday-School Institute; it is exactly what is wanted for Bible-classes.—"Told in a City Garden" (Elliot Stock) is a collection of poems by Eastwood Kidson, in which "The Street Singer" is, to our mind, best. Others of the poems, such as "Poppy Grange," are more ambitious, but there is a pathetic interest about this one that will make it popular with reciters.—The Rev. David Wright's "Thoughts upon Some Words of Christ" (same publisher) is a collection of thoughtful sermons on texts taken from actual words of our Lord. Our space will not allow us to do more than make a passing allusion to what seems an excellent work.

BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS.

A preacher, addressing himself to Sunday-school teachers, related two instances of great encouragement, which should prove some inspiration to wearied ones of little faith. Two gentlemen met on a steamer during a Scotch excursion, and they talked with interest of many things, amongst others of Sunday-schools. "To tell the truth," said one, "I am not very enthusiastic about that kind of work; I was a teacher for many years, and after all I seemed to have done no good."—"Well, I *do* believe in Sunday-school work," said the other. "As a lad I received lifelong influences for good in my old class at school," and he named the school with which he had once been connected.—"Were you *there?*" cried the other; "that was where I taught. Were you there in my time? My name is ——."—"And I was your scholar! I remember you now." The younger man gave his name, and memories succeeded each other concerning that old school unforgotten by both; there, side by side, stood the teacher who believed he had done nothing, and the man he had influenced for life!

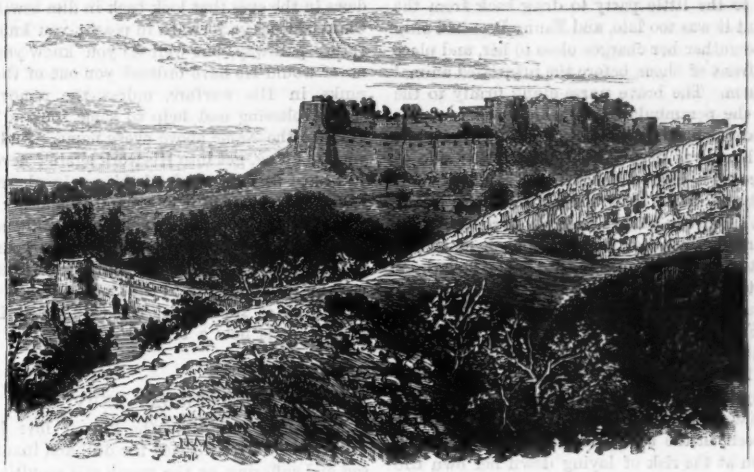
THE ORPHAN HOMES OF SCOTLAND.

These Homes may now be justly regarded as holding a conspicuous and permanent place among the many long-established benevolent institutions of the country. Mr. William Quarrier, the indefatigable and unwearied promoter of the Homes, has been fully rewarded for his noble undertaking in the success which has invariably attended it. The report of last year, which is a very encouraging one, states that 1,012 children passed through his hands, that 239 were sent to Canada, and that 1,088 homeless and destitute children were provided with a comfortable bed and other necessaries for the night in the City Home. The donations and legacies amounted to £7,621, while the wages earned by the boys amounted to £695. The expenses of the Homes at Bridge of Weir were £5,030; expenses incurred in sending 240 children to Canada, £1,449; while £450 was sent for the support of the children there. The total expenditure for the year was £8,823, leaving a balance of 11s. 4½d. The building fund during the year was £10,142; of that sum £9,353 was expended on buildings. The amount for all purposes reached the large sum of £18,965 19s. 5½d., besides large quantities of provisions and clothing. Since the report

for last year was published, Mr. Quarrier has issued his "Occasional Paper," which, as usual, contains very encouraging intelligence regarding his work. From it we learn that although he began the year with only 11s 4½d., he received from day to day the means necessary for the support of his large family. It requires about £30 a day to defray the expenses of the Homes—a fact which indicates the large extent of his work. In this paper Mr. Quarrier makes an appeal for £18,000 to enable him to build ten more cottages, which would house 1,900 people permanently. He contemplates sending 250 children this year to Canada, and for this purpose £2,500 will be required. About £600 of that sum he has already on hand. It is pleasing to learn that of the children sent to Canada, 95 per cent. continue to do well, while many of them have given undoubted evidence of having entered upon the Christian life. Mr. Quarrier mentions the encouraging fact that William Horne, one of his old boys, was accepted last year by Mr. Hudson Taylor, of the China Inland Mission, and that he went with a party of thirteen from Canada, to engage in mission work there. In connection with this, Mr. Quarrier takes occasion to inform us that during the past year frequent appeals had been made to him from his older boys for aid to enable them to prosecute their studies for the ministry, for missionary, and for educational work. He expresses a wish that £1,000 might be raised for these purposes, and trusts that many of the Lord's people may see it to be their duty to help in the undertaking. As regards the religious well-being of the children, very encouraging reports are given. Many evangelistic meetings have been held in connection with the Homes, and the spiritual results have been of a very satisfactory nature. Taking it all in all, the work in which Mr. Quarrier is engaged is increasingly productive of good, both of a temporal and spiritual kind, to the many children under his care, and being so, is deserving of the continued sympathy and support of the people of God.

WHITE FOR HARVEST.

"Is there any missionary at Jhansi?" asked an officer, whom the fortunes of war had led thither in 1840. In those days nothing was known thereabouts of the railways which now intersect the district; but the central provinces of India have been greatly



JHANSI FORT.

changed by roads, bridges, and, above all, by the railways which are now in full operation. Besides the natives of Jhansi and the neighbourhood, there are now very many European employés of varying ranks and grades who need increased spiritual help, and for whom the American Presbyterian mission would fain erect a plain, substantial church. Many years ago, an endeavour was made to make Jhansi a mission station; but it was so difficult of access, that the little band of Christians was broken up, one or two lonely graves of believers being left behind in the great dark field. Now, the "old, old story" sounds again in the city and district; a promising school exists, where Hindu, Bengali, Parsi, and Mohammedan girls are willingly committed to the care of the missionaries, and delight in singing Christian songs. The work is growing, heathen hearts are drinking of the Water of Life; but, of course, the money sent from home for work among the heathen cannot be used towards building an *English* church; this much-needed scheme must be helped from outside sources, and it is no small matter to aid our countrymen, who are exposed to much temptation, but who may yet prove valuable recruits in the Christian army. Major Conran, Ixworth, Suffolk, would gladly take charge of any help sent by those who would like to have a hand in this important work.

THE FIRST "QUIVER" HEROINE.

For the first time in the history of THE QUIVER Heroes Fund, we are able to chronicle the award of one of the medals for bravery displayed by one of the so-called "weaker sex." Briefly told, the following were the circumstances under which this award was earned. On the 9th of March last, Fanny Best, a nurse in the employ of Mr. E. F. C. Clarke, of Old Blundell's, Tiverton, was out for a walk with her little charges, when, as they were crossing a railway bridge, they were confronted by a cow, maddened from being over-driven. The man in charge of the animal called out to the little party to draw back from the bridge. But it was too late, and Fanny Best had only just time to gather her charges close to her, and place herself in front of them, before the infuriated animal attacked them. The brave nurse clung firmly to the handle of the perambulator, in which the youngest child was seated, not relinquishing her hold even when the cow's horn was deeply imbedded in the side of the carriage by a blow which twisted the ironwork. There can be no doubt that, under Providence, it was their nurse's bravery alone which saved the children from a terrible fate, for had she not held to the perambulator, it would only too probably have been tossed on to the railway line below. The Mayor of Tiverton, in publicly presenting THE QUIVER bronze medal to Fanny Best, said she "had been very brave in saving the lives of the children committed to her care; and had stood faithfully at the post of duty where many would have failed." It was with peculiar pleasure that the Editor sanctioned this award to one who had been, in the best sense, faithful in domestic service, even at the risk of laying down her own life for the sake of her little charges. The spirit which prompted Fanny Best's bravery is exactly typical of that which THE QUIVER Heroes Fund was established to reward.

"HERE HAVE WE NO CONTINUING CITY."

Few experiences in life are more painful than an enforced change of scene—having to sever ourselves from loved associations, familiar faces, and the special corner of the vineyard wherein lies the work that is so near and dear to our hearts. Many have had to endure such a parting, however, and none of us know when it may be our own turn to say "good-bye," for nothing is certain and enduring on *this* side of "the swelling flood." Let the countless partings, changes, and removals we so frequently witness make us more earnest, more devoted in whatsoever our hands just now are finding to do, for we know not if these days of service in the familiar neighbourhood may be drawing to a close—we cannot tell how much longer it may be our privilege to continue the work we call our own. But it is *God's* work, and very tenderly He will show us He can do without the most active of us, and carry on still the triumph of good over evil, and right over wrong. None of us are of so much importance as we sometimes dream, and if it humble us a little to be moved right out of the old paths of service and find them no worse for our absence, our souls will have gained, not lost, by the Heavenly teaching. And yet, if honestly we have done our best, and if God's blessing seems to have crowned our efforts, this call right out of the old associations and removal to unknown strange places is ofttimes a great mystery; and because we cannot understand the perplexity at all, let us just rest in the knowledge that *God* understands, and that our Father is counselling us with His eye upon us, our service, and all our affairs. Are the smallest perplexities of removal and parting too small to be known to *Him?* Does the God of love see nothing of the suspense, the yearning, the trembling dews in the eyes that look back in dim bewilderment? Child of God, go forward in peace; you know not the future pathway, but well do you know your Guide; never would He have ordered you out of the familiar ranks in His warfare, unless the removal meant special blessing and help to some soul in need, and glory to the Name above every name. And wherever you are going, get into His work again; never mind if you have been head of all things elsewhere, take the lowest place, should it be vacant, in another corner of the vineyard. Others may know nothing about you, but the Master knows you, and knows your powers; put yourself right into His hands, and trust Him to use you in His own good time amid the new surroundings, even as He has deigned to use you in the old home that is now a beloved memory.

SUMMER-DAY SERVICE.

In many a fairy-tale the kiss of love has by its kindly magic transformed the dull and inanimate, the sad and suffering, or the rough and repulsive, into all that is bright, and fair, and happy: and in real life kindness has still a magical power to transform and



AN ERRAND OF CHEER AND MERCY.

beautify human lives, especially those of impressionable children. Many a little one, playing in a smoke-begrimed court, or lying languidly on the bed of sickness, has experienced a wondrously beautiful transformation scene, when into the little hands somebody has put a box of sea-shells, "small and pure as pearl," lustrous, delicate, and musical, or a picture-puzzle, or scrap-book made from the Christmas and New Year cards that are thus continuing their kindly and gentle ministry. If any of our readers have locked away their stock of old cards of greeting, and if they can bring themselves to part with a few, they may be started on errands of cheer and mercy by posting them to the "Children's Scrap-Book and Sea-Shell Mission," 27, Benedict Road, Stockwell, S.W. More than 22,000 scrap-books have been sent out to the poor children of London and elsewhere; on receipt of six stamps, a specimen of the post-card album, puzzle, framed card, box of letters, or envelope drawing-book, will be sent to anyone willing to make them up for the Mission. Boxes for shells and bags (6½ inches by 4) are also welcome, and if the boys and girls who dwell amid sunshiny surroundings will make a collection of shells this summer for children who love beauty, but see little of it, they will reap the blessed heart-fruitage shared by those who lift life's shadows "for Christ's sweet sake and charity."

THE BATH PUBLIC-HOUSE MISSION.

Christian friends in Bath are carrying on a mission which provides for the regular visitation of public-houses, and also cares specially for the flymen and bath-chair men, who in Bath number about three hundred. Mr. Charles Smith, an earnest, energetic evangelist, is the public-house missionary, and the treasurer is Miss Skinner, to whose valuable series of "Friendly Letters" we have previously alluded in The Quiver. This visitation of public-houses has led to finding some jewels of grace in unexpected places. "The landlord has an aged bed-ridden mother, with whom I read and prayed; she seemed just waiting for her call," writes the visitor on one occasion; noting of another house, "The landlady's sister has been ill for years; she is a decided Christian, and very glad to be visited." It is mentioned in connection with the latter case that the invalid is now cured, and the sisters are out of the business. Those who keep public-houses are often annoyed by the bad language uttered therein, and they are glad to hang up the texts and good counsel distributed by the Mission. Some of them express distaste for the business, and though they might oppose the conversation of those who denounced the drink in their bar, most seem thankful to receive those who come as Christ's servants, speaking a word for Him. The profit of such visits is shown by one day's experience from a lady's note-book: the landlord said he was much obliged to her, as she was the first lady he had seen in there, and he promised to attend a service. She asked if she might speak to some miserable-looking women at the bar. They all accepted tracts gladly, the landlord took a card against swearing, and a man who was with him asked for a similar one to hang up in his workshop.

REACHING THE MASSES.

On all sides we hear discussions going on as to the best way of helping and uplifting the masses, and there never was a time when more anxious thought was given to their education, recreation, and general improvement. Such subjects cannot be too deeply considered, yet let us not forget that religion in its broadest meaning—the religion which is on fire with love to God and man—is mankind's great hope and help, and the power which can lift the most down-trodden as high as the Father's heart. Only let a man get the truth into his soul that the Lord of all loves him and seeks him, and he will get out of the Slough of Despond, and triumph over circumstances, even though all things seem against him. A working man brought the complaint against Christian churches that their teaching varied and caused bewilderment; but if the teachers were faithful, whatever their minor differences, they would alike point him to Jesus Christ as the Mighty to save. "All my theology," said one on the borders of eternity, "is reduced to this compass—*Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.*" This is the theology that reaches the masses. Mr. MacGill, of the Manchester City Mission, bears testimony that working men, as a rule, are *not* infidels, though godless. "They want a God; they welcome the Gospel as simply as little children; they are only godless because no God is taken to them." Let us not offer them that which is not bread; the Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation, for rich and poor.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

List of contributions received from March 19th, 1889, up to and including April 18th, 1889. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month:—

L. B., Hull, 5s.; A. W., Dalston, 1s.; Reader of The Quiver, Derby, 2s.; Thankful Heart, Warwick, 5s.; Reader of The Quiver, Nice, 10s.

The Editor has to acknowledge, on behalf of the Bishop of Moosonee, a donation of £5 from Mrs. Chalk, Caterham Valley, for the Eskimo Mission.

For The Quiver Heroes Fund the Editor has received 5s. from E. F. C., Tiverton.

"THE QUIVER" ORDER OF HONOURABLE SERVICE.

The following are additional "Distinguished Members" enrolled up to April 17th, 1889:—

Name.	Address.	Years in Situation.
Berry, Mary	East Grinstead	50
Chambers, Mary	Bonchurch	50
Fairbairn, Catherine	Galashiels	57
Gutrie, Alice	Crovin	66
Hallett, Joseph	Chard	51

The Distinguished Members' Class, which consists of those servants who have held their present situations not less than fifty years, is the only class of the Order now open. All communications must be addressed to the Editor of The Quiver.

IN A SURREY ORCHARD.

BY ARTHUR L. SALMON.



THE orchard boughs are whispering
A simple story of the Spring,
Of April blooms and birds that sing:

They tell how winds arose and tore
The clinging blossoms that they bore—
Those blossoms all so fair before:

How then their discontented care
Was roused to gladness from despair
By Summer sunshine rich and rare.

And now, in fond excess of mirth,
They drop their burdens to the earth,
And glow with pride of God-sent worth.

They feel how grand and true a thing
This task of theirs—this fostering
For Autumn-hands the gifts of Spring;

And with contentment brimming o'er,
They yield the ruddy golden store
With joy that makes the treasure more.





Drawn by PERCY TARRANT.]

"WHEN I WAS A GIRL."

See p. 675.

WORKHOUSE WORRIES.

BY THE REV. FREDERICK HASTINGS.



A SKETCH AT ST. PANCRAS.

IN rough brown cloth with brass buttons, and lightish corduroy trousers, kerchief of whitely-spotted blue around the neck, and with low felt hat in hand, an old man stood in the passage-way. I did not recognise him at first under his altered aspect, but soon remembered where I had first seen him as a tradesman in a busy thoroughfare. When, after his failure, I first saw him under the brown and brass, he was walking out of the workhouse chapel, at the close of a service, and put out his hand to clasp mine. I had not known of his ruin, as he had not been one of my flock. A half-crown I then slipped into his palm brought tears to his eyes. He told me afterwards he had for months been without money, and he could hardly believe that he was so rich in possessing that bit of silver. Poor old gentleman! when he gets his card of leave, he comes ever and anon to get me to repeat the dose. He had been removed from St. Pancras workhouse over to the costly new branch of that institution at Streatham. He walked this morning all the way from that place to Camden Town in order to see me. As I looked at the bulky form and short limbs, and thought of the long walk, I could not but feel still deeper pity for the old man. I was glad to be at home, that he might not be disappointed in his hope.

The story of his life may be briefly told. The lease of his business place had run out. He had been promised renewal of it, but when he thought it was all settled, he found that a publican had offered twice as much as it was agreed he should pay for the place. The publican wished to increase the accommodation and attractiveness of his place of temptation. The old tradesman could not raise the extra amount. He had to clear out, and to take another small place at a great disadvantage. Here, alas! he did not succeed. He then obtained for a time a situation, but soon found a younger man was required. Thus he drifted to the workhouse. As he sits in my study he makes me realise something of what life in the workhouse must be to a man who wears the uniform of the brown and brass.

It is one thing to go and address a congregation half of men in this brown uniform, and the other half of women in the white cap, small reddish plaid shawl, and blue cotton gown, and quite another thing to live among them, or to have to be one of them. As the old man tells me of his daily life. I get a clearer conception of the worries under the workhouse garb.

"We get up at half-past six; breakfast at seven," says the old man. "Half-past seven we come out of the dining-hall. Our breakfast consists of tea and five ounces of bread and butter. We have dinner at twelve. About eleven I generally feel very hungry, so I eat a bit of bread and butter which I save from my breakfast allowance. You are not supposed to take away anything you can't eat, but the officials kindly wink at the action of us old men. Dinner is a pint of soup and bread. Of course we get tired of having the same regulation diet. I very rarely take all my soup. We get a bit of meat on Tuesday. It is steamed. We often get a great deal of bone,



A SKETCH FROM LIFE IN ST. PANCRAS WORKHOUSE.

for it weighs in. The potatoes are nice. On Wednesday we have soup again. On Thursday Irish stew, which is still soup, with a little potatoes and meat added. On Friday we have meat again, and on Saturday one pound of suet pudding, with treacle, but no soup or meat. On Sunday we have bacon and greens and potatoes." The old man's eyes glistened as he spoke of the added delicacy of the cabbage.

"We have tea at five, with bread and butter. The men who are in for a short time get skilly instead of tea, which is only for the regulars. The short-timers have their skilly with salt in another hall. We have to pick oakum, and if we don't do our right amount we are put on bread and water. Between breakfast and dinner some go into the oakum shed, others go to tailoring or boot repairing. The place in which we dwell is really a beautiful mansion, but I cannot be happy there. One not only thinks of his past losses, but has to be too jealous about one's comrades. Some are very greedy, and we have to 'come the old soldier' and hide things. I used to go to church, but some would sneer and say, 'Here comes one of the chaplain's pupils!' The regular chaplain comes round and speaks kindly to us all, but some don't seem to appreciate his kindness as they should.

"I sleep in a ward with about forty men. Some of them snore terribly. When they do so, the next-door neighbour will catch hold of their clothes and pull them off, and at this there will be some hard words muttered. You can go to bed directly after tea. Those wake up the earliest who go soonest to bed, but they are not allowed to leave the ward. At five they will be seated on the edge of their beds, ready for a leap, and will rush like a lot of wild race-horses down-stairs directly the signal is given. Officers try to stop us from being aroused. If any attempt to go down before time, they have their cards taken away for a month, or perhaps three. If it is taken away, it takes three months to get another.

"We go to bed at eight o'clock, and some get tired of bed. The officers come round at half-past eight, and turn the gas low: they keep it burning all night. . . . Very few persons have been ill since we have been at the new place. Most of them are aged men. They are not too affable. If in the grounds you take the seat of one of them, he takes you by the collar of your coat, and out you come in no time. Places to which they have been accustomed they regard as their own. 'Why, I have had that seat nineteen years, and you have only just come into the house: how dare you take it?' said one of my fellows to a new-comer to old St. Pancras one day in my hearing. The persons who complain of the workhouse authorities are persons who are the most undeserving. The master over the wall said to me one day, 'Here's some plums: some of my own growing.' I took them, but it soon went over the whole building. I gave one each to the men as far as they would go, and then the mean grumblers only said, 'Can't you get any more?' Jealousy is our great bother.

"When you come out you have to ask the master for leave. You hand him your card, and he puts his initials on it. Directly some get out, they will go among their friends. They get asked to drink, and so eager are they, that they will almost 'bite the beer.'



They know the public-houses where their friends go, and some find them out to get treated.

"I have to pick oakum all the afternoon; I cannot do much. After tea we walk, or lounge, or go to the service. We have no prayers regular, only on Wednesday and once on Sunday. Sometimes ladies come on Sunday evening and sing, and bring tracts, and give us a little talk before the regular service. One lady has more and more people to listen to her each time she comes. I saw one man crying like a child—and not crocodile tears, sir. They don't know the good that a little human sympathy does to us poor cast-off hulks. We used to have an entertainment in St. Pancras, but we get none now. Sometimes we hear the music of the Salvation Army, and that is a pleasure to us for a time, as it passes; and even they don't know the cheer they give us poor fellows inside.



"'Why, I've had that seat nineteen years!'"—*p.* 644.

"When we are out some of the people look at us as if we were carrion. Some of the residents think our place lets down the value of their property.

"I got new clothes when I left the old workhouse. I thought I should get a better fit in the old workhouse than in the new. You see, sir, there's pride in the cobbler's dog yet." The old man tipped his hat, and lifted his eye, and looked somewhat like his old self.

"A parcel of young fellows are there who are strong, but who won't work. They will go out and get a drop of beer, and back they come again. They have always lived in the workhouse, were born there, and have grown up there, and some of them will say, 'We would not go out of the workhouse for a pension.' They don't care so long as they can eat and drink and sleep; they are happy at other people's expense. When asleep, they won't be disturbed if possible. 'If you wake me up again I'll punch your head,' said one to me when I nudged him to tell him a friend wanted him. It pains me to see how greedy some are. One man often has three men's dinners, for some are too old to eat much. That man keeps back generally, and peeps into every vessel to see if anything is left. He will drink up that which is left by the others. Another will always finish early, and be on the look-out for that which another can't eat. This is not because he doesn't get enough, but it is only gluttony. But there, sir, one has to live among such and make the best of it. It do seem hard after my life as a tradesman to find I have to be shut up with some of them. Still, I am thankful I have such a place to rest in instead of wandering—dirty, hungry, shelterless—through the streets of this great city."

I knew the old man was a teetotaler, and so I could trust him not to go and get intoxicated with that which was given him. Lunch was just on the table, and I asked him to come in and have some. He looked at me unbelievingly, and then said, "No, sir, I can't come in to eat with you in this coat. No, sir, I am too full to eat more. The cakes were as much as I could manage." Away he went. I watched him down the square with pitying eye, mingled with some amusement at the alacrity with which stumpy legs carried a heavy body.

I have often been in the wards of various workhouses: have visited the lunatic wards, and those set apart for the aged and infirm. I have seen painful sights of men lying in cribs, because too infirm or childish to be trusted in a bed without sides up to keep them from falling out. I have talked with many, and have done my best to cheer them when taking my turn in the religious service, but I never met with any who gave me such a clear glimpse of the worries of a workhouse from the pauper's standpoint as the poor old decayed tradesman to whom I have just said "Good-bye."

The worries are not confined to the men's wards. Those old ladies who move in blue cotton dresses, with little red plaid shawls over their shoulders, white caps on when indoors, and plain straw bonnets with single ribbon when out—have their worries too. "Don't let the others see you give me anything," said one to whom I always gave a trifle; "they will be so jealous. I have to keep to myself, or I could not live. You don't know how they can talk." I could hear them, and could imagine how, in a large ward, with little variety of things to engage their thoughts,

trifles would be magnified, and every word and movement bitterly criticised. The attendants have to be very firm sometimes in suppressing the bitterness of the inmates towards one another. Ah! as you go by a great building like that in St. Pancras Road—a building with its two hundred windows beautifully arranged in bays—and as you see the placid faces of the old dames who dwell there at the public expense, you little know how much of sorrow and bitterness can be hidden beneath those cleanly white caps. And you can can little imagine, also, how much of deep piety some of them possess. Here is one. She is feeble, beyond threescore and ten. She staggers almost from one place to another. A little assistance to her place brings warm blessings. "Ah, sir! I have no one to care for me now. I have buried my husband two years ago. He died in the men's ward. I have also lost nine children. Haven't a relative to wish me well, or when I die to close my eyes. It is hard to bear, but God helps me. He, too, will bring me to that world where I shall see my dear ones again."

One is thankful to know that never were the poor stranded mortals better treated in our workhouses than at present. The attendants really are very kind. Considering the trying nature of their work, in bearing with all the unattractiveness, pettiness, fretfulness, and selfishness of many who are placed under their care, they discharge their duties with an alacrity and thoughtfulness that are really delightful to witness. Those who have spare periodicals, magazines, books, and chess-boards might help to greatly lessen the worries and weariness of many of the unfortunate inmates of our workhouses by sending them. They will not know how thankful many will feel, but they may rest assured that they have done a good work.



THE LOVE-DREAM OF GATTY FENNING.

BY SARAH DOUDNEY, AUTHOR OF "MISS WILLOWBURN'S OFFER," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

WHERE SHE LIVED.

GATTY FENNING was born in the Meon country, under the shelter of the steep chalk downs, where the "Men of the Meon" had lived their independent life, and worshipped their idols, twelve hundred years ago. They must have been a stubborn race, those Meonwaras of South Hants, for long after the kingdoms on each side of them had embraced Christianity, they continued stiff-necked idolaters, and were not converted until the good Wilfrid found them out among their breezy hills, and preached to them the Gospel of peace.

The old house, where the Fennings had dwelt from generation to generation, stood in a lonely part of the Meon Valley, and did not pretend to be anything but a farmhouse of the simplest description. It had darkened in the suns and rains of a century, and yet its walls were sound and solid still. Every owner had added something; Gibbon Fenning's father had built the rustic verandah on the west side of the house, and Gibbon himself had made another window in the east side, when his widowed sister came to live with him.

But although brotherly love had brightened up the old home for her coming, Anne Fenning did not live many years within its hospitable walls. Her father had not been without his misgivings when he had consented to her marriage with her handsome cousin, William Fenning; but she was the only daughter, and the household pet, and no one could ever resist her coaxing. So William carried her off to his Sussex farm, and nearly broke her heart before their brief wedded life came to an end.

After three years of troubled wifehood, Anne returned, a desolate widow, to the old house among the

hills. She found the door open wide, and a lonely man on the threshold looking out for her. Old Fenning was dead; his wife had died long before, and it was now an empty house, with Gibbon, a bachelor, for its master.

To Gibbon, in his loneliness, it had often seemed as if the real home had passed out of his dwelling, leaving the house like a vacant shell which has lost its kernel. There were the substantial walls, and the rooms filled with good old-fashioned furniture; but where were the busy feet that once went pattering over the floors? And where were the active hands that once pushed about the chairs and tables, and broke up the stiff order that prevailed now?

People were never tired of wondering why the prosperous farmer did not marry But he was a man of a firm will and a quiet life, not to be bustled into wedlock by the clatter of neighbours' tongues; and although he had a hundred good reasons for keeping single, he never made one of them public. When Gatty was born, he became father and uncle in one, and proved himself fully equal to the manifold duties involved in the double relationship.

Poor Anne died when her little one was five years old; and the child grew up like a bright flower in the quiet household.

There were no dark pictures in that early childhood upon which Gatty Fenning looks back now with thoughtful eyes. All her memories are warm and brightly tinted, and they are chiefly of the old garden behind the house, whose brick walls seemed to enclose a paradise of sunshine and gaudy bloom. Somebody or something was always ready to play with the motherless bairn; hundreds of other bairns, provided with mothers, might have envied the sunny cheerfulness of this little orphan's life. Her world had very few people in it; but then, what kind, loving people they were! She was a tiny queen, and her uncle and the servants were all her loyal and devoted subjects. Surely no child ever laughed oftener or shed fewer tears!

She was not sent to school when she grew older. Uncle Gibbon consulted the vicar, and the result of the consultation was that Gatty went daily to two maiden ladies living near the vicarage. A chaise took her to their door every morning, and brought her home in the afternoon. They taught her all they knew; and when she was seventeen she told Uncle Gibbon that her education was finished.

She made this announcement quite composedly at the tea-table one afternoon. It was late in the summer; in the peaceful valley of the Meon they were cutting the corn, and everyone spoke of an abundant harvest. Gibbon Fenning was drinking his tea with a look of placid satisfaction; his affairs were prospering, just as they had always prospered, and he was laying up money for the little girl who was sitting opposite to him, behind his grandmother's silver teapot. The teapot and everything else would be hers one day; meanwhile he had quite forgotten that she was not a little girl at all.

It was a dim old room in which they were sitting, overshadowed by the roofed projection of the verandah. The windows, many-paned, were wide open; and the creepers that twined round the rustic pillars were scarcely stirred by a breath of air. Chairs and table were of solid wood, darkened and smoothed by time and long use: between the windows stood an ancient secretary, with well-rubbed brass to brighten it, and over the fireplace an equally antique mirror tilted forward from the wall. Rooms like this are always full of phantoms and memories; and even Uncle Gibbon, by no means an imaginative man, sometimes saw visions of the faces that had vanished out of his life. To-day, as he was looking at Gatty, he seemed to see the face of his Aunt Gatty hovering near hers. That aunt of his had been a beautiful, stately young woman when he had known her last; but she had married a Mr. Willowburn, a man whose birth and position had set him above the Fennings, and so it came to pass that after her marriage they had seen her no more.

Mrs. Willowburn had been dead many years, but surely her beauty lived again in the girl Gatty of to-day. The vicar had told Mr. Fenning, only yesterday, that his niece was growing very pretty.

"To-morrow will be my birthday, uncle," said the clear young voice, breaking the silence. "I shall be seventeen."

"Seventeen? My dear, you must be mistaken."

"I thought you would say so," replied the young lady calmly. "You never can believe that I have grown up, uncle; but other people are not so blind."

"What do other people say?" he asked.

"Well, they say—silly things sometimes. But, uncle dear, I want you to realise seriously how old I am. Yesterday I said good-bye to the Miss Martins."

"Good-bye to your old teachers, Gatty? Are they going away?"

"No, no, no! How slow you are, dear! I meant that I had said good-bye to my studies. A girl is supposed to have finished her education at seventeen."

Mr. Fenning set down his cup, and looked at her with a troubled expression in his face.

"But you are very young for your years," he said; "quite a child, you see; and I don't know how you will fill up your time if you have no more lessons to do. Hadn't you better go to those good women a little longer?"

The tall young beauty glanced at him with large brown eyes that flashed under their black lashes; but the angry light died in an instant, and she smiled.

"I can't go back to them now; I have taken leave of them," she answered. "And I am not a child, I assure you. Mrs. Mainsborough left school when she was seventeen, and she knows what is right for girls."

"Well," said Mr. Fenning slowly, "I like you to make yourself happy in your own way. If you are tired of studies, just give them up, and take your ease and enjoy yourself."

"That's what Warren Mainsborough says; he tells me to enjoy myself."

Gibbon Fenning looked at his niece again; but he was not a man of many words, and he did not speak his thoughts aloud.

Gatty was gazing out absently at the tinted hills, but although she loved all their soft shades well, she

was not seeing them at all at that moment. She was dreaming a girl's dream.

She pictured an old-fashioned white house facing a lawn-like meadow, and made shadowy with ancient trees; and then she looked in through an open window, and saw a young wife sitting at the head of the dining-room table. Guests were there, but they were only shadows; the wife was real enough, and so was the young husband who glanced at her now and then with such fond pride. This youthful hostess was slight and tall, and wore a cream-coloured silk gown, with scarlet flowers at her breast. She had dark hair and eyes, and was beautiful. Yes, Gatty knew that she was beautiful, and felt sure that Warren Mainsborough knew it too.

When Mrs. Mainsborough, of White House, had begun to show an interest in Gatty, Mr. Fenning had been at first well pleased and grateful. Mrs. Mainsborough was a widow, with an only son at college, and her life must often have been monotonous and lonely. The bright girl of fourteen, whom she had first met at the vicarage, soon grew to be a favourite companion. She took Gatty out driving and walking, petted her, told her stories of the world and its ways, and exerted a strong influence over her character. Gatty provided her with an occupation. It was pleasant to see how quickly the girl copied her manner and mode of speech, and accepted her judgment as a law.

The widow felt a sincere liking for her girl friend; but the liking was not deep enough to be called love. If Gatty had gone away, Mrs. Mainsborough would soon have forgotten her. Warren was the sole object of his mother's affection; and all her hopes, and plans, and thoughts concerned him alone.

But Gatty Fenning, with her undisciplined heart and childish self-importance, believed herself to be quite necessary to the mistress of White House. And when Warren left college, and came home to live with his mother, he struck up a great friendship with Gatty; but he would have been honestly surprised if he had known that he figured as a hero of romance in the girl's dreams.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. PIDDOCK.

THE golden afternoon had not ended when Gatty and her uncle rose from the tea-table. He looked at her with one of his loving smiles as she followed him to the door.

"You are going out, I daresay?" he said.

"Yes; one mustn't stay indoors in such weather as this. I have been quite hard at work all day, and I want plenty of fresh air this evening."

He paused in the entry, and she waited, thinking that he had something more to say; but no words came.

"I am going to see Mrs. Piddock," she remarked. "Mercy told me that there was a rumour of Wild Ben having been seen near her cottage. I wonder if she knows where he is?"

"Mercy ought not to repeat silly tales. It is not likely that Ben Piddock will ever venture into these parts again. He may be a little mad—I believe he is; but he has sense enough to keep out of danger. Don't talk to Mrs. Piddock about her son, Gatty dear."

"But it doesn't hurt her to talk about him," said Gatty.

"I'm afraid it does. I have never thought that Mrs. Piddock herself was quite sane. She was always strange."

"It is that strangeness which makes her interesting, uncle. All the other old women are exactly alike; but she has marked peculiarities. The rest are always talking about their rheumatism and the badness of the times. She has plenty of aches and pains, and the times are certainly no better for her than for her neighbours; but she never complains. And I like her lonely cottage; it is one of the prettiest places in the neighbourhood."

"You have curious fancies, Gatty. But if you like the place, go there by all means, my dear. There is no harm in the old woman that I know of. She is a little odd, that's all, and I think she is not very well liked; but that is a good reason why you should visit her. You have a kind heart, my pet, and it will guide you aright."

"I am not sure that it is my heart which leads me to Mrs. Piddock," said Gatty, with the perfect frankness which was natural to her. "I believe it is my curiosity. I don't care much about going to see Mrs. Rigg, who is just as poor and lonely."

"Well, don't go to the old dame empty-handed." Mr. Fenning put on his straw hat, and went out of the house door as he spoke. "The poor soul may be a little bit queer; but she doesn't beg, and never grumbles. Yet her wants must be many, I'm sure."

Gatty packed some good things into a basket, and went her way. A pleasant way it was in this August weather, and she took in everything with observant eyes—all the uplands and pastures and corn-fields, the gleam of water and the gloom of wood, and the picturesque dwellings scattered here and there. It is a peaceful vale, this district of the Meon: hill folds softly over hill and shuts the valley in, and keeps out the clamour of the great world.

She went up a steep and narrow lane, with high hedges on both sides. The banks were gay with wild flowers, and trailers of many-coloured foliage swayed gently in a warm wind. Sometimes she put out her hand and broke off a piece of honeysuckle; sometimes she sang a bar or two of an old tune, in an untrained voice which was rich and sweet. It did not matter that the way was toilsome: she was never tired, never ill, and, in these sunny days, never sad.

At last the lane ended suddenly and abruptly, and the wide downs stretched away before her eyes, unbroken by any visible road. Here she paused, although she knew every feature of the landscape, and gazed for a moment at the view that could be seen from these lonely heights. It was a fair and tranquil expanse of open country, with many-tinted fields that clothed the low hill-sides with soft tones of colour. There were no intense hues, no rugged outlines anywhere; everywhere the eye rested on signs of plenty and peace.

"Dear old scenes!" said the girl to herself. "Other

people may want to go far away and see the world; but I don't. My world is here among these hills. I think I am descended from those Men of the Meon who lived here ages and ages ago, and kept themselves apart from other tribes and meddlesome strangers. In our valley we are all one family. We and there is Bennet Vardye—well, his mother and her people belonged to us. I have not a single friend, thank Heaven, who is not of our tribe."

Some people might have thought that this was a doubtful kind of blessing, hardly worth a thanksgiving. Gatty had an exaggerated affection for her



"Bennet glanced at her uplifted face, and was struck by its intense expression."—*p.* 652.

do not seek our friends or our pleasures outside these green walls."

She walked onward, turning to the left and continuing the ascent, still with a bright smile on her face.

"We are all Meonwaras," she went on, musing. "The Mainsboroughs have dwelt here from generation to generation; they are one of the oldest families in the valley. And we Fennings, too, have grown out of the soil, as Uncle Gibbon says. The vicar is a Meon man; birthplace and its associations. Steeped in her blissful ignorance, she was unable to conceive the joys of a larger life. To live for a little while longer at Barrow Farm, and then go to the White House and reign there as Warren Mainsborough's wife, was the lot that she most desired. And she believed that all her wishes would be realised. It never occurred to her to doubt. Always, from her childhood up, the things that she had wanted had been given to her.

The ground still rose and rose, and the air grew fresher and sweeter as she ascended. By-and-bye she came to a piece of wild land, full of rabbits and stunted furze-bushes. Something like the remains of an ancient wall might be traced along the margin of this waste, and bits of rugged stone were scattered here and there. It was just where the place was wildest and the bushes were thickest, that the widow's cottage was to be found.

It was rather a cabin than a cottage. The thatched roof was so low that there was scarcely space for the door and window, and yet the little dwelling had a certain wild charm of its own. Its walls were hidden under a mass of woodbine and hop; bees and butterflies hovered round it, and hardy weeds and grasses, sown by the wandering winds, were flourishing gaily on the old thatch. The door was open, and an old woman sat sewing on the step of the threshold.

When Gatty drew near she looked up, and then rose quietly, without surprise or haste. She wore no cap, as other women in the neighbourhood did, but covered her head with a faded red handkerchief, which was tied under her chin.

"Good-day, missy," she said calmly, in a deep-toned voice.

"How do you do, Mrs. Piddock? How delightfully fresh and cool it feels up here!" exclaimed Gatty, drinking in the scented air. "And how pretty the cottage looks with all these creeping plants growing over it!"

"My plants thrive well, and cost nothing," the old woman answered.

"That is true. Even in winter you are never without something green to gladden the eyes; and you can't be lonely, because the rabbits are such good company."

Mrs. Piddock's lips were pressed tightly together for a moment. She had had beauty in her youth—a brown gipsy beauty which had left a dusky after-glow. Her dark eyes were still penetrating and bright, and her black brows knew the way to frown. But she did not frown often, and there was a peculiar fascination in her smile which made you think how winsome she must once have been.

"I don't quarrel with the rabbits, missy, and they 've got used to me," she said. "When I sit here with my work, they come and gambol near the doorstep. But sometimes the heart yearns for human voices."

"If you really want society, you can come and live in one of the cottages near our farm," cried Gatty eagerly. "My uncle will find you a place."

"No, no, missy. Thank you kindly, but I'd rather stay here. When I spoke of voices I didn't mean the clacking tongues of neighbours. I never could abide neighbours, you see. I was thinking of those who left me long ago."

There was a pause. Gatty was wondering whether Mrs. Piddock would ever speak more openly about her past life and its associations. The old woman had always been strangely reserved, and no one had ever ventured to ask her questions. Even the vicar, who came to see her sometimes, had never been taken into her confidence, although she treated him with marked respect.

"See what I have brought for you," said Gatty at last, opening her basket. "People say that our farm is quite famous for pork pies, and this is one of Betsy's best."

Mrs. Piddock was duly grateful, and the pie was carefully carried indoors and deposited on one of the shelves of a rude dresser. The cottage consisted of a single chamber, and a back-door opened into a little shed where fuel was stored. Beyond the shed there was a morsel of ground which some former tenant had cultivated, and here the widow grew a few potatoes.

The furniture in this small dwelling was of the meanest kind; there were a few pots and pans, a stool, an old deal table, one chair, and a truckle-bed in the corner. Mr. Fenning's kindness had provided the poor woman with a piece of strong matting, which was spread in front of the fireplace; elsewhere in winter and summer the boards were bare.

Gatty looked round her with a pitying glance, and thought of the comfortable old-fashioned rooms at home. And then her eye suddenly lighted on a man's jacket, torn and weather-stained, which was flung down carelessly upon the bed.

"Why, Mrs. Piddock, have you a guest?" she asked, thoughtlessly and abruptly.

The colour deepened on the widow's brown cheek, and her smile vanished.

"What guest would come to this poor place, missy?" she said in her calm voice. "You're looking at the jacket? Ah! that once belonged to my man, and I've turned it out to see if there 's any wear left in it. Winter days are coming, and sometimes a tramp or a gipsy passes this way with scarcely a rag to his back. One must give a thought to those who are worse off than oneself."

"Yes." Gatty looked at her kindly. "Has your husband been dead a very long time? He died before you came here, didn't he?"

"My man died before you were born, missy," the woman answered. "But this is a dull place for you on a bright summer's evening. Young misses should drink in the fresh air if they want to keep their bloom. Feel how sweet the wind is as it comes sweeping over the hills."

As she spoke she made a slight movement towards the door, and Gatty instinctively stepped out again. Mrs. Piddock brought the stool, and set it close to the threshold.

"You'll sit here and rest, missy, before you go home," she said courteously. "I wish I had a better roof to shelter your pretty head. Yet, deary, there's no roof as beautiful as the blue sky, and houses are dreary places after all."

"Our house is not dreary," replied Gatty, seating herself—"although I have seen a house I like better than Barrow Farm," she added, speaking in a low murmur.

"It's the White House that you mean, isn't it, missy?" The widow had quick ears. "Maybe it's the fine old pictures and the carved oak chairs that please you? And maybe it's the young master with the fair hair? Rachel Piddock knows all about love stories, and their beginnings and their endings."

"Do you really know?" asked Gatty, suddenly remembering that this woman was said to have gipsy blood in her veins.

"Sometimes love's a tangled skein," Mrs. Piddock said, looking at her with a keen glance. "You find knot after knot in the thread, and you have toil and trouble and heart-ache before it's all wound smooth upon the reel. Young misses should take care how they begin winding."

"Can you tell fortunes?" Gatty cried, with a bright flush coming into her cheeks. "Oh, I wish you would read the lines in my hand!"

"No, no." The woman turned away from the outstretched palm. "I will have nought to do with that. Wait and watch, missy, and guard your own heart; then you'll never need the warnings of the fortune-teller."

"You tantalise me," said Gatty, pouting. "I believe you have a mysterious knowledge of people's lives. And I am sure you know some strange tales and old sayings, that others have quite forgotten. Mercy has heard a wild story about Old Winchester Hill, but she can never tell it clearly."

Mrs. Piddock's dark eyes were still studying her visitor.

"I wonder if you know the story?" Gatty continued. "In the old, old days, after the Romans had abandoned Britain, the people of this country became idolaters again. But at last, when good men came and preached among them, they were all won back to Christianity; and everywhere in Hampshire the true God was worshipped, save in the Valley of the Meon. The tribe that inhabited this vale were stubborn, and offered sacrifices to Thor and Woden; like Gideon's fleece, they were dry while all the land around them was steeped in heavenly dew. And then came St. Wilfrid, the teacher whose voice none could resist, and he converted even the Meonwara, so that they bowed down to the false gods no more. Yet—so runs the tale—it was hard to banish Thor and Woden altogether; and some of their former worshippers feared them still. Even to this day it is said that if the old gods are invoked on Old Winchester Hill they will answer. Mercy's grandmother told of a girl who had courage to go alone to the crown of the hill at midnight, and ask of the gods whether she should marry her true love."

"Did she see or hear anything?" Mrs. Piddock asked.

"She saw a great dim figure rise up, but there was no voice; and then she knew that she should get her heart's desire. Tell me, Mrs. Piddock, have you heard the tale?"

"Yes, missy; I heard it years ago."

"Then you can say the words that must be said. The old gods will not show themselves unless they are invoked in certain rhymes. What those words were Mercy did not know."

"Why should Christians want to know?" demanded the woman, with a scornful light in her dark eyes. "If they are contented with their own God, missy, they have no need to ask favours of Thor and Woden. But do you see who is coming over the downs?—someone who can talk of these things better than we can."

"Oh," said Gatty, getting up from her stool quickly, "it is Mr. Vardye! Does he often pay you a visit, Mrs. Piddock?"

"Not very often," the widow answered shortly. "He knows that I like to be left to myself."

CHAPTER III.

GATTY'S HERO.

Bennet Vardye met Gatty very quietly—he was always quiet under any circumstances—and it must have been an acute observer who could have detected the pleasure that his calm manner concealed. But nothing escaped Mrs. Piddock's notice. She saw something which Gatty had never seen, and, perchance, never would see: something which Bennet believed he had effectually hidden from mortal eyes.

For years Bennet Vardye had worked hard in an East-End curacy, and then came a severe illness, which compelled him to cease from all labour for a time. He got better, but his strength was hardly equal to the old conflict. He needed fresh air above all things, and so he had come to the Meon Valley to help the vicar, and win back all his former vigour. He was by no means a delicate man; nature had fitted him well for the kind of work that he had chosen to do, and he was longing to be in the thick of the fight again. Yet he was not slothful here among the peaceful downs, and his quiet influence was felt in the straggling parish.

There was nothing attractive in his face at first sight. It was not handsome. It was rough-featured, and owed its refinement to a cultivated mind and a pure life. He was tall and strongly made, and as he stood in the sunshine in his shabby coat, he did not look in the least like a lady's ideal parson.

Gatty had been favourably disposed towards him from the first, simply because his mother had belonged to her beloved valley. After six months' acquaintance she had learnt to like him for his own sake, and even vaguely to reverence him. But her head and heart were too full of the Mainsboroughs and their perfections for any other influence to be deeply felt. She was in love—absurdly, unreasonably in love—and her infatuation would have run its course, and died out in due time (as all such infatuations do), but for the proximity of its object.

White House was only a mile from Barrow Farm, and no one in the neighbourhood was fascinating enough to be Warren Mainsborough's rival.

"Are you going home now?" asked the curate, after he had spoken a few friendly words to Mrs. Piddock. The woman was even more reserved than usual, and Bennet Vardye was too wise to force himself upon her in her sullen mood.

"Not just yet," Gatty answered. "This is a perfect evening, and I have a fancy to get to the top of Old Winchester Hill. I can never see a hill without wanting to stand on the top of it, can you?"

"I like climbing," Bennet replied. "And I am very fond of that old camp. May I go with you?"

"Yes," she said, rather absently, wondering why Mrs. Piddock's eyes were fixed upon her with such a searching look, and thinking again about the mysterious invocation.

They parted with the widow, and went their way across the waste land in the glow of the waning sun. The stillness was intense; warm lights falling here and there upon the downs invested them with a dream-like glory; and the old earthwork, lifted high into the golden atmosphere, seemed to have gained a strange wild beauty. They climbed slowly to the summit, and stood there in silence, looking away over the magnificent scene spread out before them. From this spot they could command a view of three fair counties, now richly coloured with the ripe tints of harvest-time; and here, where their feet were planted, the gazers of an earlier day had beheld the imperial galleys of Rome in the silver waters of the Channel, and the narrow ships of Sweyn and Canute. Far back in forgotten ages this solitary hill must have been an important point of observation, and the ancient camp had crowned the height long before the Meonwara had settled in the valley below. A terra-cotta lamp of Roman make has been dug up within the encampment, and fragments of pottery and other remains have been found in some of the neighbouring barrows. But, for some reason unexplained, few explorers care to seek the ground; the hills are left year after year in their unbroken quietness, and the old warriors sleep under their green mounds in peace.

"After life's fitful fever," no calmer resting-place can be found than these lone heights, nearly one thousand feet above the level of the sea. The birds fly over them; the breezes blow freely there; but the foot of man seldom presses the short sweet grass, and the steep downs, which once helped to make the Meonwara so inaccessible to Christianity, still preserve the primitive seclusion of this district. The people of the Meon have lingered far behind the march of life; their nearest railway station is miles away; their roads are not easy for the traveller. Something of the ancient clannishness and proud independence have been handed down to them from the stubborn tribe that once inhabited this region, and Bennet Vardye could trace these qualities in the self-willed, headstrong girl who stood by his side.

"I suppose it is only unhappy people who want to look into the future?" she said abruptly.

"Unhappy people?" he repeated, rather surprised at her words. "Yes; they long to know whether there will be any change for the better. Dissatisfaction is, I think, at the root of every desire to pry into futurity. The happy ones do not disturb their bliss by asking questions."

"It isn't worth while to ask questions when one is quite sure that everything will be all right," said Gatty.

"No; and even if one is not quite sure of having one's wish, it is best to be quiet and wait."

"I could never be quiet if I were tortured with doubts," she remarked.

Bennet glanced at her uplifted face, and was struck by its intense expression. She looked brilliant, beautiful at that moment. Her cheek, slightly tinted with brown, glowed with a deep rose flush; her eyes had taken a sudden splendour. It was as if she had seen a vision of impossible glory and delight, and was determined at all costs to make it her own. But it was a girl's face still, not yet a woman's; and he knew that her dream was only a girl's dream.

"There was someone who once came to this hill at midnight," she went on excitedly. "She could not rest until she knew her fate, and she dared to come here alone, and question the old gods Thor and Woden. What a stout heart she must have had! But I could be just as brave if I wanted desperately to know."

"I hope not, Gatty." He spoke in his usual quiet voice, using her unprefixed name, as everyone did. "That isn't the right kind of courage. The girl would have been far braver if she had conquered her own wild impulses, and stilled her passionate heart, and gone about her daily work in a sensible way."

"But she *couldn't*, you know, if she had such a nature as mine," she answered.

"Yes, she could," he replied, looking at her steadily. "Besides, what good could the old gods do, Gatty?"

"Not much, perhaps." She broke into a clear, happy laugh, and began to descend the hill. "Mr. Vardye, I don't know why we should stay up here talking of improbable things. Do you know it is my birthday to-morrow, and I want to be sure that Betsy has made the best cake in the world? I must go home at once."

"Many happy returns of to-morrow to you," he said, relieved by her quick change of mood. "I am glad to find that you are not beyond birthday-cakes."

"Oh, it will be a long time before I get beyond them. I shall be seventeen to-morrow, but I think one may go on enjoying plum-cake till twenty-one."

"Well, don't wish to be twenty-one," he said, laughing.

"I don't wish to be twenty-one—particularly," she answered dreamily. "But perhaps seventeen *is* a little too young."

"Not a bit too young. This is your golden time."

"No," she said, with more earnestness than the occasion required. "Oh, no; my golden time is yet to come."

It would have been cruel to warn her at that moment. The Promised Land was clearly visible to her hopeful eyes, and she did not doubt that she should enter into her paradise. But Bennet wondered, a little sadly, whether the woman of seven-and-twenty would look back with scorn and pity on the vehement maiden of seventeen.

The first shade of dusk was stealing over the land when they returned to Barrow Farm. The house door stood hospitably open, and Gatty invited the curate to come in.

"You know that my uncle delights in a gossip. It would be quite unkind not to indulge him," she said.

Just then Mr. Fenning himself appeared in the doorway, and called out, "Here she is!" in a tone of unmistakable satisfaction. In the next instant a young man's face looked over the farmer's shoulder.

"Oh, it is Warren!" exclaimed Gatty joyfully.

Her companion was completely forgotten. She went flying up the narrow path that led to the door, and Warren Mainsborough came out of the house to meet her.

He was fair, English-looking, and handsome. His clothes fitted him exceedingly well, and he had a way of holding himself proudly aloof sometimes, and indulging in reverie, which was very like the hero of a romance. He liked Gatty, and was glad to have her at White House. She was a beauty in her fashion, and there was a sense of perfect freedom in their friendship which was pleasant to him. For other women he had to exert himself and make conversation; with her he could speak or hold his peace as he chose. She was only Gatty, his mother's simple girl friend. He thought that he understood her perfectly, and never dreamed that there could be any depth in her nature which he had not fathomed. He was grateful, too, for the affection that she lavished on his mother. Mrs. Mainsborough had her own private crosses and anxieties, and it was good for her mind to be diverted from them. Gatty was a sort of plaything for the weary woman of the world. And so he went his way, seeking the girl's society often enough to strengthen the wild hopes that she was cherishing, putting no restraint on himself, because he was serenely confident that none was needed.

"We thought you were never coming home," he said lightly, as he stood looking into her glowing face. "Half an hour more, and we should have been dragging all the ponds. You must have had a great deal to say to that old gipsy who lives in the wilderness."

"Oh, but I didn't stay long with Mrs. Piddock," she answered. "I went up to the top of Old Winchester Hill with Mr. Vardye."

"Ah, then you were safe enough," remarked Warren, with a friendly glance at the curate. "But I don't think you ought to be trusted alone with that mysterious old dame. She'll bewitch you one of these days, and send you home in quite a new shape."

"I am not afraid of her," replied Gatty, laughing.

"No, you are far too venturesome; I shall get my mother to lecture you. She sent me here to give you her love, and ask you to spend the day with us to-morrow."

"How kind of her! She didn't forget that to-morrow was my birthday?"

"I confess with reluctance that she *did* forget it. Absorbed in feverish worldly cares, she allowed the important date to slip from her memory. But I discovered the auspicious date for myself."

"You remembered that I had a birthday last August?" said Gatty, with eager eyes.

"I suppose I must have remembered that there was something which made August a remarkable month. Anyhow, I opened my mother's daily text-book this morning (a gift from you), and found your name written at the twentieth of August."

"Yes, I wrote it myself as a reminder," Gatty said, with rather a clouded face. "Of course I thought she would use the book every day."

"She does use it very often, I am sure," replied the young man, anxious to bring back the sunshine. "But my mother is forgetful sometimes; you must forgive her. And now, am I to take her a message? Will you come after breakfast to-morrow?"

"Yes," the girl answered, with a happy smile.

"Then, *au revoir*," he said gaily. "We will make a feast, Gatty, and the queen of the day shall be crowned with roses."

CHAPTER IV.

HER BIRTHDAY.

GATTY opened her eyes on her birthday with a vague expectation of delight. For an instant she could not account for this blissful feeling; then it suddenly flashed upon her that she was to spend the whole of the bright summer day at White House, and Warren would be her companion through long sunshiny hours. In warm weather Mrs. Mainsborough often dozed away the afternoon in her shady drawing-room; callers were few, and it was seldom that anything occurred to disturb her repose.

Gatty's room had windows that looked towards the east, and it was here that she had first seen the light, seventeen years ago. In all her life she had never passed a single night out of this chamber. When Mrs. Fenning's strength began to fail, she had moved into another room, leaving her old apartment to the little one who was so soon to be motherless; and Gatty had slumbered peacefully in the four-post bedstead, under Mercy's care. No wonder that the young face, with a cloud of dark hair tossed round it over the pillow, was glowing with such healthy rose-tints; no wonder that the brown eyes were so bright. Never yet had Gatty Fenning known the misery of wakeful midnight hours; her sleep had always been as sound and sweet as the sleep of a child.

The morning sunshine stole in between the window and the white blind, and the girl lay smiling happily to herself. She had been dreaming confusedly of Warren, her hero, and could hardly tell when her dreams ended and her waking thoughts began. But Gatty's waking thoughts were scarcely less unreal than her nightly dreams.

She was still musing when Mercy entered, a buxom woman of six- or seven-and-thirty, who gave her young mistress a hearty birthday greeting. She drew up the blinds and opened the windows, and in rushed the morning air, with all the sweetness of the downs in its breath. Here, in this valley of the Meon, you could not get away from the hills: they met your gaze at every turn. Fair and fresh at morn, when the light shadows of cloud and bird flitted over them, golden and calm at evening, and invested with something of the mystic beauty of the Delectable Mountains, they folded in Gatty's warm young life, and kept her in a happy and unconscious captivity.

When the soft air kissed her face she shook off the lazy content that had kept her still, and got up, in rosy gladness, to begin this glorious day. A little later she tripped down-stairs, wearing a new summer gown that had come from Petersfield. It was a red and white dress, there were some cherry-coloured ribbons about it, and it gave her the look of a village maiden of old times, arrayed in her best on a fair-day. Uncle Gibbon was waiting for her with endless loving wishes, and Scott's poems in dainty little volumes packed into a box.

She kissed and thanked him heartily, but did not

bestow much notice on his gift. One hasty glance at the little books was enough just then. She longed to get breakfast over, and be off and away to White House.

"Why are you hurrying, my dear?" said Mr. Fenning. "It is early yet, and you have a long day before you."

"Oh, they will be looking out for me," Gatty answered, between scalding draughts of coffee. "I should hate to be late. Warren asked me to come after breakfast."

"But he did not ask you to come directly after breakfast."

"That was what he meant, uncle. And he dislikes waiting and watching very much."

"I don't think he will trouble himself to wait and watch for anybody," said Uncle Gibbon, with a clouded brow. "He is too indolent to be impatient."

"And why shouldn't he be indolent, uncle?" Gatty's colour was very bright. "There is no need for him to work, you see."

"A man ought to get something to do, my child. You know there's somebody who finds mischief for idle hands."

"Warren *is* busy in his own way," said Gatty warmly. "He is no idler, I assure you. He writes stories, I believe. His mother says so."

"I wonder what he can find to write about?" Mr. Fenning remarked. "It seems to me that a man must *live* stories before he can write them well."

"Oh, Warren is very clever, uncle. He has plenty of ability."

"Perhaps he has, Gatty. But ability alone doesn't make such a writer as men and women care to read. There must be experience too. I am only a plain farmer myself, but this is very clear to me."

Gatty devoted herself to breakfast, with a passing thought that her uncle was very prosy and tiresome this morning. She almost fancied that he was lingering over his meal on purpose to exasperate her. But it was not so. Gibbon Fenning was far above the petty satisfaction of exasperating anyone, and he loved this girl so well that it was a pain to thwart her lightest wish. He read her impatience, emptied his second cup of coffee, and rose quietly from his seat.

"No more, my dear, thank you," he said. "I must go and see about those hurdles. Good-bye; I hope you'll have a very happy day!"

He was gone, and she drew a long breath of relief. In the next moment she went flying up stairs to her room again, to take a last look at herself in the glass.

It was an old-fashioned looking-glass, which had outlasted many of the faces that it had reflected. Anne Fenning, in her girlhood, had lingered before it, putting a flower here or a ribbon there when she was going to meet her lover; and now her daughter was gazing into the depths of the same old mirror, half-pleased and half-dissatisfied with what she saw there. But on the whole, pleasure predominated.

Gatty had a fresh springtide face, just tinted enough with gipsy-brown to add richness to the complexion; lips red and full, cheeks round and dimpled, a nose that was inclined to curl outward like the inside of a bow, but pretty for all that. Yes; she was *almost* satisfied with herself to-day.

She put on a large, coarse straw hat, turned up on one side, and adorned with as good a bouquet of artificial leaves, poppies, and grasses as could be bought in a country town. Gatty was a little too fond of adornments. She had no one to advise her in the matter of dress, and was apt to display a barbaric fancy for decoration.

Thus equipped, she went out into the fresh morning light, too much occupied to spare a thought or a glance to the children who dropped curtsies in the good old-world fashion—too much excited to enjoy the glory of the early day. We waste a great deal of life's sweetness when we are under the influence of some dominant feeling. Poor Gatty was the slave of one idea which demanded every moment of her bright existence.

If you followed the road (a narrow and winding one), you had to go at least a mile before reaching White House. But there was another way which Gatty and her friends always chose; first, because it was shorter, and secondly, because it was far pleasanter than the other. This way was a footpath running along the border of a small meadow, and raised slightly above the level of the grass-land, so that it could be used even in wet weather. A walk of two or three minutes brought you to the little river Meon, which is constantly appearing in unexpected places, and taking surprising turns and bends. Crossing a wooden bridge, with a stout hand-rail on each side, you found yourself in the road, within a short distance of Warren Mainsborough's lodge-gate.

The meadow belonged to Barrow Farm, and was exactly opposite to Mr. Fenning's house. Gatty had only to cross the road and strike into the meadow-path at once. It was by this way that Warren had come and gone on the preceding evening; he had never been known to choose the longer route when he went to and from the farm.

The sun had not yet dried up the dew of last night, and there was a diamond glitter on the grass. It promised to be a sultry day, but the air was still fresh in these early hours, and now and then a faint wind lifted the heart-shaped leaves of the bindweed, and set the spider swinging in its web. The tall hedge was full of richly tinted foliage and lovely quivering grasses, but Gatty hurried on, thinking only of one who had trodden this path in the gloaming yesterday. How eager he had been to carry his mother's invitation! How plain it was that he had longed to have Gatty with him on her birthday!

The path terminated abruptly at the bridge, and the little river, flowing between steep banks, was deep at this spot. It swept along with a deeper murmur here, and darker shadows fell upon the tide that had rippled brightly and playfully through the water-meadows under the downs. The Meon was such a little chattering busybody of a rivulet, that strangers never realised the amount of work that it performed. It seemed too merry for real labour, and far too shallow and insignificant to drown man, woman, or child. But the dwellers in the valley knew their Meon, and were well aware that it was always in earnest, and had a force and a depth that it did not seem to possess.

Gatty loved this place. She had often lingered on the bridge with Warren, who, being naturally deliberate, had a fancy for watching anything that was in a hurry, and amused himself with the water's quick race. He liked the tall reeds and grass that grew on the banks, and the graceful boughs that dipped into the stream. And Gatty, although she was still in haste, could not help pausing on the planks for a moment, and gazing down into the swift tide. How little did she dream that in a time to come this spot would be for ever haunted with memories of unutterable horror and passionate regret!

Coming off the bridge, she followed a beaten track running through a bit of stony ground, where yellow snapdragon flourished, and poppies made a brave show. And then came the hedge and gate which marked the boundary of her uncle's land.

The gate opened into the lane, which went winding on to the little pepper-box lodge. Warren had often complained that the lodge was ugly, but he had never had energy enough to pull it down and build a new one. And, indeed, it would have been a pity to pull down any building to which roses and honeysuckle clung so lovingly. The lodge was such a bower of creepers, that very little of its ugliness could be seen, and leaning against the flower-wreathed doorway was a young woman of nineteen or twenty, who was fresh and comely to look upon.

She wished Gatty good-morning respectfully enough; but when Miss Fenning had passed by she called softly to her mother, and the two stood gazing after her, and talking in low tones.

"She'll always be countrified," said the elder woman, with a smile of contempt. "Look at that dress! Anybody could see that it wasn't made by a first-rate hand."

"She's handsome, though," the daughter remarked.

"Handsome in a country way. But where's the style that marks a lady? You haven't seen what I've seen, Jenny. You never knew Mrs. Mainsborough when she was Miss Adelaide Chaplin, and I used to dress her for parties. She's let herself run to seed, my mistress has; she ought to be younger-looking than she is now, and she don't care a straw about her gowns nowadays. But in her youth, when we lived in Mayfair, and admirers were plenty, Miss Adelaide was worth looking at, I can tell you."

"Of course, Miss Fenning's a long way below them," said Jenny thoughtfully. "But they're partial to her up at the house, aren't they?"

"Amusements are scarce in these parts," returned the lodge-keeper, with another of her scornful smiles. "Mr. Mainsborough's just bored to death. They ought to have put him into the army, but somehow their money seemed to run short. He's glad of anything that'll pass the time away, and that's why he takes so kindly to his mother's little country friend. As for the girl, poor simpleton, her head's getting turned fast."

"Don't you think there's a chance of his marrying her?" asked Jenny. "They're very often together, you know."

"Marry her! No, Mr. Mainsborough's not quite such a fool. He's got his share of the family pride, for all he's so lazy and soft-spoken. He knows what he's got to do, and he'll marry an heiress, and live as he ought to live. Mistress don't care much for society now. She'll stay here quietly as usual, and Mr. Mainsborough and his wife will spend a good part of their time in town."

"But who's the heiress, mother?" cried Jenny, eagerly. "Is there one looked out for him?"

"Yes, there is," the dame replied gravely. "But, Jenny, I won't have you asking any more questions. You'll soon know as much as you want to know. Keep your eyes and ears open, and your tongue still."

Unconscious of the talk that was going on behind her, Gatty walked up to the house with bright cheeks and a heart throbbing with gladness. It was a long, low house, with white walls gleaming out here and there between heavy masses of foliage, and an imposing pillared portico. Not a beautiful mansion by any means, but situated in a pleasant place and a healthy atmosphere: old enough to have gathered honourable associations under its roof, and stately enough to awaken reverence in the mind of a girl who had never seen any of the great ancestral homes of England.

Warren himself was standing under the portico to welcome her with outstretched hand and cordial voice.

"Many happy returns of the day!" he said. "Why, Gatty, you are a perfect Hebe this morning! My mother is indoors, with a pretty speech prepared for the occasion. She has a headache, but it will do her good to see something fresh and bright."

In Gatty's opinion this was a perfect greeting. She looked at him with a smile so brilliant that it dazzled him for an instant. This girl-friend of his was growing really beautiful, he thought, and as they entered the house he wondered idly what her future life would be! He supposed that some farmer husband would be found for her, and hoped, quite fervently, that he would be a decent fellow, who would be kind to pretty Gatty.

CHAPTER V.

AT WHITE HOUSE.

Mrs. Mainsborough was sitting in the drawing-room, a long and rather low room, with four windows looking out upon the lawn. There was a good deal of valuable old china, and on the walls were a few beautiful pictures, of which their owner was excusably proud. The furniture was old; slender-legged oval tables stood here and there; but Mrs. Mainsborough's easy-chair was decidedly modern, and so was the little couch that filled up her own favourite corner. She had a way of establishing herself in this nook, with her books and work-baskets round her.

Anyone could see at a glance that she had been handsome once; even now her eyes were blue and clear, and her face, rather cold in repose, was very winning when she smiled. There were flashing rings on the firm white hand that she held out to Gatty.

"I am glad to see you, my dear," she said, kissing the girl kindly. "I hope you will have a great many



"Gatty was a little too fond of adornments."—*p.* 654.

happy birthdays. You must let Warren amuse you to-day. This morning I woke with a headache that has made me fit for nothing."

"Gatty is easily amused," remarked Warren.

And then the pair went off together out of doors; but Mrs. Mainsborough did not send a single anxious thought after them. Mrs. Bell, at the lodge, had discovered that Gatty's head was getting turned, but the mistress of White House was blissfully unconscious of the process. In her eyes, Gatty Fenning was still a perfect child. She had never dreamt of the romantic attachment that the girl was cherishing in her foolish, vehement heart. Nor did she suppose that Gatty could for one moment forget the wide social gulf that lay between a Fenning and a Mainsborough.

Louisa and Adelaide Chaplin, daughters of a baronet with a long pedigree, were beautiful and attractive enough to be belles in London society. They were poor, but grace and beauty atoned for small fortunes, and no one was surprised when Louisa married the Earl of Silverthorpe, a widower, rich and childless. The match was really a happy one; a son was born, and Louisa's wedded life was marvellously smooth and easy; but she was affectionate enough to concern herself anxiously about the welfare of her sister.

After one or two disappointments, Adelaide accepted Mr. Mainsborough, and then came years of trouble and fear. Warren's father lost the greater part of his fortune on the race-course, and died just in time to save the remainder. And so it came to pass that

the widow was left alone with her boy, and lived her quiet, weary life in White House.

Almost before the sound of Gatty's steps had died away Mrs. Mainsborough had forgotten her very existence. She had been absorbed in thought when the girl entered, and her mind returned to its busy occupation as soon as the door was shut. An important letter had come from Lady Silverthorpe that morning, containing something which was likely to have a strong influence on Warren's future. She took up the letter again, and read it through carefully for the third time.

"I have had no difficulty with Angela," the countess wrote. "She said at once that she should like to go to Hampshire and put herself into your motherly hands. Her health is still delicate, and in spite of all my watchfulness the fatigue of the season has tried her very much. When she is once settled in White House I think we may safely predict what will happen. She liked Warren when they met in town, and my husband has promised that he will not stand in my nephew's way. In fact, he says that Angela is rich enough to be guided by her own feelings, and if she accepts Warren he shall not make any objection to the match."

Mrs. Mainsborough folded up the letter again, and sat looking out upon the lawn with a satisfied smile. Already, at the breakfast-table, she had had a confidential talk with her son, and had found him not unwilling to do what was expected of him. All the worries and anxieties of years would be ended soon, she thought. Of late they had been harassed by fears about certain investments which Warren had somewhat unwisely made. But even if the transaction turned out to be a mistake, it would not make much difference to Angela Warburton. As the Earl had said, she was rich enough to be guided by her own feelings; he was her guardian, and it was an immense relief to know that no opposition was to be feared from him.

"Louisa has a wonderful influence over him," mused Mrs. Mainsborough. "I was afraid he would say that Warren was too poor a match. But, after all, why should wealth mate with wealth? And the only thing that can be said against Warren is that he is not rich. I was quite sure that Angela would fancy my boy. Well, she will find me the most amiable of mothers-in-law—perfectly ready to efface myself for her sake. I have had my day, and a disappointing day it was! However, the good fortune that the mother missed may come to the son."

She drew a long breath, as if a heavy load had been lifted off her heart, and sank back in her chair with eyes half-closed. Her headache was due to several sleepless nights while she had been anxiously awaiting her sister's letter. No one had been sure about Angela's plans for the autumn. If she had chosen to go abroad instead of coming to White House, Mrs. Mainsborough's hopes would have been shattered at a blow. Miss Warburton, at twenty, was always allowed to have her own way. She lived with her guardian, but Lord Silverthorpe's authority was very seldom exercised, and the countess was all sweetness and gentleness. But after spending a month at the Earl's castle in the north, Angela had decidedly agreed with Lady Silverthorpe in thinking that the air of the south would be far better for her health; and this decision had given the greatest satisfaction to the countess. Her own son had been married and settled for some years, and her nephew stood high in her favour. Moreover, she was fully acquainted with all the Mainsboroughs' troubles, and really anxious for their good.

All the windows were open, and the cool, quiet room was full of the rich scent of flowers. Presently Mrs. Mainsborough sank into a doze, and drifted away to a tranquil dreamland. She was not really an old woman yet, but anxiety had worn her nerves and made her so weary that unbroken rest was a great luxury.

"It would be a sin to stay indoors on such a morning," said Warren. "Let us come and sit under the cedar, Gatty, and then you shall tell me what it feels like to be seventeen."

"It isn't very long ago since you were seventeen," she replied.

"What are you talking about, my dear child? I am an elderly man of five-and-twenty."

"Are you as old as that? Then I think you ought to tell me what it feels like to be five-and-twenty. That would be truly instructive, you know," said Gatty.

"And you need a great deal of instruction! Now that you have done with your governess, I feel that I ought to carry on your education."

Gatty looked up, with large lustrous eyes full of gratitude.

"Indeed, Warren, I should like to learn of you," she said gravely. "The Miss Martins couldn't teach me anything more, but my uncle thought I ought to have gone on with them for another year. There are so many things that I want to know, and you are so clever!"

"Am I?" The young man regarded her with an amused air. "I am blissfully unconscious of it, then. No, Gatty; on second thoughts, I won't continue your education."

"Why not?" Her lips quivered. "Oh, Warren, I wish you would!"

"How seriously you take everything, Gatty! I only felt that your ignorance was so bewitching that it would be a pity to make you too wise. And as to worldly wisdom, I fancy you will need very little of it."

"I don't quite know what worldly wisdom is," she confessed.

"Unless you went out into the world, it wouldn't be very useful," he answered. "You have made up your mind to stay here in this old valley, and lead a life of pastoral delight."

She flushed with happiness. Surely he was speaking of a life that he would share. He understood all her hopes and wishes, she thought, with a throb of joy.

"Oh, I should hate to go away," she said earnestly.

"We must not let you go. You were born to live among rural surroundings. In a town you would be as much out of place as Bo-peep or Little Boy Blue, and we should lose half the poetry of our valley if you were taken away."

"No one shall ever take me away," Gatty answered, with great determination. "Sometimes my uncle has talked of enlarging my views and giving me fresh ideas; but I always tell him that I'm not made for changes."

"I did not know that Mr. Fenning had such thoughts as those," said Warren, in a musing tone. "How strangely we misunderstand people sometimes. I looked upon him as a man who had no ambition in him at all."

"Well, perhaps he is a little ambitious for me, but he doesn't say much about it," returned Gatty. "Once or twice lately he has dropped hints that have disturbed my mind for a few minutes. But when he sees that he has made me uncomfortable, he is silent."

"Do you mean that he isn't quite satisfied with you, Gatty?"

"Not exactly that," she answered. "Do you think that I am at all unsatisfactory, Warren?"

"No," said the young man, with a quick look of amusement coming into his face. "In your own style, I think you are simply perfect."

He had not the slightest intention of doing any harm. Not one word that he had spoken to Gatty had ever been untrue. In her own style, he *did* think her simply perfect. She was in harmony with the woods and fields, and there was a good deal of the bird and the flower in her. The clear warble in her voice might have come from some feathered songster; her ripe fresh face glowed like the heart of a rose. She passionately loved an out-of-door life, and rejoiced in the free air of the hills. Warren had never pictured her as anything but a country girl, and if anyone had suggested that she might be trained into a society woman, he would have laughed the idea to scorn. She had the "rustic woodland air" which has been dear to poets in all ages. Warren had a great deal of poetical feeling, and felt the need of sweet, unconventional things in his existence. But there was a deeper and stronger need of which he had not yet become conscious at all.

Gatty's seventeenth birthday was one of those golden days which often come to the young before their lives begin to change. She spent the greater part of the time out of doors, and Warren scarcely left her side. Mrs. Mainsborough (who was in a good humour with all the world) was kind and caressing, but her headache was a sufficient excuse for saying little to her young visitor. She was too much absorbed in her own plans to exert herself in entertaining Gatty, and Warren obligingly took the task off her hands.

Just as Mr. Fenning was going indoors to sit down to a solitary tea, Bennet Vardye joined him at the gate, and was at once invited into the house.

"I am glad to see you," the farmer said, with a grave look on his face. "Can you spare an hour for a talk?"

"Yes," Bennet answered readily. "Gatty is at White House, I suppose?"

"She is there," replied her uncle, with a sigh. "And I'll own I should have been better pleased if she had spent her birthday at home. But one mustn't be hard on a young girl for liking pleasant acquaintances."

"It is very natural that she should be fond of the Mainsboroughs," said the curate, glancing round the old-fashioned parlour, and thinking how empty it seemed without her.

(To be continued.)

"THEY'LL COVER UP SOME UGLY PLACE."

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.

SOME little time ago I was walking along a dirty muddy lane in our parish, when I met the parson's two daughters. They were both middle-aged women of kindly hearts, willing to say a kind word and do a kind deed to the poor around. And, now, they were returning home from a mission of mercy.

One of these ladies had two sprigs of ivy in her hands, plucked. I have no doubt, from the creeper which not only climbed, but hung in festoons from a neighbouring wall. I asked her what she wanted with the two sprigs, and her answer you have, good reader, at the head of these few lines—"They'll cover up some ugly place."

She meant to plant the sprigs, and when they had rooted, to put them where they would cover some of the old decaying, mud-bespattered, tumble-down places about.

A gentle, gracious ministry was hidden in those two as yet unrooted sprigs—shall I not rather say in the hand that held them—yea, shall I not rather say in the heart that moved the hand to pluck and afterwards to plant them?

Gentle ministries! how often they are unrecognised themselves; and when they are, how often the source is hidden whence they flow! They are like the scarce-murmuring stream from which the sheep and oxen drink and are refreshed, on which the water-lily floats, where the sun reflects himself by day, and the moon herself by night—the stream that catches the glimmer of far-off stars, and does its part in the beauty of the landscape and the fertility of the land, but whose first life-impulse is hidden in the silver droppings of some moss-covered rock, or the bubbling water of some distant spring, where there is no eye to see, nor ear to hear, and none is near save God.

Well, the parson's daughter was going about the parish that day, even as she had done many days,

doing good; and in doing good, stooping to things and people of low degree; and, unknown to herself, her ministry extended to me, and, I trust, through me to some, at any rate, of the hundreds of thousands of readers of THE QUIVER. For herein lies a part of the preciousness of a good word or deed—that we know not how long will be its duration, how extended its influence, how wide its sphere. Much of what we do and what we say hath in it life eternal. The ivy sprig of the parson's daughter may cover, even in far-distant lands, the ugly places in some unhappy homes.

No doubt, in going about the "parish," my friend had enough to do—enough, I mean, in the way of covering up ugly places.

Most likely there were some ugly places which had not to be covered up, but to be pulled down, by whatever strong hand was able successfully to assail them. The parson, I have no doubt, had had many pulls at them. He had fired all his great guns at them, and battered them with all his battering-rams, but there they were; and the gentle ministrations of the parson's daughter could not bring them to the ground. But whilst there is much with us that we cannot do, there is much that we can—and the words of commendation from the Saviour's lips ran thus, "She hath done what she could." It is a blessed thought that a man is accepted according to that which he hath, and not according to that which he hath not.

There were plenty of ugly places in that parish for the parson's daughter to cover up with her ivy sprigs, and plenty which could be covered by what those sprigs could represent. Ugly places are to be found in communities, in families, in individuals, everywhere; and many are reachable, many are coverable.

That was a sore ugly place in the cottage down the lane where Mrs. Punchim lived. Punchim had got drunk. Yes! though I am writing in the pages of THE QUIVER, I will tell it all out. Punchim had got drunk; he had come home not Punchim-as-he-ought-to-be, not Punchim-as-he-generally-was, but a different kind of Punchim altogether; a Punchim altogether unlike the one who had said to his wife, "With this ring I thee wed;" a Punchim altogether different from what he ought to be.

Indeed, Punchim, I know you pushed Mrs. Punchim against the wall; I know you made her arm black and blue, and pea-green besides, when you gripped it so tight in your efforts to hold up; but you have never been the same man since; and I believe you told me under the hedge that "you were a'most getting afraid to go home;" and that, if your wife kept on at you, you'd "be driven perhaps to the 'public' altogether."

But, Punchim, you haven't seen what's going on at the little home to-day; the "pub" shan't have you, old fellow, after all.

Softly steps the parson's daughter
O'er the threshold of your home:
Can you guess at all what brought her?
On what errand has she come?

All who know the parson's daughter,
Know soft words are on her lip;
Something in her heart has brought her,
And, with her, the ivy slip.

It was, no doubt, hard to cover up that parti-coloured place in poor Mrs. Punchim's arm—which she said looked like a bite out of a rainbow: but I don't hold with the simile, for then surely (even though it were a bite), seeing whence it came, it would have been the token of something good—but the parson's daughter planted her ivy slip close up to the ugly patch, and watered it with such dews of tender looks, and warmed it with such sunshine of bright words, that ere she left that cottage's walls the ugly place was covered up.

Had not Mrs. Punchim a woman's heart? and did not the parson's daughter remind her how Punchim had been faithful and true to her, and how he had fought the biggest boy in the school for teasing her, and how many a time he had spent his few scanty halfpence of pocket-money on her, and how he had saved for long and long to make this dear little home for her, and how he had nursed her when the baby was born; and now, how he had just been overtaken in a fault, and was to be restored? It was not the real Punchim that had blacked and blued and yellowed that poor arm. And it was not only *what* she said—the parson's daughter—but *how* she said it, and *how* she looked it, that made her ivy slip of memory grow and climb so that Mrs. Punchim vowed then and there to the parson's daughter that no mortal eye should ever see that bruise any more, that no harsh word should poor Punchim get again; and that in the memory of the past, ay, and in the general goodness of the present, and not in the one failing, or apparent failing, of her honest-minded husband, would she live.

I merely mention this as a little instance of how an ugly place was covered up.

Some folk look for ugly places in order to make them uglier. Ugliness is always intruding itself on our view in communities, in families, in individuals; and often how easily is it covered—a few kind words, or looks, sometimes even a few silences, will be the sweet charity that covers the multitude of sins—the ivy sprig on the ugly place.

There are some persons who will not do anything because they cannot do everything. They will pull down with vigour, or they will build up with vigour, but they will not repair, or cover, where there can be neither building up nor pulling down. They prefer naked ugliness to what Charity could do with her ivy slip. We are not talking now, when we speak of ugly places which may be covered, of sinful habits which must be forsaken, or sinful characters which must be altered, but of those sores, and wounds, and ugly places, which, in this unhealthy, and disjointed, and deteriorating world of ours, must ever be amongst us here and there.

It was, I suppose, in the garden of her own quiet home, a very retired little corner, hard by the graves of many dead, that the parson's daughter ere she transplanted them struck and grew her ivy slips.

Ah! true emblem of the "whence" and the "way" of some of Charity's softest ministries. They are quiet deeds, they are prepared deeds; they are nurtured in the solitary thought of some quiet heart. It may be that they cost but little in money—the



parson's daughter had but a scanty purse—"Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee," she might have said, like one of old. The prepared deeds in quiet places! What a history theirs would be if it could be written!

As to this planting of the ivy slips, I thought, "Who will thank the parson's daughter?" Many an ivy-clad ugly spot will be passed by, and no one will know or care how unpointed are the bricks, or how decayed the rubble underneath. No one will say a word of thanks to the parson's daughter.

But, for all that, her work is not unseen, unrecognised, lost. Nothing that is well done is lost. Even to go no farther than the mere covering up of ugly places, she had contributed to the general beauty; she had embodied a loving thought; she had won blessing in her own character for herself. For little deeds lead on to greater, and embodied thoughts of love become realities as powers in our spiritual and even in our temporal lives.

And so, good reader, if thou hast but little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little; for so gatherest thou thyself a great reward.

Say not that thou hast no wherewithal; there is something ready to every man's hand. The ivy from which the parson's daughter pulled her slips was growing on the common way, and might be plucked by any hand. What is wanted—or, rather, wanting so often —is not the ivy or the hand, but the heart that, in planting and sowing, brings the two together.

Do you pine for appreciation? Can you do these things if only you are appreciated? Then, though, like your blessed Lord, you must be content both to do and to suffer without any human appreciation, know

that you and your work are each appreciated, and that by God.

Man has marred many of His works, but he is a beauty-loving God still, and all lovers of true beauty are, so far, in harmony with Him. Beauty in all things is "after its kind," and wherever it is after its kind, He says of it that "it is good." Therefore, let us plant all that is beautiful, even though it may be very humble—even though its only function be to "cover." I am sure that an eye from heaven looked with pleasure on the planting of—

THE IVY SLIP.



SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

JULY 21.—SAMUEL THE REFORMER.

To read—1 *Sam. vii.* 1—17. *Golden Text*—*Isaiah i.* 16, 17.

THE ARK RESTORED. (1, 2.) The last lesson told of the Ark being taken by the Philistines. What would its loss involve?

(*a*) Absence of regular sacrifices and public worship of God.

(*b*) Decay of national religion.

Think what it would be with us to have all the houses of God closed!

After seven months, Philistines send the Ark back. (vi. 1, 2.) It finds a resting-place at Kirjath-jearim, in Judah. Twenty years pass before any further history. People begin to long after God. Why?

(*a*) Find their idols are of no profit.

(*b*) They cannot be happy and prosperous without God's blessing.

II. THE PEOPLE REPENT. (3—6.) Samuel, the judge and prophet, gathers the people together. He urges them to repent. What must they do?

(*a*) *Put away* the strange gods, *i.e.*, renounce sin.

(*b*) *Turn to God* truly, *i.e.*, believe in God.

(*c*) *Serve God only*, *i.e.*, keep His commandments.

These three things necessary in all true repentance. What does Samuel do to help them?

(*a*) He prays for them—intercession.

(*b*) He pours out water—sign of a solemn covenant.

(*c*) He fasts with them—token of humiliation.

The people's cry for mercy heard—the prophet's intercession prevailed—God was appeased.

III. THE PEOPLE SAVED. (7—14.) Philistines take advantage of the large gathering of Israelites—prepare to attack them. People in fear beg Samuel to pray for them. What does he do?

(*a*) Offers a lamb—sacrifice for sin.

(*b*) Pleads for the people with God.

God discomfits the Philistines, who are routed by Israelites.

A stone (Ebenezer—God is help) set up as memorial of the victory. God had indeed helped them.

Notice these points:—

1. Samuel used the appointed means—sacrifice and prayer.

2. God heard and answered immediately. (Isaiah lxv. 24.)

3. The people had to do their part in routing the enemy.

4. Memorial stone would always remind of God's help.

5. God's help and protection were effectual.

IV. SAMUEL THE JUDGE. (15—17.) Acted also as priest. Notice:—

(*a*) *His service* of God during his whole life.

(*b*) *His wisdom* in establishing circuits.

(*c*) *His piety* in building altars for worship and constant prayers.

LESSONS. 1. Never too late to turn from sin to God. (Golden Text.)

2. God's mercy, pardon, and help never fail.

3. Have we no Ebenezers to set up?

JULY 28.—ISRAEL ASKING FOR A KING.

To read—1. *Sam. viii.* 4—20. *Golden Text*—*ver.* 19.

I. A KING DESIRED. (4—6.) Remind of past government of Israelites.

Moses, leader chosen by God, brought them out of Egypt.

Joshua, also God's choice, led them into Canaan.

Judges raised up from time to time to rule and fight for them.

All these under direct control of God. How did He make known His will?

(*a*) By His own voice, as on Mount Sinai. (Ex. xx. 1.)

(*b*) By Urim and Thummim on breastplate of High Priest. (Deut. xxxiii. 8.)

(*c*) By an angel, as at Bochim. (Judges ii. 4.)

(*d*) By visions of the night, as to Samuel. (1 Sam. iii. 4.)

This direct government of God called "theocracy." Now the elders of the people, *i.e.*, the heads of tribes—the wisest and gravest—come and ask for a change. Why do they want a king?

(*a*) Samuel is getting old and feeble.

(*b*) Samuel's sons are not impartial like him—they take bribes.

(*c*) Other nations have kings—why not they?

How did they think a king would be better than a judge?

He would take a more important position—lead them out to war (ver. 20), win honour and glory to the whole nation. What did all this show?

(*a*) *Dissatisfaction* with God's rule.

(*b*) *Desire of vainglory* for themselves as a nation.

Both these feelings wrong and caused pain to Samuel.

He, as in all difficulties, asks advice of God.

II. A KING PROMISED. (7—20.) What does God answer? He shows the people's sin, ignorance, and folly—

(*a*) *Sin* in rejecting Him who had done so much for them.

(*b*) *Ignorance* of what is before them under a king.

(*c*) *Folly* in desiring that which cannot be undone.

So Samuel warns them of what the king would be and do. He would be—

(*a*) *Arbitrary* in choosing out servants he wanted for himself.

(*b*) *Grasping* in taking away their lands.

(*c*) *Tyrannical* in making them all his slaves.

And the people would find out their mistake too late.

Notice the way God teaches the people. He gave them their desire, knowing that it would be bad for them. This he did—

1. *To punish* them for their rejecting Him.

2. *To teach* them by a sad experience.

III. LESSONS. 1. *From Samuel.* To seek God's advice in difficulties.

2. *From the elders.* Not to be obstinate in choosing our own way.

3. *From God's message.* (*a*) To trust Him that He knows what is best for us.

(*b*) To have our desire granted may prove our greatest punishment.

(*c*) To reject His ministers is to reject Him.

AUGUST 4TH.—SAUL CHOSEN OF THE LORD.

To read—1 *Sam. ix.* 15—27. *Golden Text*—*Prov. viii.* 15.

I. GOD'S MESSAGE. (15—17.) God had promised a king to the people—all now waiting in eager expectation to see who it was and what he was like.

Samuel the first to be told—privately. Why?—

(*a*) That he might be prepared to anoint him.

(*b*) That he might pray with and talk with the king to prepare him for his high office.

God gives Samuel instructions how to proceed.

The appointed king will arrive the next day.

He is to be a mighty captain and deliverer.

God announces his arrival to Samuel.

LESSON. God's omniscience.

(*a*) He knew Saul's bravery and general suitability.

(*b*) He knew he was coming to Ramah in search of his father's asses.

II. SAMUEL'S MESSAGE. (18—24.) Samuel sitting "in the gate" as judge.

Gates of the city often used as courts of justice.

Moses provided for them as such. (Deut. xvi. 18.)

Eli sat in the gate to judge. (1 Sam. iv. 18.)

Absalom attended at the gate. (2 Sam. xv. 2.)

Saul, therefore, naturally went there to seek the seer, prophet or judge.

What did Samuel say to him?—

(*a*) He must go first to the high place for sacrifice.

(*b*) He should then be a guest at Samuel's house.

(*c*) He should hear all he wanted to know.

(*d*) He is the desire of all Israel.

What did this show on Samuel's part?

(*a*) *Piety*—putting God first.

(*b*) *Hospitality*—entertaining a stranger. (Heb. xiii. 2.)

(*c*) *Unselfishness*—welcoming the appointed king who would govern instead of him.

How did Saul receive the message? Must have been very much astonished; but receives news with much modesty. What does he say?

He belongs to the smallest and least influential tribe in Israel.

His family one of the least in the tribe.

But these not the things God regards. He had often raised up unlikely instruments to do His work. Thus—

(*a*) Joseph the bond-servant became deliverer of Egypt.

(*b*) Joshua, Moses' servant, led the people to Canaan.

(*c*) Samuel the child announced Eli's punishment.

Now Saul goes home with Samuel, has the seat of honour and the best portion of food; is introduced to thirty leading inhabitants of Ramah.

III SAUL INSTRUCTED. (25—27.) A private interview between Saul and Samuel. Notice what it was—

(*a*) *A conference.* The aged prophet would speak solemn words to the young king. (Golden Text.)

(*b*) *A prayer-meeting.* Held on the roof in the early dawn. Thus Saul began well, with many things in his favour—

(*a*) *Modesty* of character.

(*b*) *Personal courage* and appearance. (x. 23.)

(*c*) *Good advice* and friendship of Samuel.

(*d*) *God's Spirit* in his heart. (x. 10.)

What a good start! Well begun, half done!

AUGUST 11.—SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.

To read—1 *Sam. xii.* 1—15. *Golden Text*—*ver.* 14.

I. SAMUEL'S INTEGRITY. (1—5.) Saul began reign well. Showed himself—

Modest in keeping in background when chosen by lot. (x. 22.)

Courageous in defeating Ammonites. (xi. 11.)

Merciful in sparing the prisoners. (xi. 13.)

Now we turn from the young king to the aged prophet.

A great gathering held at Gilgal. Saul openly proclaimed king before all Israel. Great rejoicing and feasting.

Samuel takes opportunity to speak some parting words. First about himself. What does he appeal to?—

(*a*) *His compliance* with their wishes—has given them a king.

(*b*) *His life* spent in the sight of all.

(*c*) *His integrity.* Has been honest, just, and impartial.

The people unanimously agree to the truth of this.

So Samuel proceeds to speak very seriously to them.

II. Samuel's Address.—1. *The past history of the nation.*

(*a*) Jacob came down to Egypt—the people were oppressed by Pharaoh, and cried to God. Moses and Aaron raised up as deliverers, and brought them out of Egypt.

(*b*) After being settled in Canaan were oppressed by various nations because of their idolatry.

People repented—cried for mercy—deliverers again sent.

(*c*) Then they desired a king, despising God's government.

2. *The future prospects of the nation.*

(*a*) God has given them a king—let them make the best of it.

(*b*) Choice of two ways is before them—to fear, serve and obey God. This will bring happiness and prosperity with God's favour. Disobedience and rebellion against God will ensure God's displeasure and the nation's adversity.

Had had similar choice before from—

Moses—"I set before thee life and good, death and evil." (Deut. xxx. 15.)

Joshua—"Choose you this day whom ye will serve." (Josh. xxiv. 15.)

Another opportunity of choice given now.

Which will they choose?

III. Lessons. 1. Like Saul, begin life well.

2. Like Samuel, serve God all our days—in favour with God and man.

3. Remember God's past dealings and mercies.

4. Nothing prospers without God's blessing.

MEMORABLE LETTERS AND THEIR WRITERS.—III.

BY THE REV. R. SHINDLER.

THERE would be no difficulty in filling a volume, and, indeed, many volumes, with "Memorable Letters." Among others available are those of Lady Brilliana Harley, to the number of more than two hundred. They were published in the "Camden Series," from a collection of family papers then in possession of Lady Frances Vernon Harcourt, and had been preserved at Eywood, near Kington, Herefordshire, one of the family estates, where they had been treasured by Sir Edward Harley, to whom the larger number were addressed, or by his son Edward, the "Auditor of the Imprest."

Lady Harley was the third wife of Sir Robert Harley, Bart., and was the grandmother of the first Earl of Oxford. She was born at Brill, in Holland, about 1600, and was married to Sir Robert in 1623. Her father was Sir Edward (afterwards Baron) Conway, of Rigley, Warwick.

Pierson, the Puritan writer, was incumbent of Brampton parish, and was succeeded, in Lady Harley's time, by Stanley Gower. They were men after Lady Harley's own heart. In her letters we see her thorough Christian character plainly depicted, and therein are manifest, not the Christian only, but the patriot, the loving, tender-hearted wife and affectionate mother. What a contrast between her quiet and beautiful piety, her true-hearted patriotism, her wifely and motherly virtues, and the glitter and gaiety of the Court favourites a quarter of a century later!

Some of her letters are exceedingly amusing and entertaining, especially those addressed to her "Dear Ned" when at Oxford, whither he went after preparation, first at Shrewsbury School, and then at Gloucester. His tutor was the celebrated Perkins, one of the first rank among the Puritans. "Ned" did not fare badly, neither as to spiritual nor bodily food, with such a tutor and with the books his mother sent him: among others a MS. copy of a portion of "Luther on the Galatians," translated and transcribed by herself. In the letter accompanying this, dated the 10th of May, 1639, she says concerning the great German Reformer:—

"Another observation I find in Luther—that all his fastings and strictness in the way of Popery never gave him peace of conscience; for he had great fears till he had thoroughly learned the doctrine of justification by Christ alone. And so it will be with us all; no peace shall we have in our own righteousness. And one thing more I must tell you, that I am not of their mind who think if he had been of a milder temper it had been better (and so Erasmus says); but I think no other spirit could have served his turn. He was to cry aloud, like a trumpet; he was to have a Jonas spirit. Thus, my dear Ned, you may see how willingly I impart anything to you in which I find any good."

The letter has this singular postscript:—

"I have made a pie to send you; it is a kid pie. I believe you have not that meat ordinarily at Oxford. One-half of the pie is seasoned with one kind of seasoning, and the other with another. I think to send it by this carrier" (bearer).

"Dear Ned" is notified in another letter of "a turkey pie, made of two turkeys;" and such-like good things, including apples and physic.

In a letter dated the 1st of November, 1639, superscribed, "For my dear son, Mr. Edward Harley, in



COWPER IN HIS GARDEN.

Magdalen Hall, in Oxford," and endorsed, "For your dear self," she pours out her heart in language which both graduates and undergraduates, and all young people, may well take to heart. She says:—

"MY DEAR NED,—Keep always a watch over your precious soul; tie yourself to a daily self-examination; think over the company you have been in, and what your discourse was, and how you found yourself affected; how in the discourses of religion: observe what knowledge you were able to express, and with what affection to it, and where you find yourself to come short, labour to repair that want; if it be in knowledge of any point, read something that may inform you in what you find you know not; if the fault be in affection, that you find a weariness in that discourse of religion, go to God, beg of Him new affections to love those things which by nature we cannot love. . . This is the rule I take with myself, and I think it the best way to be acquainted with our own hearts, for we know not what is in us till occasions and temptations draw out that matter which lay quiet."

The letters are dated from "Bromton (Brampton) Castell," the principal seat of the family. The mother of seven children, with frequent returns of weakness and more serious illness, her husband occupied with his duties in Parliament, and as Master of the Mint, and both he and afterwards her "dear Ned," much engaged in both civil and military duties on the side of the Parliament, and living amid families that sided with the King, she had a harassing life. Tenants did not pay their rent, cattle were stolen, neighbours were unkind, and she saw almost

"Every day new straits attend;"

but her trust was in God, and her language often was, in spirit at least:—"But I will hope continually, and will yet praise Thee more and more." Turning to her letters almost anywhere, you see repeated proofs of her simple faith, her devout spirit, and her Christian charity towards both friends and foes. But her solicitude for "Dear Ned" crops up everywhere, and he proved a worthy son of such a mother. Letter cxlvi. is dated the 29th of April, 1642. "Ned" had gone to Lincoln's Inn, and matters were growing worse between the King (Charles I.) and his Parliament. She says:—

"I see the distance is still kept between the King and Parliament. The Lord in mercy make them one, and in His good time incline the King to be fully assured in the faithful counsel of the Parliament. Our God has done great things, and I hope He will still glorify Himself in exercising of His mercy to us, His poor servants. And, my dear Ned, it is my great comfort that you have made your God your confidence; and this is most sure—He will never fail you."

In 1642 and 1643 the letters were very frequent up to the 9th of October, the latter year. "Dear Ned" had been made colonel of a regiment of horse, concerning which she writes:—

"As it has pleased God to entrust you with a greater charge, . . . so the Lord in mercy bless you with a double measure of ability, and the Lord of Hosts be your protector, and make you victorious. My dear Ned, how much I long to see you I cannot express; . . . and if it pleased the Lord, I wish you were at Brampton. I am now again threatened" (she refers to a second siege of the castle); "there are some soldiers come to Leominster, and three troops of horse to Hereford, with Sir William Vavasour, and they say they mean to visit Brompton again; but I hope the Lord will deliver me. My trust is only in

my God, who never yet failed me. . . I have taken a very great cold, which has made me very ill these two or three days, but I hope the Lord will be merciful to me in giving me my health, for it is an ill time to be sick in.

"My dear Ned, I pray God bless you and give me the comfort of seeing you, for you are the comfort of —"Your most affectionate mother,

"Brilliana Harley."

This was her last letter. Her cold increased, and after a few days' illness she died, aged forty-three —a woman among women, and a saint among saints.

The first siege, referred to above, lasted six weeks. With the aid of Dr. and Mrs. Wright, and a veteran soldier, she headed her servants in defending the castle, until the successes of the Parliamentary army in the Forest of Dean caused the besiegers to hurry off to Gloucester. On the day the siege began, she and her young children were engaged in prayer and humiliation before God that threatening judgments might be averted. In the second siege, the castle and church were destroyed. The latter was rebuilt by "Dear Ned" and his father, but the former remains a ruin still.

No notice of "Memorable Letters and their Writers," however short, would be complete without some allusion to William Cowper and the Rev. John Newton. Cowper's poems are too little read, though they still command attention; and perhaps they have never been rated, except by a few here and there, at their proper value. Hardly any other poems are so essentially English, for Cowper never left his native land even for an hour; and none are more pure, homelike, spiritual, and edifying. He was a master, too, of letter-writing, a gift not shared by many. With Doddridge, Watts, Mrs. Rowe, and his own close friend, John Newton, he holds a foremost place. There is often a tinge of sadness in some of his communications, but we oftener meet with sound teaching, and withal, a winning sweetness and tenderness. Cowper could be witty, as everybody knows; but, perhaps, few have seen the letter addressed by him to his friend Newton, of which we give a specimen :—

"My very dear Friend,—

"I am going to send what, when you have read, you may scratch your head, and say, 'I suppose, there's nobody knows whether what I have got be verse or not; by the tune and the time it ought to be rhyme; but if it be, did ever you see, of late or of yore, such a ditty before?'

"I have writ Charity, not for popularity, but as well as I could, in hopes to do good; and if the reviewer should say, 'To be sure, the gentleman's muse wears Methodist shoes,' you may know by her pace, and talk about grace, that she and her bard have little regard for the taste and fashions, and ruling passions, and hoydening (roistering?) play of the modern day; and though she assume a borrowed plume, and now and then wear a tittering air, 'tis only her plan to catch, if she can, the giddy and gay as they go that way, by a production on a new construction. She has baited her trap, in hopes to snap all that may come, with a sugar-plum."



JOHN NEWTON PREACHING.

But he could be also, as he commonly was, both grave and wise. His letters to his cousin, Lady Hesketh, offer many and various specimens of this, but one must suffice. The first sentence may be taken as his own idea, and as a just estimate, of what letter-writing should be. It is dated—

"Huntingdon, September 4th, 1765.

"Whatever interests us deeply, as naturally flows into the pen as it does from the lips, when every restraint is taken away, and we meet with a friend indulgent enough to attend to us. . . Two of my friends have been cut off during my illness, in the midst of such a life as it is frightful to reflect upon; and here am I, in better health and spirits than I can almost remember to have enjoyed before, after having spent months in the apprehensions of instant death. How mysterious are the ways of Providence! Why did I receive grace and mercy? Why was I preserved, afflicted for my good; received, as I trust, into favour, and blessed with the greatest happiness I can ever know or hope for in this life, while these were overtaken by the great arrest, unawakened, unrepenting, and every way unprepared for it? . . . My dear cousin, a firm persuasion of the superintendence of Providence over all our concerns is absolutely necessary to our happiness. Without it we cannot be said to believe in the Scripture, or practise anything like resignation to His will."

The letter continues in the same devout and edifying strain, but space allows no more.

The letters of the Rev. John Newton were widely read two and three generations ago, and they are worthy of being read now. His "Omicron's Letters," his "Letters to a Wife," his "Letters to the Rev. Mr. Bull," but most of all, his "Cardiphonia, or Utterance of the Heart," are choice specimens, and full of instruction. Here is a portion of one to a friend, "On Trials," and on the "Methods of Divine Grace":—

"I think the greatness of trials is to be estimated rather by the impression they make upon our spirits, than by their outward appearance. The smallest will be too heavy for us, if we are left to grapple with it in our own strength, or rather weakness; and if the Lord is pleased to put forth His power in us, He can make the heaviest light. A lively impression of His love, or of His sufferings for us, or of the glories within the veil, accompanied with a due sense of the misery from which we are redeemed—these thoughts will enable us to be not only submissive, but even joyful in tribulations. When faith is in exercise, though the flesh will have its feelings, the spirit will triumph over them. But it is needful that we should know that we have no sufficiency in ourselves, and in order to know it we must feel it; and therefore the Lord sometimes withdraws His sensible influence, and then the buzzing of a fly will be an overmatch for our patience: at other times He will show us what He can do in us and for us; then we can adopt the Apostle's words, and say, 'I can do and suffer all things through Christ strengthening me.'"

This good man passed through strange vicissitudes of circumstances: a profligate sea-captain, a slave-dealer, a slave himself, and afterward "called, faithful, and chosen" as a witness for the grace of God, a leader of God's hosts, and a kind and tender shepherd of the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock. He preached almost to the last. In 1806, when he was eighty-one, Mr. Cecil counselled him to stop. "What!" said he, "shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?" He would not desist, and continued to discourse to his crowded congregations long after his sight had so failed that he could not read his text.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE READING SOCIETY.
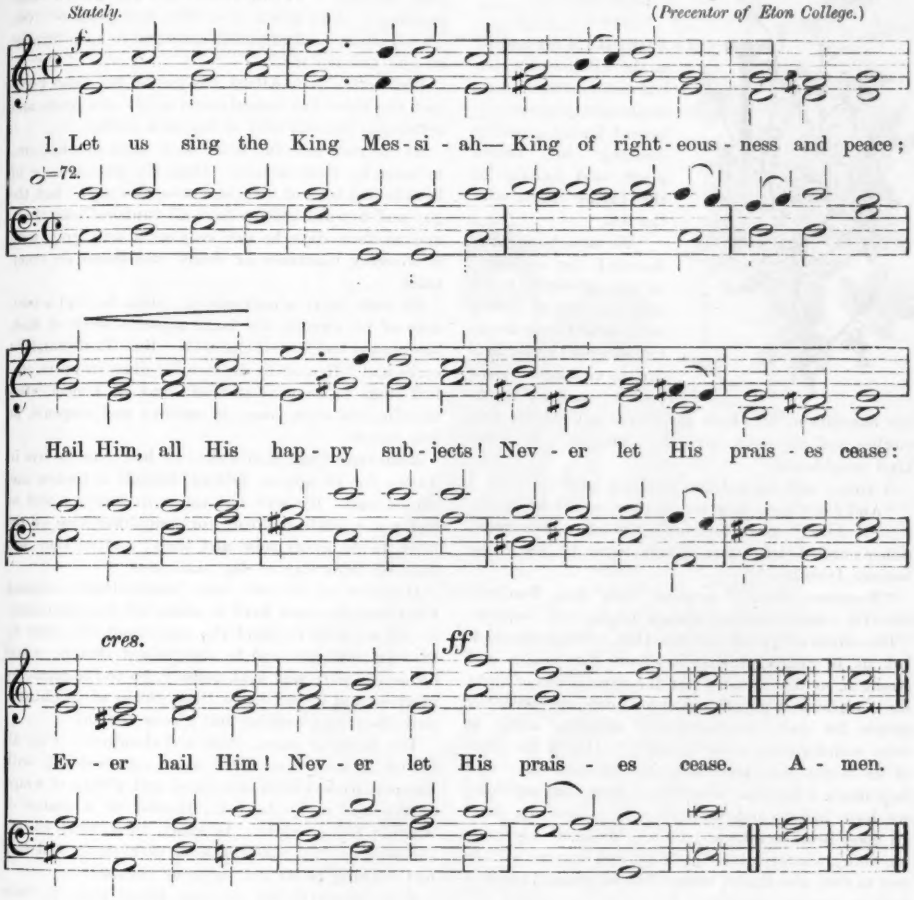
DAILY READINGS BEARING ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

JULY 15—AUGUST 11.

JULY.	MORNING.	EVENING.
15.	Deuteronomy xxx., to ver. 10.	Deuteronomy xxx., from ver. 11.
16.	Isaiah lii.	2 Corinthians vi. vers. 17, 18; vii., to ver. 11.
17.	Psalm l. 7–15; James v., from ver. 16.	Hebrews vii., from ver. 19.
18.	Isaiah lxii.	Luke xv., to ver. 10.
19.	Luke xv. 11—24.	Psalm xxxii.
20.	Isaiah lv.	Hosea xiv.
21.	1 Samuel vii. 1–17.	1 Samuel viii. 4—20.
22.	Deuteronomy xvii., from ver. 8.	Philippians iv. 5—9; James i., to ver. 7.
23.	Exodus xvi., to ver. 12.	Luke xiii., from ver. 25.
24.	Proverbs i., from ver. 20.	1 Peter ii., to ver. 10.
25.	Psalm ii.	Psalm xxix.
26.	Jeremiah x., to ver. 16.	Isaiah xxxiii., from ver. 15.
27.	St. John xix., to ver. 19.	Acts xvii., to ver. 11.
28.	1 Samuel viii. 4—20.	1 Samuel ix. 15–27.
29.	1 Samuel x., to ver. 13.	1 Samuel x., from ver. 14.
30.	Psalm cvi., to ver. 15.	Psalm lxviii., from ver. 20.
31.	Judges vi. 11—23.	St. Luke xiv. 7—15.
AUGUST.		
1.	Hebrews i.	1 John ii., 20—29.
2.	Acts xiii. 16—34.	Psalm lxxxix. 7—19.
3.	Daniel ii. 20—23, 31—44.	Psalm xxiv.; Isaiah ix., to ver. 7.
4.	1 Samuel ix. 15—27.	1 Samuel xii. 1—15.
5.	Acts xxiv. 10—20.	2 Timothy iv., to ver. 8, and 16—18.
6.	Psalm xxxvii., to ver. 11, and from ver. 37.	Judges v., to ver. 11.
7.	Hosea xiii., to ver. 11.	Joshua xxiv. 14—27.
8.	Psalm lxxxi.	Romans ii., to ver. 11.
9.	Leviticus xxvi., to ver. 17.	Exodus iii. 7—15.
10.	Isaiah i. 11—20.	Psalm lxxiv. from ver. 12.
11.	1 Samuel xii. 1—15.	1 Samuel xv. 10–31.

"Let us Sing the King Messiah."

Words by JOHN RYLAND, 1793. *Music by* JOSEPH BARNBY.
(*Precentor of Eton College.*)



2. How transcendent are Thy glories,
Fairer than the sons of men;
While Thy blessed mediation
Brings us back to God again!
Blest Redeemer!
How we triumph in Thy reign.

3. Gird Thy sword on, mighty Hero!
Make the word of truth Thy car;
Prosper in Thy course majestic—
All success attend Thy war!
Gracious Victor!
Let mankind before Thee bow.

4. Majesty, combined with meekness,
Righteousness and peace unite
To ensure Thy blessed conquests—
On, great Prince, assert Thy right!
Ride triumphant
All around the conquered globe!

5. Blest are al that touch Thy sceptre;
Blest are all that own Thy reign;
Freed from sin, that worst of tyrants,
Rescued from its galling chain:
Saints and angels,
All who know Thee bless Thy reign.

WHAT CAME OF A HOLIDAY.

CHAPTER I. — A BROKEN LEG.

JOHN FORDHAM is standing at the window of a poor but clean cottage room, in the pretty seaside village of Yarley, gloomily stroking his brown beard, and looking at the fading light over the sea.

"We have been going downhill for so long," he says presently to his wife, who sits at a table near, busied in renovating some old straw hats for the children to wear to-morrow, on a picnicking expedition, in which they have all—father and mother and all—been invited to take part by some kind neighbours.

A pause, and then John Fordham adds—

"And I don't see how we are ever to get up again. . . . I don't care about taking holiday to-morrow, either; and I wish you would agree to leave me behind, Dorothy."

"Nonsense, John!" returns little Mrs. Fordham cheerily; she is almost always bright and hopeful. "The children would not like that, neither should I. Let us be thankful that we have our health and strength, so that we *can* put the worries out of sight for a while, and go off and enjoy ourselves like other people for once"—industriously sponging away at some soiled ribbon as she speaks. "One or the other of us might have been laid up," she goes on; "and how much worse that would have been than anything we have had to put up with yet. Cheer up, dear. 'A good heart breaks bad luck.' We have only to go on, doing whatever lies before us, and leaving all the rest to One who knows better than we do, and the way will be sure to open——"

Here the four children, two boys and two girls, run in from their play in the quiet country roadway.

"Oh, mother, have you finished our hats?" asks the eldest of the girls, a curly-headed little maid of eight, while Dorrie, the youngest, takes up the sponge which her mother has just finished using, and next casts her glance over the table, in search of a stray bit of ribbon.

"Not quite.—Dorrie, put down that sponge, and find my large scissors, there's a good child!—And, Hilda, thread a needle with white cotton for me. —Boys, have you cleaned your boots?"

"Yes, mother."

"And brushed your clothes?"

"Yes, mother.—Oh, look, Johnnie!" peering delightedly through a home-made kaleidoscope (their latest toy), and then gently holding it out to his older brother. "It's all rose-colour and yellow—like sunshine! And green, and blue, and purple! Oh, isn't it pretty! And you've only got to keep turning it, and turning it!"

But, before little Alfred has got so far, John Fordham the elder has looked down at his own boots, and bethought himself also of his own clothes.

As he goes into the little back yard, brushes, etc., in hand, he sighs heavily. Once the kaleidoscope of his life had been of blue, and rose, and gold: but the gay and hopeful colours have all vanished long since, and in these days he can only see a dull grey, with a hovering blackness of doubt and dread on every hand.

By trade he is a cork-cutter. Once he had a business of his own in the large adjacent town of Eastbridge, and had been doing well. But the demand for corks had fallen off by degrees, for glass stoppers, etc., had come to be used instead; and, at length, after months, and even years, of anxiety and suspense, he had failed.

Removing from Eastbridge, he had come to live in Yarley for cheapness, feeling himself a broken and ruined man. His wife had taken in washing, and he had got a little painting, or something else of the kind, to do, every now and then; and so they had gone on from day to day until now.

However, as he—not very energetically—cleaned his boots, he tried hard to shake off his depression; he did not wish to cloud the enjoyment of others by his own dejection, and he determined that he would do as his wife had said, namely, go to the picnic to-morrow, and forget, in its little gleam of brightness, that there was nothing but gloom beyond.

The morning came, clear and cloudless. They all set off in good time, in a roomy covered van, with hampers packed with provisions, and plenty of wraps, cloaks, and umbrellas, etc., in case of a change of weather before night. In short, their kind friends, the Wynnes, had taken care of everything, and they had nothing to do but to enjoy themselves.

How beautiful the country lanes were in their fresh summer greenness, how exhilarating was the cool, pure morning air, and how gloriously the June sun shone down on the flowering hedgerows!

John Fordham was just beginning to cast off his despondency, when—snap went something! A strap! At the same moment the van began to go down-hill —the horse kicked out violently—poor John Fordham was thrown out into the road, and it was very evident that his leg was broken.

All was confusion in an instant. The children were screaming with terror, and their mothers almost fainting. Three men who had been passing ran up, and gave all the assistance they could; and a very little later there was poor John Fordham being wheeled away on a truck to the nearest railway station, in order to be taken to Eastbridge Hospital.

And the remainder of the sorrowful party returned to their several homes.

CHAPTER II.—A NEW FRIEND.

THREE weary months had passed. Autumn browns and yellows decked the country lanes and gardens, and the field pathway in which the four little Fordhams were at play, while their mother stood at an open window above, putting on her bonnet. She was intending to snatch time from her hard work to go and see her husband, who had not yet left the hospital. His leg had been very badly broken, and he had only quite lately begun to mend.

Friends had been very kind, and had got up a small subscription among themselves, which had been of material use. But there were no rich people living near, and, for the most part, poor Mrs. Fordham had had to get on as best she could.

As she was about to close the window, she called to the group below—

"Be good children while I am gone; and you can have your tea early, and start to meet me directly after. And don't forget to lock the door before you come away, as you did last time."

Once away from the house, and fairly started on the lonely road along by the beach, Mrs. Fordham felt her tears beginning to come. Her children were not near now to ask, "What is the matter, mother!" No one was near, no one saw her, save the Great Father above, Who could and Who would help her, when the right time came; she felt sure of that, amid all her trouble.



"Mrs. Fordham sat down with her and tried to comfort her."—*p.* 670.

She soon dried her eyes, for John must not see that she had been crying, and walked on, her gaze roving, half absently, half sadly, over the few late sea-pinks and yellow poppies that were scattered on the one hand, and the dandelions and seeding-grasses that grew on the other, when suddenly she became aware that a young woman was approaching, and then, almost immediately, a voice said—

"Why, Dorothy, I was coming to see you!"

"Were you, dear? Well, why not go on? You will

find the children, and I shall be back quite early. I am going to the hospital to see poor John. I expect we shall soon have him at home again now." And in her heart the poor little woman added, "Though what we shall do then, I don't know! The children will worry him to death, poor fellow! And how I shall be able to get him half the nice and strengthening things he ought to have, I cannot imagine."

But she had observed by this time that her young cousin—who had frequently been to see her before, and whose home was five or six miles beyond Eastbridge—had eyes as tearful as her own; and, after they had talked for a minute or two, she (Mrs. Fordham) said suddenly—

"I hope that there is nothing the matter, Fanny? and that you, and——"

But poor Fanny Gay was young—only eighteen—and unused to trouble; and, at her cousin's first words, she dropped down among the sea-pinks and the poppies, and began to cry bitterly.

"Oh," she exclaimed, as soon as she could get her voice again, "poor Arthur is so ill! They don't think that he'll get over it! And you know we were to have been married in a week. Everything was ready—and—and—oh!" with a fresh burst of bitter grief, "now perhaps I shall never see him again! and he is so far away—and they won't let me go to him!"

Mrs. Fordham sat down with her, by the lonely roadside, and tried to comfort her; and presently she dried her eyes, and told why she had been going to Yarley.

"Mother and I can't help feeling dull and lonely and miserable," she said, the tears running over again; "and we thought that we might have Hilda and Dorrie for a while, if you liked. Father is in good work, and——"

"Oh," interrupted Mrs. Fordham, "how kind! But I am afraid that they are hardly respectable enough to go anywhere. I have no time for sewing, and——"

"Oh, never mind that!" broke in Fanny in her turn. "It will be something for me to do, and that is just what I want."

A little further conversation ensued, and then the two parted for the present, Fanny going on to Yarley, and Mrs. Fordham proceeding once more in the direction of Eastbridge.

She arrived at the hospital, and sat by her husband's bed. He was to be allowed to sit up on the following day, he told her; but he did not tell her happily or hopefully.

"And you will have me at home in a week or two, I expect," he went on the next moment; "and more of a trouble to you than ever, poor little wife! I don't suppose that I shall ever be of much use again."

"Don't say that, John," laying her hand affectionately upon his. "We'll get along somehow, never fear."

At this instant a man in the nearest bed—an elderly man, with a withered and frowning face—exclaimed aloud, in a doleful voice—

"Dear, dear! what a world it is! Ups and downs, ups and downs! Nothing *but* ups and downs!"

He was a stranger to Mrs. Fordham, having been brought in since her last visit. He kept a thriving coffee-tavern in busy London, she was now informed, and, coming down to Eastbridge to collect some old debts, and on a visit of private business to a lawyer besides, he had met with an accident from a passing cab, receiving internal injuries from which it was feared he could not recover.

"And I was getting on so well," he said to Mrs. Fordham, as he fixed his piercing grey eyes upon her. "And in a year or so I should have been able to retire—in fact, it was the very thing I wanted to talk to Lawyer Searle about. But now, there's nobody but my housekeeper to see to everything; and she hates the business, and will very soon drive all the customers away. Oh dear, oh dear! To think that I should have slaved all my life, as I have, to be ruined at the end of it by a thriftless woman!"

Here the conversation was cut short, for more visitors had arrived, and two of these made their way to John Fordham's bedside. For John was both liked and respected in Yarley, and one friend or another generally divided the time his wife had to spend with him.

On her way home Mrs. Fordham was met by Fanny and the children. The two little girls were delighted at the idea of going back with their cousin, who helped their mother to pack their things, and departed, with a child holding by each hand, on the following afternoon.

"Good-bye, Fanny," Mrs. Fordham had said. "Don't grieve. It's first joy, and then sorrow, and then joy again! And there's more sunshine than cloud in our lives, after all. Your Arthur will soon get well again—as I cannot help thinking—and you will be as happy as the days are long."

A fortnight passed. John Fordham was at home once more. The first small pleasures and excitements were over, and he had relapsed into dulness and depression, as his wife had feared that he would.

It was a gloomy autumn morning. The two boys had gone to school, and his wife, after giving him his breakfast, wished to return to her washing; but he kept saying—

"Don't run away from me so, Dorothy! I shall never get well if I am to be left so much to myself."

She did not know how to spare the time; nevertheless, she sat by him until, by-and-bye, he fell into a light doze, when she stole silently from the room.

As she reached the little passage, she saw from the open door the postman approaching. He gave her one letter. It was for her husband. Who had written to him just now?

The postman's step had aroused the sleeper, and his wife put the letter into his hand.

It proved to be from their new friend, Albert Weldon by name, the elderly patient who had still lain in the neighbouring bed at the hospital on John Fordham's removal. And thus the missive ran:—

"Come and see me. I have no one to talk to. A poor young man with a crushed foot has taken your place in the next bed, and he speaks scarcely a word through the whole day. And, besides, I have

something of great importance that I want to say. I enclose a postal order for expenses. Bring your wife—and come *to-day!*—Yours truly,

"Albert Weldon."

CHAPTER III.—A FRESH START IN LIFE.

John Fordham and his wife sat by the hospital bed, and Mr. Weldon, lying back on his pillow, gazed at them eagerly.

"My business weighs on my mind," he is saying fretfully; "and I have had another letter from that tiresome and foolish woman, my housekeeper, to say that the place must be closed, if I can't send someone to look after it! Now will *you* go, Mr. Fordham?—children and all? I have seen and heard enough of you to know that I may entirely trust you. There is plenty of room: and your wife will find herself in her right place exactly—or, at least, it is my belief that she will. And you shall have full liberty to do precisely as you think best until I come back: and then—but there will be time enough to settle that afterwards. Will you go?"

But John and his wife could only look at each other in silent bewilderment, instead of replying. Mr. Weldon, however, almost immediately continued—

"And, if I never come back—which may happen—why, I have neither chick nor child, and Lawyer Searle and I will talk the matter over, and make such arrangements as shall satisfy you, I hope."

Here was a turn of life's kaleidoscope, indeed! And, to shorten my story, Mr. and Mrs. Fordham acceded to their new friend's plan, and, after surprisingly little delay, proceeded to London. And change of air, scene, and society, freedom from anxiety, good nourishing food, and plenty of it, and, in a word, the different life altogether, soon made a new man of John Fordham. And when Cousin Fanny (no longer Fanny Gay, but Mrs. Arthur Dixon) by-and-bye came to London, bringing the two little girls, she scarcely knew him, he looked so much better.

And when only a month had passed, Mr. Weldon returned, not, indeed, well enough to take up his former way of life, but well enough to be at home again, and to watch John Fordham filling his place so efficiently, always with the help of his brave wife and two good, industrious boys.

And there was plenty of work for them all, for Mrs. Fordham made a certain little wheatmeal cake to be eaten with the coffee, and it had come to be greatly preferred, and in fact it was already promising soon to double the number of Mr. Weldon's customers.

It was a bright December afternoon. During the lull between dinner and tea, John Fordham had taken up a new kaleidoscope which Mrs. Dixon had brought the boys the week before.

"Life wants 'turning and turning' as the boys say, just like this," he remarked. "But some people don't think of doing that, or perhaps they haven't the heart. And that is how I felt, Dorothy. But now I see that there must be no standing still, and that, like the Israelites of old, we must, through all, 'go forward;' and then we shall presently find that we have passed through the deep waters unhurt, and also left our hindrances and our enemies behind us."

His wife looked at him with a smile as she stood behind the counter, busily drying cups and saucers. "Thank God!" she murmured, softly, "Who has given me back again my good, brave John, with new heart and hope, and new prospects too; so that we need not any longer look back at a sorrowful holiday, but forward, to all that has grown out of it."

THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL AT MOSCOW.

SURELY there is no city in all Europe which, for historical interest and quaint fantastic beauty, can surpass the world-renowned city of Moscow. Others may have their own special treasures of art or architecture, their riches of the past or present, but still, amongst them all, Moscow rests unique.

It stands in the midst of the endless flat monotony of Russian territory—almost an oasis in a desert—unique with its innumerable spires and cupolas, glittering with gold or shining with many-coloured tiles; its green-roofed houses; its winding, irregular streets, with their noisy, bustling crowds and flying droskies; its stately churches, and, amidst all, the quiet Moscow river, winding, like a blue ribbon, round the foot of the Kremlin walls.

Just beyond the Kremlin, glistening white with its walls and rich carving of highly polished "Labrador" stone, stands the scarcely finished "Church of the Saviour," a truly magnificent structure, rich in marbles, paintings, and precious stones, looking as if the foundation had been laid but yesterday, so clean and white the stone remains in the dry, clear atmosphere.

This church—built, like all Russian churches, in the shape of a Maltese cross, which gives them such a curious squat look—was commenced in 1812, as a thank-offering for the defeat of Napoleon's armies.

Near by is the renowned Kremlin, with its four churches, each one crowned with gilded cupolas, which shine like burnished gold in the sunlight; its treasury; its Imperial palace; its courts of justice; its spacious gardens and courtyard; and its rows and rows of cannon, standing there in harmless array, telling a silent story of a stormy past, and preaching an eloquent sermon upon the vanity of human ambition. For most of these guns were taken from Napoleon,



THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL, MOSCOW.

and still bear his initials, "N. I.," with their own names engraved also—"Victory," "Glory," and so forth. How dim and distant, and utterly useless, all that past glory seems now!

In the courtyard, too, stand the huge bell of world-wide fame, and close by, overtopping all else, rises the great white tower of "Ivan the Terrible," from whose open galleries may be heard, from time to time, the melodious peal of bells.

Just outside the great walls, which have seen so many vicissitudes—fires and battles, victory and defeat—rises the quaintly curious church of "St. Basil the Beatified," with its eleven towers, each crowned with the unfailing cupola, each of different shape and colour, and its eleven small and lofty chapels, reached by narrow winding passages, whose walls are covered with various coloured designs, rudely painted on the white plaster. The whole building is more remarkable for its quaintness and unique character than for its beauty.



"In one room two or three were being bathed."—*p.* 674.

It would be easy enough to write many pages descriptive of this wonderful city of Moscow, but it was not with St. Basil or the Kremlin, or any other object of historical interest, that we were concerned, when, one afternoon last August, we found ourselves just outside the great Kremlin walls, and rattling along the uneven, cobble-paved streets in a somewhat shaky drosky. We were bound for the big white building, not far off, which forms by no means one of the least interesting of the "lions" of Moscow.

This is the Foundling Hospital, probably the largest in the world. The one at St. Petersburg, though by no means a small one, only takes in on an average about half the number of children annually.

I am not going now to enter into the difficult question of the wisdom or morality of such institutions, nor to try and argue how far the State is justified in making it so easy for any parent to relegate the sacred duties of fatherhood and motherhood to other hands; but my object is simply to describe this huge public nursery as it is, and leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

The hospital is approached from the high road by a long, shady avenue, and as we passed down it we saw several women wandering about, all wearing the same pink cotton dresses and long aprons crossed over the bosom, a dress which, with the little dark velvet head-covering, might have been both becoming and picturesque had not the wearers been almost invariably plain and slovenly. These women proved to be

some of the nurses, who all wear the same uniform, though they are allowed the liberty of exercising their own individual tastes in the colour of their caps, and in the addition of such feminine adornments as necklaces and embroidery.

We found our way to the principal entrance, and there, after a little delay—which our limited knowledge of the Russian language made more difficult—we were courteously given leave to visit the hospital (Russian officials we almost invariably found to be courteous), and were consigned to the care of a guide.

We were not shown over the whole of the institution, which comprises, besides the public nursery, a hospital for women, and two schools, one for boys and one for girls. These we were not anxious to see, our interest being confined to the foundlings. The institution was opened in 1763 by the Empress Catherine II., and part of the expenses of keeping it up—which are enormous—are met by the proceeds of a monopoly of one particular industry.

The facilities, however, which increased railroad accommodation gives for conveying children from distant places to this common centre, have so increased the number of cases, that the institution has been compelled to look to the State for further aid. Some few years since the annual government grant amounted to £180,000.

It being summer weather, the small inmates of this huge State nursery had been removed from their ordinary quarters in the hospital to the gardens, where are built a row of wooden houses for their accommodation at night or in wet weather. When practicable, the daylight hours seem to be spent in the open air, when the children are strong enough to bear it.

At the gate of the garden our Russian-speaking guide, who would have been of but little use to us as a cicerone, owing to our comparative ignorance of the language, fortunately handed us over to the care of a French-speaking lady, who seemed to fill the post of superintendent of the place.

Most kind and courteous she was; and as we made the tour of the place she afforded us all the information she could, and was politely ready to answer any questions our curiosity prompted us to ask.

It was indeed a curious and striking sight, and one not soon to be forgotten, when we came upon the long rows of little iron cots ranged under the trees, each with its tiny temporary owner, who was either lying there asleep or being fondled and soothed in the arms of its respective *nourrice*.

All the little cots were the same; the nurses all wore the same uniform, and each baby was tightly wrapped up in white garments that called to mind the swathing-bands of the New Testament. And of these tiny morsels of humanity, all under a month old, there were no fewer than 1,300.

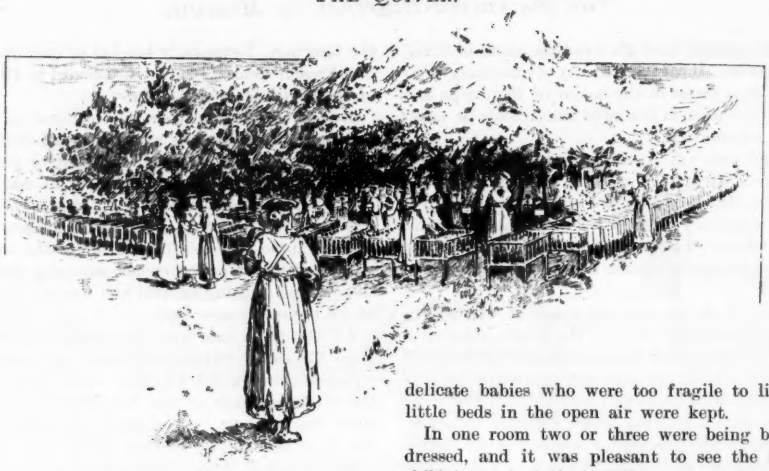
One thousand three hundred little helpless infants, not one of whom had parents either able or willing to nurse and care for it! parents who were either too poor, too careless, too hard-hearted, or too much ashamed to own their little ones, who must in consequence grow up without the love of father and mother, which is the birthright of every child.

In spite of all mitigating circumstances, the sight was inexpressibly sad. The little disowned creatures were mostly poor and puny. Here and there you saw one with a bright, bonny, intelligent face, but these were the exception. By far the majority were plain and wizened, and many had the faces of old men and women, grave and sad, as if from their earliest infancy they were to be denied the happy, careless joy of childhood.

One could not help pitying the little helpless creatures, as one saw them lying in their swaddling-bands, which prevented all the freedom and movement of tiny limbs which a healthy baby always delights in.



WAITING FOR AN ENGAGEMENT AS NURSE.



"Long rows of little iron cots."—*p.* 673.

These poor little mummies, when once carefully enveloped, could move neither hand nor foot.

I ventured to question our guide as to the wisdom of keeping the tiny creatures so closely wrapped up, but she indignantly scouted the idea of their being in the least *serré*, and no doubt being always accustomed to this mode of baby garmenture, knew of none better.

Our guide informed us that no fewer than 10,000 of these poor little waifs had been received in the hospital since the beginning of the year.

When the child has been received, its admission is registered in the books of the institution, and a number assigned to it, which is worn round its neck, and which also figures on its cot, and a corresponding number is given to the person who brings the child, thus affording every facility for the baby's being traced, should its parents at any time wish to claim the child again.

The little one is then undressed, weighed and passed on to another room, where it is bathed, and dressed in the hospital garments, and consigned to the care of one of the women who happen to be waiting for engagement as nurses. Of these there seems to be an unfailing supply, and when we paid our visit quite a large group were sitting on the floor waiting the chance of their turn coming round.

These nurses are mostly peasant women from the country, who are tempted to neglect their own children and offer their services to the institution for the sake of the pay—about sixpence or eightpence a day—and the good food which the hospital offers. Indeed, it is said that a mother will sometimes leave her own child at the hospital, and then go and offer her services for another child, and thus receive the desired remuneration. The very idea is heartless, but perhaps among a poverty-stricken peasantry such as the Russian there is but little opportunity for the cultivation of finer feelings or family affection.

We were shown over some of the wooden houses where the nurses and children slept, and where the delicate babies who were too fragile to lie in their little beds in the open air were kept.

In one room two or three were being bathed and dressed, and it was pleasant to see the swift and skilful manipulation of the nurses, who seemed to treat their little charges with the greatest possible care. Even the big copper baths were all lined with flannel, a delicate attention which I fancy few children receive in England.

Where the tiny creatures are especially delicate, they are laid in copper bassinets, which are made hollow, so as to allow of the space between being filled with hot water, to keep a warm and even temperature, and to supply an artificial heat which the little fragile mites require.

But all the care the institution affords, and all the best medical skill, which is not lacking, are not always able to save the baby lives, and we saw outside the door of one of the houses a pathetic sight—a tiny rough-hewn coffin.

It is a sad consideration to know that after all the skill and care bestowed in the hospital, the poor little waifs, after a four or six weeks' stay, are, if they are strong enough, drafted off, each with its foster-mother to her native village, where, owing to rough fare, careless treatment, neglect, and the severity of the climate, hardly one-fourth grow up to maturity—a truly pitiable minority.

Amongst the children, too, of these foster-mothers, who are deprived of the maternal care which is their right, the mortality is very great. One chief reason for this is perhaps the habit amongst the Russian peasant women of leaving very young babies for hours alone with the "soska," a sort of milk poultice, by their mouths, to nourish or choke them as the case may be.

In the hospital the children, as before observed, are only kept for four or six weeks, and then when they are strong enough, having been named and vaccinated, are sent off with their foster-mothers, the women receiving about four and sixpence a month for looking after the little creatures, while the doctor of that district is also expected to supervise their welfare.

We were shown the plainly furnished little chapel, also the stable where three or four calves are kept for vaccination purposes, for it appears that the operation is performed direct from the animal. These are

kept for about a month, and, lying in their respective stalls, did not appear to be at all unhappy or uncomfortable.

Out in the garden were little groups of nurses off duty for a while, who were enjoying their tea and black bread under the shade of the trees, chatting and laughing amongst themselves. All rose politely and saluted the superintendent and the visitors as we passed.

We asked our guide how long she had been at her present post, and I think she said twelve years. "And you like the work?" we asked. "Oh, yes," she answered; "and it was a good work and a Christian work." We assented, but I could not help adding "A sad work too," but to this she did not agree.

But the conviction remained, and as we bade adieu to the courteous superintendent and left the place, we went away with the impression that, in spite of all mitigating surroundings, the sight we had seen was both saddening and sorrowful.

E. W. FIRTH.

"WHEN I WAS A GIRL!"

"WHEN I was a girl," said grandmamma,
Who stooped with her weight of years,
"My step was as light as your steps are,
My form was as straight, my dears!
With laughter and song my youth was gay,
I had more bright days than sad
And so, little maids, to you I say,
And bear it in mind—Be Glad!"

"When I was a girl"—she sweetly smiled
On each fair young face upturned—
"I kept the love and faith of a child,
And in all things God discerned!
His constant blessing my spirit knew
His guidance I understood:
And so, my children, I say to you,
And lay it to heart—Be Good!"

J. R. EASTWOOD.

PETER'S LOVE AND BOASTING.

THE QUESTIONS IN THE UPPER ROOM.—III.

BY THE REV. J. TELFORD, B.A.

"Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, whither goest Thou? Jesus answered, Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow afterwards. Peter saith unto Him, Lord, why cannot I follow Thee even now? I will lay down my life for Thee. Jesus answereth, Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied Me thrice."—ST. JOHN xiii. 36–38.

THE previous part of this chapter shows how carefully Jesus had prepared the way for those glorious revelations of truth which still beam on us from the Upper Room. Strife was silenced; the traitor was dismissed. Now Jesus is to bid farewell to His disciples. Before the Cross—in its very shadow—He lit those lamps of promise which have shone forth for ten thousand mourners in every generation. What an awful light is thrown on the "choice of Judas" as we linger here! His path diverged from that of Jesus and his old companions. Which took the better road? The contrast between their choice and his should do not a little to open our eyes.

A cry of triumph burst from the soul of Jesus when the door had closed behind the traitor. He knew the plans of Judas. He Himself had spurred him to his task by those parting words, "That thou doest, do quickly." It is a sight to make us pause: Jesus exulting in victory, whilst Judas hastens to the priests. "When, therefore, he was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; and God shall glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him." That is the grandest hymn of victory that ever rose above the storms of sin and death. It is the "Son of Man"—the representative Man who undertakes the cause of our ruined race. He is glorified—He and all His disciples—

> "The Cross on which He bows His head
> Shall lift us to the skies."

His might and His love are there to be magnified

for ever. God, too, is glorified. His rebels are subdued, His prodigals are brought home, His mightiest foes are vanquished. But another glory is here—the glory of the Conqueror's return to His Father. That hour is near when He should say in the first flush of triumph, "I also overcame, and am set down with My Father on His throne."

Thus did the heart of Jesus rejoice. But as He looked round on the anxious faces of His disciples He remembered that His victory meant for them bereavement and separation. A pathos and tenderness are in His words which we have scarcely caught before. Here only does He call them "Little children"—that title which St. John bore from the Upper Room, and ventured to use in his ripe old age at Ephesus. "Little children," saith Jesus, "yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek Me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come, so now I say unto you." The dullest of them knew that this was no common separation; the wisest of them failed to understand how unutterably grave it was. Whilst they were wondering, He added another word: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." As we study these words their significance dawns more fully upon us. There is to be separation, yet they shall not cease to be disciples. The Master's stamp is upon them, plain for all men to see; and lo! such is the art of Jesus in binding them to Himself, He had kindled in their hearts a love for each other which should grow ever brighter, till it shone with some of the lustre of His own undying love to them.

PETER'S DESIRE TO FOLLOW JESUS.

SUCH is the preface to the third group of questions in the Upper Room. Before we study them, look at the place Peter fills in the thirteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel. The bold yet blessed dialogue about the feet-washing; the suggestion to John that prompted his inquiry; now this third group of questions—all these bear witness to the prominence of Peter. His enthusiasm for Christ; his curiosity; his impulsiveness; his ignorance of his own heart—are written in every word he utters. But if Peter, as it were, asked all the questions in the first of these chapters, the profounder questions of the fourteenth chapter also grew out of these. Christ had indeed won in Peter a man of commanding force and individuality.

It seemed as though events were moving too quickly for the disciples. The lowly service of Christ, the treachery of Judas, now the coming separation. The rest were silent, but Peter could not bear the thought of parting. Hence arose his question. He at least can see no reason why the company should be broken up. They had left all to follow Jesus at the Sea of Galilee; why cannot they follow Him now? Do not forget that Jesus Himself prompted this question, as He prompted all that were asked in the Upper Room. "Yet a little while I am with you." "On this hint" Peter spoke: "Lord, whither goest Thou?" What loving concern for his Master breathes in his words! Jesus has often spoken of His plans to the Twelve. He has invited their confidence and given them His own. But though the interest in Jesus is so touching, how wonderful is the blindness! Even at this eleventh hour, after all that has been said of Judas, Peter does not yet understand. That want of insight robbed the Saviour of much comfort. The disciples failed to appreciate His purposes; they lost their opportunities of cheering Him by their sympathy. He was comforted by their fidelity, but grieved at their slowness of heart.

Not even yet did He speak so plainly as Peter wished. He read the thought that lay beneath the question—the simple resolve that nothing should separate him from his Lord. Hence the form of the reply. It discouraged the vain attempt of the present; it brought clearly out the hope of the future. "Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow afterwards." A few months before Christ had spoken to the Jews of His departure: "Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me; and where I am ye cannot come." The words raised no little questioning. "Whither will this man go that we shall not find Him? Will He go unto the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?" A little later He had repeated the words, but they were still blinded: "Will He kill Himself, that He saith, Whither I go ye cannot come?" How different are the words to Peter! This farewell is to be followed by an eternal reunion, for which Christ was going to make preparations. He and Peter were to be separated but for a season.

The Apostle would not accept this answer. The incident of the feet-washing had shown him that his Master was wiser than he. Yet he was still persistent. "Lord, why cannot I follow Thee even now? I will lay down my life for thee." Jesus had taught him that the true rule of life for every disciple was, "Follow Me." Peter had walked with Him on the Sea of Galilee, he had gone with Him to the house of Jairus, he had climbed the Mount of Transfiguration by His side. He was soon to be with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. His Master had chosen him for the most intimate fellowship; Peter had become uncomfortable if he was not close to Jesus. Therefore he asks, "Why cannot I follow Thee now?" It seems a strange question to enlightened eyes. Did he not yet understand that Christ was to tread the way of the Cross? that soon He would leave the world, and go unto the Father? How unprepared he was for such a following of Jesus as this! Nor was that the

only reason why he could not follow Him now—Heaven was to be prepared by Jesus. That work He represents as yet to be done. The Day of Pentecost, too, was coming, when Peter was to be the spokesman of the Church. Confession and witness-bearing—these were to be his following of Jesus for a while.

A SELF-CONFIDENT DISCIPLE.

NO thought of such prospects ha yet dawned on Peter. He saw only the coming separation; he was persuaded that His Master was mistaken. Jesus had not learned to calculate upon His servant's loyalty. Where would not Peter follow Him? If Christ were to begin another ministry among the Gentiles, Peter would be glad to follow Him even there. It needed the thrice-repeated vision at Joppa to prepare him for the mission to Cornelius; but if Jesus went to the Greeks, Peter had no misgivings. His national pride was nothing compared with his devotion to his Master. Or perhaps Christ did not know to what lengths Peter was ready to go. He might be desirous to screen him from trouble. Peter dimly discerned the perils that were gathering around the sacred head. Jesus had just spoken of them: "All ye shall be offended in Me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." (St. Matt. xxvi. 31.) How eager Peter is to clear himself and cheer his Master! "If all shall be offended in Thee," he answers, "I will never be offended"—whatsoever comes, I will trust and love. Again Jesus seeks to warn the impetuous disciple: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not; and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, stablish thy brethren." Here, at last, the peril is fully disclosed. Satan had already found one victim in the Upper Room, but he was not content. On the Master he had used every art of seduction, but had found all powerless. He would strike at Jesus through His followers. Judas had become his tool; Satan was eager for other victories. He desired them all, but Peter most of all. To accomplish this, no device should be untried. But, though Peter's blindness and self-confidence promised well, it augured ill that Christ was alert, that Christ was praying, that Christ was warning Peter.

The warning, indeed, seemed wasted. Unmoved by the fact that Christ thus singled him out for special prayer, Simon answered, "Lord, with Thee I am ready to go both to prison and to death." (St. Luke xxii. 33.) Let the Master clearly understand—here is one man on whom He may implicitly rely: a man for whom prison and death have no terrors. So utterly is Peter ignorant of his own weakness. All the Evangelists relate this conversation with Peter. It is the longest of the dialogues in the Upper Room. St. John's description is at this point, perhaps, the most striking—"I will lay down my life for Thee." It is not merely reproach and poverty that I will face. He takes the last and greatest trial: This also will I brave for Thee. Jesus made a striking response. He took those loving, yet presumptuous words, and held them up before his face. "Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me?" Then He hung beside them a prophecy: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied Me thrice." It was already night when Judas had left the room. The first dawn should not break on Jerusalem ere Peter had thrice denied his Lord. So Jesus prophesied. But Peter was neither convinced nor humbled. The forecast did not move him to examine his own heart, or to cry for grace. He but protested the more. "He spake exceeding vehemently, If I must die with Thee, I will not deny Thee." Nor were his comrades wiser or less confident: "In like manner also said they all."

Peter, it will be seen, had the last word. That saying his brethren endorsed and echoed. Already Thomas had expressed the same purpose (xi. 16): "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Now all took Peter's side against Jesus, as perhaps most of us would have done had we been there. But yet Jesus was right. Peter began well, so no doubt he thought, by his attack on Malchus in Gethsemane. He soon found, however, that the weapons of this warfare were not carnal. For such fighting he was unprepared. He did indeed follow Jesus to the High Priest's court, but only to exhibit his pitiable weakness in the hour of trial. How sadly the prophecy was fulfilled! "He began to curse, and to swear, I know not the Man."

Thus Peter fell. With all his devotion he was slow to learn that Christ knew better than he. He could not see that there were reasons which the event would approve for everything his Master spoke. This was the lesson which he learned so painfully from that night in the Upper Room. Grieved though we are by his boasting, there is the true ring of manly loyalty in every word. He sees no joy in life without Jesus. He is ready to renounce his home, his country, his kinsfolk to follow his Master. Here is the contrast between Peter and Judas. Satan finds something to work on in both, and with masterly skill suits the temptation to the man. Yet there is a striking difference between the two characters. Peter's faults are on the surface; his heart is right. There Jesus reigns. Death is better than separation. His impetuosity, his overweening conceit of his own strength and fidelity, lead him astray. Instead of guarding the weak points, instead of obeying the command, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation," Peter can see no weakness in himself. This was the secret of his fall. This was the reason of his restoration. With

Judas it was otherwise. He loved himself more than Jesus. The heart of the false disciple was eaten up with covetousness, till, for a paltry advantage to himself, he betrayed his Lord.

PETER'S SILENCE.

PETER'S voice is not heard again in the Upper Room. The chief questioner is silenced. The separation is inevitable. Jesus will not, cannot have his company. But amid his regrets and fears, the words of his Master may have shed a ray of light: "Thou shalt follow me afterward." How that promise opened out before him, the following chapter must show. Think of Peter listening to the words about the many mansions of the Father's House. He should follow Jesus thither. A few weeks later, by the Sea of Galilee, where the Christ had first said, "Follow Me,' He spoke of that other following, and its end. Peter, though he had thrice denied, should yet follow Jesus to prison, to death, to glory. But he must first glorify Christ by his life. He was not allowed to miss that honour. It was he who was permitted to open the door of faith and heaven both to Jews and Gentiles.

This dialogue closes the personal questions in the Upper Room. "Be not high-minded, but fear." That is the moral for all disciples. What searchings of heart, what attention to the warnings of Jesus we should learn from the story! The zealous and attached disciple denies his Lord. He cannot believe that Jesus is right, and he will not. But Jesus knows too well what a collapse is near. Lowliness and vigilance, how much we need these guardian graces as we go forth to meet our trial! It had been well for Peter had he trusted Jesus more. He thought that he knew his own heart better than his Master did.

True disciples must still be comforted by the fact that, whilst foretelling the denial, Christ foretold also the following in the future. He sees that Peter shall become a new man. There is the true stuff in him after all. Some woods will take no polish; you can veneer them—that is all. There are woods of a firmer grain to which every touch of the workman's hand adds a higher finish. Such was the character of Peter. Christ sees its sterling worth. To one less skilled in discerning the heart, there would have been slight hope of heroic service from him who had filled the chief place, yet had gone down before the first shock of trial after boasting so loudly. But Jesus had not done with Peter. Like the lapidary who sees the worth of some gem yet unpolished, and spends all his art to make its lustre shine forth, so Jesus dealt with Peter. So He deals with all disciples. If our hearts are full of Christ, if we are willing to learn of Him, He will teach us even by our faults to rise to better things, until we repay His grace by unswerving love and faithful service.

To distrust ourselves, to trust our Master; to see the perils of our path, till boasting dies and faith clings as with a death-grasp to Jesus—that is the one way and the sure way of victory for every disciple.

THE COURAGE OF LOVE.

A TALE FOR THE CHILDREN, LITTLE AND BIG.

"BEENIE, darling, don't cry! It makes me miserable at sending you away. The time will soon pass, my pet."

"Yes, papa, I—I know. And I am not crying. See!"

The tall gentleman, who was seeing off the little girl at the Victoria station, stooped to kiss her tenderly.

"That is my own child," he whispered, as the blue eyes smiled bravely up at him through their tears. "That is like my good Beenie! And now get in, dear. The guard will take care of you, and you are not to move until he lifts you out at the other end."

There were a few last words, chiefly injunctions from the small traveller:—"You must wrap up when you are out at night, papa." "Papa, you must not start in the morning without breakfast." And then the train rolled slowly out of the station, and Beenie Stratton curled herself up in a corner, and cried as if her heart would break.

Yet nine children out of ten would have only been too delighted at the prospect which was before her, and instead of making the poor little face swollen and red with crying, would have grudged each moment which kept them from that goal of child happiness—the sea. For it was hot July, and instead of the baking and dusty streets of her London home, Beenie was to spend a couple of months on the Sussex coast, with a merry family of boys and girls, and with nothing to do all day long except run about and enjoy herself. But it did not sound at all delightful to our eight-year-old heroine. All this holiday happiness and sunshine only meant leaving papa—poor papa, who worked so hard, and who would sorely miss the tiny daughter who was his sole companion in the dreary street-bound house.

Beenie did not often cry, and her tears were dried long before the friendly guard took her from the

carriage, and proceeded to point out a tall thin-faced clergyman as the old college friend to whom her father was sending her.

"That's Mr. Verner, sure enough. You run along to him, missy, and tell him who you are, while I see to the luggage."

It required no small amount of courage to do as she was bid, but she managed it somehow, and walked solemnly up to her new friend.

He did not say much to her; but, hastening after the guard, he caught up the portmanteau in one hand and the bundle of wraps in the other, and then whisked through the station door with Beenie trotting soberly at his heels.

What made him in such a dreadful hurry? she wondered. She was a serious-minded little woman, grave-eyed and slow of speech, and, as she had never known a cleric out of the pulpit, this new experience rather puzzled her. Mr. Verner hurried the child and her properties into the basket-chaise which was waiting for him on the white treeless road, and then he jumped in himself, and the fat pony started at a brisk trot.

"It is a slow business coming down from town, isn't it?" he asked sympathetically. "Father quite well? That's right. And how are you going to like my tribe of children? Expect you will be here a good while. Your father will be wanting to take a run abroad for his holiday, and he knows you are in safe hands."

Poor Beenie! She looked up at him with suddenly startled eyes, and her cheeks flushed hotly.

"That is not true! He would not go without me," she said briefly, and then she turned away her head, her lips quivering pitifully.

Her host gave a little amused laugh, and then drove on in silence. He was a good-natured man in his way, and had Beenie been a pretty, engaging child, like one of his own, they would very soon have been good friends. But this mite, with her plain, wistful little face, who had received his half-joking remarks with what looked very like an outburst of temper, was not likely to tempt him to further efforts. So he shook his reins, and then relapsed into his own thoughts, without a second glance in her direction.

Meanwhile, Beenie was almost beside herself with fear and wounded love. Was it possible that papa was going away, going "abroad," which meant the other side of the sea? She would never be able to think of the sea again as a soft, sunny stretch where one cooled bare feet when tired by the golden sands, but rather as a dreadful mark which would keep them far apart. Why had he not told her? When was he going? Could she not run away to London, and beg to be taken too?

She looked back on the straight, chalky roads. No, she decided with a sigh, it would be too long and too difficult; and she had no money. There is something very pitiful, I think, about the utter powerlessness of a little child. And first recalling the long journey, and then furtively scanning the strong brown hands upon the reins, Beenie gulped down a rising sob, feeling it was all of no use; for she was only a little, little girl, and home was a long, long way off.

A fair-haired girl came out of the rose-covered vicarage to greet them, and Beenie was snatched up as before, and placed upon the broad gravel path.

"Here is another chick for you, Beatrice," the vicar said to his daughter, and then added, in a whisper, "and a naughty one too, I am afraid."

He had not intended Beenie to hear him, but the child had sharp ears, and the face which was brightening under Beatrice's kiss grew dull again. What had she done? It was not fair to call her naughty before they knew anything about her. She wished she were back with papa, but papa was going away; yes, and he had not even told her.

The determination not to cry made her look sullen, and so when Beatrice—that kind-hearted Beatrice who was always slaving and planning for the wild motherless brood—took her in to the others who were having tea, the impression she made was a bad one. Daisy thought her "finikin," for Daisy was just at the hoiden age when she longed to be a boy; and the younger girl, Ethel, fretted because the new arrival confessed to disliking dolls. There were three boys between these two, but even they were of the same opinion. She had no go in her, they said, no spring. The chief good of a girl was to back-stop at cricket, and that little Londoner had not the pluck of a mouse.

Only one of them all had a good word to say for her, and that was a yellow-haired scrap, with big limpid brown eyes, who smiled at all her little world, and who found consequently that all her world was smiling back at her. This was Flossie, the pet and darling of the house; but she had no right to form an opinion, the rest decided loftily. Floss was nothing but a baby. Why, she was only three and a half!

She and Beenie made better friends that evening, when the younger child was awakened by the sound of sobbing. Sitting upright with a very wide-awake face, and with both chubby hands clutching to the sides of her cot, she looked first towards the nurse's bed, and finding it still empty, looked over at the other where Beenie's rough, dark hair was all that showed above the sheets.

"Beenie, is 'oo crying?" Floss demanded in an awe-struck tone; for tears were rare at the vicarage, and she felt rather scared.

Receiving no answer, the little one stood up, and, clinging to the curtains of her cot, began a perilous descent, which finally landed her upon the floor. Then she pattered over the carpet at a great rate, and climbing into the elder child's bed, nestled down beside her.

"Tell ickle F'oss was it is," she said persuasively, rubbing her soft, cool cheek against the other's hot, tear-stained face.

"It's—it's about—papa."

"Has he d'one to heaven?" Flossie whispered back. "My mudder has. We put her to s'eep in the d'rave-yard, and we made it all pitty with f'owers. But it is pittier up there!"

She pointed through the uncurtained window to the western sky, which was still aflame with golden gleams, and Beenie felt inexpressibly comforted.

"No, he is not dead," she explained. "He is going abroad, the other side of the sea, and I shan't be with him. And when I am not there he sometimes forgets to wrap up when he goes to see patients at night, and then he catches cold."

"O'her side of the sea," echoed Flossie; she was getting sleepy again, and had only taken in the first part of the sentence. "F'oss will catch a fiss to-morrow day, an' we will hold his tail tight, an' he will take us to Abroad-land."

Beenie kissed her as vigorously as the little one would allow. Of course she knew that it was nonsense, and that one wanted ships, and money, and lots of things to get even to France; but it was not so very long ago since she too had been wont to settle her difficulties after Flossie's easy fashion, and it was not very hard even now to forget her teasing geography lessons, and to believe in the magic fish. While thinking of it she fell asleep, and woke next day with the pleasant feeling that she had at least one friend in her new home.

She had need of this comfort, poor child, during the following weeks, for her life became anything but a happy one. "*She hasn't the pluck of a mouse!*" That was what Harold had said on the first evening, and he was the big brother of the house, with all the authority on such matters to which his Eton jacket entitled him. He was apt to take up ideas—"fads" his father called them—and be red-hot upon them for the time being, and the present craze was for physical courage. He crammed his curly head with tales of old Greece and her Spartan heroes, and romances of King Arthur's knights with their supreme contempt for pain, until his boyish imagination was fired, and he turned to the nursery and schoolroom for willing disciples.

It was rather a rough-and-tumble schoolboy sort of system, and consisted quite as much in inflicting pain as in bearing it, and the fad was somewhat wearing itself out when, with Beenie's appearance upon the scene, it suddenly revived. It would be a fine work to make this timid little Londoner as strong and fearless as themselves, Harold had declared, and the rest had agreed with him without the slightest conception of their own cruelty.

So from that day began a series of semi-practical jokes, none of which were very dreadful, and many of which would have been nothing at all to a country-bred child, or to one who was used to the bustle and excitement of a large family.

But to Beenie, who in the dull town-house had seldom play-companions more noisy than the wavering shadows which crept silently through the narrow windows, the very life and noise around her was a thing to get accustomed to by only very slow degrees. And when, added to this strangeness and to her vague unhappiness about her father's movements, there came this new dread of never knowing what might be the next tax upon her nerves, the child's life became a misery to her.

"What is the matter with me?" she asked in desperation one evening, after she and Floss had been left to go to sleep in the soft August twilight. "Papa used to say I was 'a brave little thing,' and I am always a coward down here."

"Poor ickle Beenie! Boys is nasty howwid s'ings!" scolded the shriller voice in answer; and through the cot railings Beenie could catch a glimpse of the yellow head bobbing up and down on the pillow in her indignation.

"I want to be good. Oh! I do want to be good and 'plucky,' as Harold says, and nice to all of them, but I can't somehow. Frank put a spider in my tea to-night, and I was so frightened that I knocked it all over, and even Beatrice was cross then."

"Nasty s'ings," murmured the baby again.

"And I say my prayers so often," sighed Beenie. "But there is always such a noise here. I think, perhaps, it was easier for God to hear me when it was quieter, and that's why I was gooder at home."

"Poor Beenie!" Little Flossie's powers of comfort were not very varied. "D'o in the fields, d'en."

Beenie hailed the drowsy words with delight. Of course! Why, how stupid she had been! All the good men in the Bible went into deserts or caves so as to be quite quiet when they prayed to God; and she would do as they had done. Then everything would come straight.

Beenie fell asleep with a smile upon her face, and woke early to begin her preparations. She owned a certain quaintly cut frock, made something in the style of an Italian peasant's, which had not seen the light lately, because the others laughed at it, but she put it on now, longing to make everything seem as home-like as possible. She would take a little basket with her, she thought, to fill with field flowers for Floss; but her dark hair was looking so unusually smooth, that she resolved not to take her sun-bonnet.

Losing the sense of her general spruceness in the surety that for the future all was to go better, she trotted down-stairs, and went through her breakfast in a kind of dream. Too absorbed to notice the boys' teasing, she did not heed either what the vicar was saying about a dog in the next village which was supposed to have gone mad, and as soon as breakfast was over she slipped from her seat, and went out of the room.

In a few moments she was upon the downs, and running over the short springy grass until she came amongst the golden gorse, and there to a stand-still.



"She came amongst the golden geese, and there to a standstill."—*p.* 680.

"This is better than indoors," she said to herself, with a little laugh.

It was indeed better. A bend in the downs completely hid all signs of the houses below; the golden sunlight was falling on her as she stood, a picturesque little figure, knee-deep amid the gorse, about whose gleaming tips the butterflies were flitting. Far as she could see, there stretched a cloudless sky, and as her soft laugh broke the stillness, a lark went winging heavenward, and poured his song down upon the listening child.

A whispered prayer—a little child's prayer, broken, and loving, and full of faith—and then Beenie started homewards. It would be all right now. God had heard, and God would help her.

* * * * * *

The account of what happened that morning after Beenie had turned to go home, was for a long time the favourite story with the Vicarage children. Harold used to begin it, and tell how he and Daisy had started with the four younger children for a regular country ramble, without waiting for Beenie's return. They were trudging along, he with Ethel on his back, and Daisy and her brothers chasing each other round him, and little Floss, . . . Well, turning rather red, he didn't know who was supposed to be looking after Floss; he wasn't, at any rate, for he had Ethel, and he could not be expected to mind the two, now could he? Well, then, Floss must have been somewhere behind, and all of a sudden they heard a dreadful noise right in front of them.

Here excited Daisy would break in with an—

"Oh, it was awful! There was a great *breathing* noise, like the grating of a pump-handle, but whether it was the dog himself, or whether it was the men who were running after him, I don't know. Harold told you it was the dog, didn't he? A great white mad dog, which had escaped from the yard where they had shut him up till they could kill him. He was running straight at us, with his tongue lolling out, and his eyes quite red and angry. The lane is narrow just there, and we had scrambled up on to the banks, when Jack cried, 'Flossie!' and there we saw Baby below us standing quite still, and staring at the coming dog. It happened faster than I can tell you, but while we were all screaming at her, and too frightened to move, I saw Beenie go sliding down the bank—I thought she had dropped from the clouds—and she rushed at Floss and caught her up just in time. Baby was safe, but we thought Beenie was bitten, for the dog snapped at her as he rushed by, and she was flecked with foam. But he didn't touch her really, and we were so glad! We think she is the bravest and dearest little girl in all the world."

The children were not very dramatic, and the very real danger Beenie had run was a good deal lost in their way of telling it. But that they very warmly appreciated what she had done, and were heartily ashamed both of themselves and their past conduct, there could be no possible doubt. From that moment Beenie became the darling of the house, and when it became known that, so far from going abroad, Dr. Stratton was coming down almost immediately to take his little daughter home, the lamentations were loud and deep.

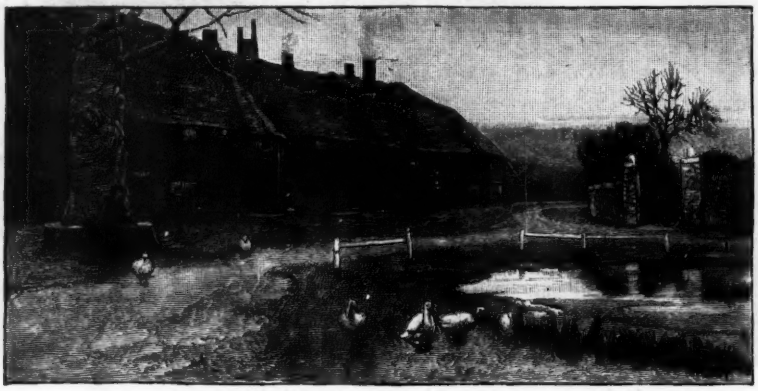
"But I did nothing. I love Flossie, so of course I went to pick her up," the child protested once, grateful for all this newly won love, but too honest to pose as a heroine. "And I wasn't a bit brave, because I never thought of the dog at all. I thought of Floss."

Beatrice chanced to overhear her, and a swift remembrance of certain old familiar words about the "love which casteth out fear" prompted her to stoop and kiss the little plain face.

"That is the right way, dearie," she whispered. "Go on loving and praying, and you will grow into a good, brave woman."

"I did pray," said the child simply. "That's how it was."

Beatrice kissed her again. M. E. W.



SOME OLD CHURCH CHESTS.

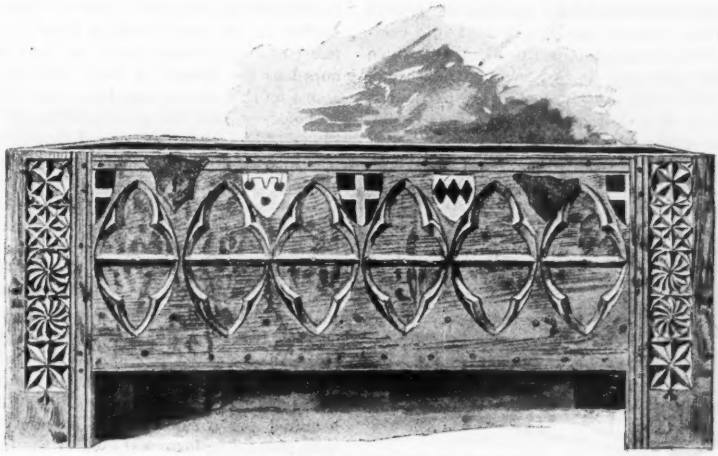


THE vestries of many of our country parish churches we may see the old oak chests in which the registers and other parochial documents have been kept from time immemorial. In some instances, these repositories are damp and decaying, dusty and cobwebby; and sometimes we find them turned out of the vestry into some lonely, shadowy corner of the aisles; but in many more instances they are well cared for, and their value and interest fully recognised. Some of our larger town churches, too, have preserved their chests; and in still rarer instances our cathedrals have not parted with some of the great chests in which the more costly robes of bishops and other clergy were formerly kept, but have found them a quiet resting-place either in their dim crypts, or in some equally safe solitude.

Some chests are raised from the ground on short legs formed by the framework at the four angles. Some touch the ground on three sides, but have their fronts cut away to be clear of it. The bases of others are flat and square. A further diversity is obtained in their treatment. Some are made wholly of oak, or some other hard wood, and elaborately carved. Others are left plain, plank by plank, but strengthened with hand-wrought ironwork of an ornamental character, on which the smith has lavished his utmost skill.

There is a fine "early" example of an ancient chest in St. John's Church, Glastonbury. It is lidless, though two large lock scutcheons, tapering to a point, are still in their original places. The front measures six feet and two inches in length, and is enriched with six equilateral cusped arches, which rest on six more that are inverted, and thus form a line of vesica-like carved ornamentation. Above this line of enrichment are five shields painted on the wood. The legs, which raise the chest eight inches from the ground, are richly carved with dog-tooth ornament, which leaves its Transitional (*i.e.*, between Norman and Early English) workmanship beyond question.

Coventry has a good example. Once upon a time Coventry was a walled city, and the huge wall stood screening the houses and their pleasant gardens like a great stone curtain three miles in circumference. And as the population increased, and the people were still desirous of benefiting by the protection the wall afforded, the pleasant gardens had rows of houses built in them, and became crowded lanes and courts. We may see somewhat of the picturesqueness of the old city to-day in its half-timbered houses with projecting upper storeys, the wooden effigy of Peeping Tom still apparently peeping at Lady Godiva out of an upper window, and its three grand parish churches, St. Michael's, Trinity, and Christchurch, with their three tall spires, and its fine old St. Mary's Hall; but not all that our predecessors saw in the days of old, for the wall has been taken down, and bright villas with gay gardens are spread beyond the old confines in every direction. However, in St. Michael's Church we shall find one of the old chests belonging to the old times. It is of the workmanship that is known as "Late Gothic." The front of it is carved with two rows of panels with cusped traceried headings, whereof the lower is twice as wide as the upper and has cusped spandrils. In the



CHURCH OF ST. JOHN, GLASTONBURY.



centre of this ornamentation, immediately below the large lock, is a larger oblong panel on which are carved two coroneted figures, and at the two ends of it are lozenged panels nine and a half inches wide, filled with Tudor roses and grotesque creatures. Doubtless various interpretations may be put upon these delineations, but bearing in mind the traditions of the city, how Leofric taxed the citizens, how Godiva importuned him to remit his charges, and how he consented to do so on the condition that she would ride through the streets, which she did, veiled only by her long and beautiful hair, we may allow ourselves the option of naming the two regal-looking figures Leofric and Godiva.

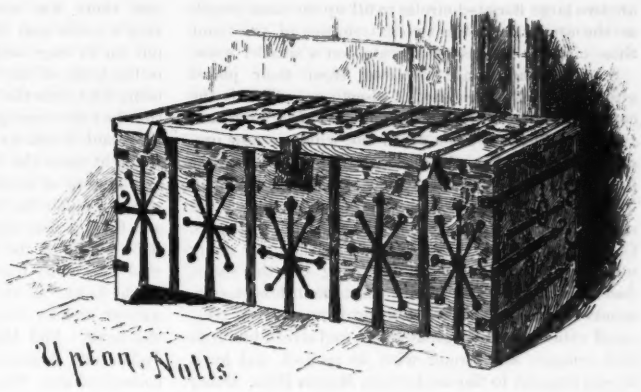
Alnwick has another of these old chests. It is not so old as the Coventry chest, nor as the Glastonbury chest; but it is large and massive and handsome. It is seven feet long good measure, two feet ten inches high, and two feet seven inches wide. The base of the centre of the front is cut away, which shaping leaves the framework at the two extremities touching the ground like legs. Three tiers of carvings, divided into compartments with notched edgings, run along the whole front. On the uppermost line are two hunting scenes, one the fac-simile of the other, except for one particular, both consisting of a deer, a dog, a man in a broad-brimmed beaver blowing a horn, and a tree, and both facing the large iron lock in the centre. The difference consists in the deer being a hind on one side and a hart on the other. The other two rows are filled with representations of winged dragons, two on each tier, facing each other, and some intervening foliage. The ends are carved with dragons diversified with the heads of beasts and birds, and with leafed scrolls on the lowermost divisions. This chest is in the vestry of St. Michael's Church. On entering the church by the porch in the south aisle, on which are carved some ancient Percy heraldic insignia, one descends several steps, and then the eye is greeted with two noble arcades passing from the extreme west to the uttermost east, great traceried windows full of stained glass, oaken roofs, carved stalls, recumbent effigies, and mural monuments, in one first glance; and in front, opposite to the high and heavy entrance-door, is the vestry, and in it stands the chest that has been mentioned.


Church Brampton Northamptonshire

If we may see some old attempt to depict the traditional incident of Godiva's intercession with Leofric in the two coroneted figures on the central panel of the Coventry chest, we may perhaps allow ourselves the licence to fancy that in the hunting-scenes on this one we may have some old-world effort to commemorate the great Northumbrian romance, Chevy Chase. It may be urged that these chests were probably manufactured in large numbers in Flanders and elsewhere, and simply purchased when required. But we know that things often work together in a different fashion from this, and that local talent is more frequently employed than overlooked, and we may assume that it has been so before our own experience of the fact. This leaves us free to ask whether we may not have here some faint yet faithful allusion to the great "woeful" hunting incident that Northumbrian song and legend have handed down to us. Any Northumbrian, in any century, having acquired sufficiency of his art to carve this chest, would have acquired also a sufficiency of culture to be familiar with the leading historical facts of the district. And it seems not to be unreasonable to take this artistic effort,

comparatively rude though it may be, to represent one more stone thrown upon the cairn to perpetuate the remembrance of local heroism.

Winchester and Ewerby have also handsome carved chests, with ornamental circles that speak of fourteenth-century carvers. In Empingham Church, near Stamford, there is a fine cedar chest with incised tracery and figures. And in Whitwell Church there is an example cut out of a solid tree of oak.



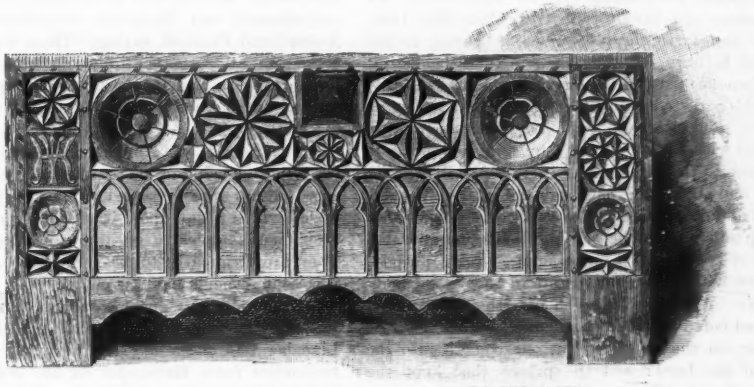
There is another example in Upton Church, in Nottinghamshire, of a different description. On the roughly hewn surfaces of front, lid, and ends are laid straps of wrought iron at irregular distances, which divide it into compartments. In the centre of each of the spaces thus left is an additional band wrought out into the rough outlines of a star with floriated points. At each end are four iron bands and an iron chain for a handle. It is six feet three inches long, two feet six inches high, and two feet wide.

In West Horsley Church there is another oaken chest strengthened with iron straps, but smaller and of much greater simplicity than the Upton example. It has two massive locks and a central hasp for a padlock. It has also an iron bar perforated with holes, by means of which the lid can be held up when required. The ends of the iron straps are beaten out into a rude fleur-de-lys.

At Church Brampton, in Northamptonshire, there is an ancient chest enriched with floriated and scrolled ironwork on the front. The edges are strengthened with iron corner-straps beaten out into fleurs-de-lys at the ends, and the hinges are also treated ornamentally.

There is a grand chest in the vestry of St. Mary's Church, Mortlake. This is made of walnut, inlaid with ebony and boxwood. The chief ornamentation of the front consists of its elaborate lock, with its four squares of tracery at the angles of it, and large and long hasps, and the fine lozenge-shaped scutcheons for fine ring-handles. There are also very richly wrought handles at the side. The lid considerably overhangs the chest, and has two lions' heads carved at the corners of it. The chief beauty of this example is on the underside of this lid, where there is some very elaborate tracery in tinned ironwork sunk level with the woodwork, and we may see, by traces of it, that red velvet or cloth has once set it off. There is a central, large circular ornament, which is a continuation of the hasp, and there are two squares of similar work, one on either side of it, which are extensions of the hinges, and disposed all round is a border which breaks up at regular intervals into a design formed of rectangular lines.

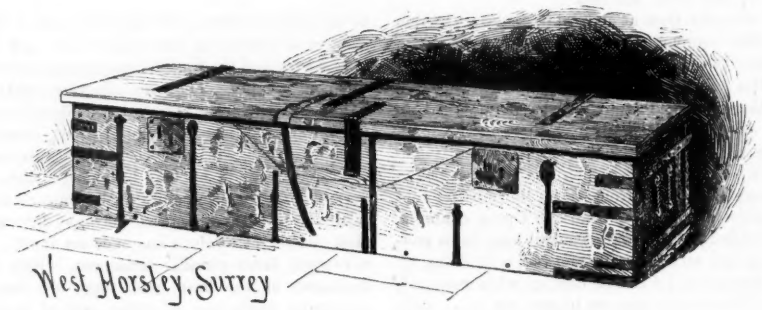
In the Church of St. George at South Acre, in Norfolk, there is an ancient carved oak chest of a familiar type, on which there is a row of twelve cusped arches. Over this line of ornament, on the centre of the front, is the lock, a little tilted out of the square made for its reception, and on either side



CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE, SOUTH ACRE, NORFOLK.

are two large floriated circles to fill up the same length as the arcade. At the two extremities of the front these circular figures are repeated on a smaller scale.

Some examples are removed from their places altogether, and taken care of elsewhere. This is the case of a chest four feet long by two feet high and two feet wide, that has a coped lid, which is now preserved in the old castle in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It has seen many stormy days: Scots bearing down upon Newcastle time upon time, the town besieged, the steeple of St. Nicholas' Church full of prisoners, Charles the First a detained resident there for many months, Oliver Cromwell appearing on the scene, Jacobite risings; and many times, doubtless, terror-stricken folk have rushed to it or from it with treasured valuables under great strain and stress, but it is still compact and strong, with its padlock and keys. It was brought to the castle from Maison Dieu. Other



West Horsley, Surrey

removed examples, though very rich and handsome, are, on the contrary, sometimes put to very incongruous uses. A superbly carved chest of fourteenth-century workmanship, covered with interlacing arches and floriated ornament, was recently found in a farmhouse near Brinkburn Priory, used as a bacon-chest. But these instances are rare. We read of many more that have been quite lost. There is frequent mention of church chests, for instance, in old inventories. To give a case:—An inventory bearing date May 11th, 1536, setting forth the possessions belonging to the Priory of Kilburn, mentions many articles belonging to the domestic parts of the convent, such as bedsteads of boards, and "a standinge bedd wt four postes of weynscot," and "a trundle bedd under the same," and a "cubbord with two aumbreys," etc., and then proceeds to enumerate items belonging more especially to the church, and among the hangings and altar-cloths and chalices and copes, we come to two "chestes wt div'se bookes p'teinynge to the churche, bookes of no val'."

A chest is mentioned as being used for a purpose connected with a place of worship in the Second Book of Kings. We read—"But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the Lord: and the priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the Lord. And it was so, when they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and the high priest came up, and they put up in bags, and told the money that was found in the house of the Lord. And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of the Lord: and they laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought upon the house of the Lord, and to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the Lord, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it." Again, in the Second Book of the Chronicles we read that when Joash was minded to repair the house of the Lord, "at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the Lord. And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem to bring in to the Lord the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness. And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end." The prophet Ezekiel, too, when indicating the riches of Tyrus and the number of its far-sought merchants, and mentioning those who traded in the fairs with emeralds, purple, broidered work, fine linen, coral, agate, wheat, wine, white wool, precious clothes for chariots, bright iron, cassia, calamus, and so on, particularises Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad, saying, "These were thy merchants in all sorts of things, in blue clothes, and broidered work, and in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise."

In the choir of Amiens Cathedral there is a bas-relief showing a chest used as a table by a robed figure who is seated at it and writing on a tablet which rests upon it. There are also some very fine examples in good preservation in France. They are frequently to be noticed, too, in the vignettes of ancient manuscripts.

There are many ancient oaken alms-chests still to be seen in many of our ancient churches. In Llanaber Church—a massive, heavy structure about two miles from Barmouth, on the sea-bound road to Harlech—there is an old alms-chest cut out of a single block of wood. They are generally, however,

ornamented with carvings and floriated ironwork. One at D ayton, in Berkshire, is a plain oblong box, bound about with straight iron straps, with three hinged hasps to it, and standing on a solid wooden pedestal. At St. Peter's-in-the-East, Oxford, there is an example, ornamented with floriated scroll-work in iron, which is fastened by a padlock to a hook in the wall, which hook is placed in the midst of much handsomer scroll-work, climbing up the wall plant-fashion. In Meare Church, Somerset, there is a specimen of a different kind again, for the chest is square and plain, but raised on a richly panelled and columniated pedestal. In several instances, as at Irchester and Mears Ashby in Northamptonshire, and Hartland in Devonshire, the alms-chest is placed on the capping of the pews. The regulation requiring the provision of alms-chests, only stipulated they should be set and fastened in the most convenient place, to the intent the parishioners should be able to put their alms into them for their poorer neighbours. Three keys were ordered, that the churchwardens and clergyman should have one apiece. And the order continues:—"And the Parson, Vicar, or Curate shall diligently, from time to time—and especially when men make their testaments—call upon, exhort, and move their neighbours to confer and give, as they may well spare, to the said chest." The keepers of the keys were required yearly, quarterly, or oftener, to open the chest and divide the alms amongst the poor and needy, in the presence of most of the parish, or of six of the principal parishioners. S. W.

A SERMON FOR THE DEAF.

BY THE REV. MICHAEL EASTWOOD.

"The deaf shall hear the words of the book."—Isaiah xxix. 18.

FOR some time past you have wondered at the indistinctness of speech (as you deemed it) amongst your friends and acquaintances. Sometimes you have been irritated by it—just a little. But you have at last acknowledged with your usual honesty that you are very deaf. Will you accept a word of sympathy—not a word of pity, but of hope? It is by no means impossible that your hearing may be restored: perhaps by some shock to your system, perhaps yet by the staid finger of science—or, as you and I would reverently regard it, the healing touch of Christ, still in the world, no longer local but universal. But rest assured that if the Master leaves you as you are, it is for some good purpose; and what you lose in one faculty shall be given you in another.

And now, after this word of sympathy and hope, you will accept a word of remonstrance; and you will find it sympathy still, under another aspect. It is reported that you contemplate retirement from God's house on the ground that you cannot hear the sermon. But I want to remind you that—

(1) Although you cannot hear, yet YOU CAN SEE. God has spared your sight. Let it be your duty and your pleasure to use it in His house as well as your own. There is much to see in God's house. The very walls have become sacred, and yield forth pictures of the past. If chaste and beautiful, enriched by the gifts of those who feel they cannot live in beautiful homes without making God's house beautiful too, those walls have a ministry which all worshippers have learnt to love. But if those walls are bare and unadorned, they are now transfigured after standing guard over God's poor for generations, by listening, as it were, to the prayers of humble worshippers; yes, and they are illuminated by God's smile of approval, like rocky hills at sunset. Ah! yes, to your wistful gaze, intensified by the loss of another faculty, those bare rugged walls will yield many a sacred picture.

And you can see the minister. Though you cannot hear him, it is something to see him if he be a true servant of God. You can mark the movement of his finger. You can see the gladness lighting up his face one moment, and the pain overshadowing it the next. By his gesture, by his expression, and by your own quick sympathy, you will sometimes know what he is saying, as in one breath he invites the sinner to Christ, and in the next seeks to urge the saint to fuller consecration.

And you can see the congregation: the old man whose hair has grown white in the service of God; that little child "with grave fresh lip," turning round to look at you with large soft eyes; the mother laying down the burden and the care; the strong man finding inspiration for the battle of life; the widow mourning a soldier's grave far away; the maiden who, as you can see, has brought to God's house the dream of her love, with all its tender helpfulness, and all its prophecy of pain; yes, and that graceless youth over there who is behaving so badly. So he is; but look again, and you may perceive the making of a good man (by God's grace) even in him. And as it happens that you have some influence over him, will you use it? That boy may be destined to become a gifted minister of Christ, and some day he will reprove others, not by harsh words, but by reminding them how he regrets having once behaved so badly in God's house himself. Will it not be a joy to you, whether in this world or a better, that you

were the means of showing him a more excellent way?

Thus you look around. Does it not do you good to gaze upon the congregation of the Lord, now bent in prayer (*you* may be forgiven for looking), and now rising to sing the songs of Zion?

(2) Here, then, is another reason why you should come. Though you are deaf you are not dumb, and YOU CAN SING—a little. Even if your voice is not all it used to be, yet any infirmity you now think it possesses would not only be excused but unnoticed, indeed, while blended with the volume of song round about you. Heartfelt singing has a wonderful power of blending into one magnificent stream all manner of voices. And with a good hymn, and a good tune, what hallowed associations, what touching memories are revived!

But your own heart (independently of my sermon) urges more than sentiment and gratification. Our service of praise is a duty; it is a debt; it is an offering due to God, and to be paid both regularly and cheerfully, for He receives it—I had almost said gratefully. But this I can say—though God has the worship of Heaven, He is not satisfied so long as one child of earth withholds the public offering of his praise and love. Our own way of insisting that friends shall acknowledge and honour us publicly as well as privately is but a faint shadow of something in the mind of God, something of course more beautiful, and even more imperative.

(3) The mention of this public duty further suggests that we go to church not only to see, but TO BE SEEN—by the Lord, by the minister, by the people. We thus testify by our presence that we are on the Lord's side, that we are thinking about Him, that we are depending on Him, and, moreover, that we are mindful of His children.

Your friends would see you and be glad. The undecided would see you and be strengthened in the desire to live such a life as you have lived. And the minister would see you, and although you cannot hear his ministrations, he can feel yours—do not forget that the pew has a ministry for the pulpit—and how he would be helped when he perceived by the expression of your face that you were praying for him, praying not perhaps in words so much as by the sympathetic attitude of your mind. You do not know how it would touch his heart. You would almost hear the next sentence he uttered.

But I said that the undecided would see you, especially young Mr. ———. You are exercising an unconscious influence over him. He often quotes you as an authority, and justifies his actions by yours. If, therefore, you live some years without attending God's house, he is likely to do the same. He is likely to tell his companions that a man can get on very well without church life, and he will point to you, without adding, in just and thoughtful parenthesis, how many years you *have* attended church, and how you would be the first to acknowledge that you would not be the man you are but for your happy association with a Christian church.

(4) I don't believe you are getting impatient with me; I will therefore detain you a few minutes longer to remind you (as I have already done by anticipation) that not only can you see and be seen (and sing), but YOU CAN FEEL. Then in the house of the Lord you would feel the inspiration of numbers, that magnetic something that thrills us through and through. You could feel the different waves of spiritual influence that swept over the congregation. You could feel the blessing of God. You could feel the "peace that passeth all understanding."

What do you think of these things? To see and feel; to be seen and appreciated; to go away having joined in the prayer that rises from every Christian assembly; to go away in possession of the hymns, and lessons, and texts; to carry away with you a mental picture of that particular service—these are blessings you cannot afford to lose.

If you say that I do not know how irritating it is to sit for an hour or more without hearing a word that is said, I would venture to remind you that it is not so great a trial in church as you experience every day in the week socially, and, perhaps, in the exercise of your daily vocation. Besides, if my kindly remonstrances are based on truth, you will be fully compensated for the inconvenience. Remember, too, that self-sacrifice is the order of our Christian life. It was the Master's life; it must be ours—very largely.

True the Lord is everywhere, and can give you a blessing (and make you a blessing) in your retreat, but it is in the Temple that Simeon receives a special revelation, and is permitted to embrace the Incarnate Word. What a glow the young child sends into his heart! Simeon's youth is renewed like the eagle's. With what passionate fervour he breaks into a song the Church will prize to the end of time! All this would have been lost for himself and for posterity, if Simeon had missed that morning service at the Temple.

Thus at 113 years of age (perhaps), and even if deaf, *Simeon* is, after all, "*one who hears with acceptance.*"

We may regard Simeon as transfigured on this occasion; for we (in our way) are transfigured as well as the Master. And these moments often come to us in God's house rather than elsewhere. The Lord comes to us with unusual power. He bends over us with the beauty of "the young child," with the royal simplicity of His young manhood, and with the splendour of His deity, and we are changed. And we behold others changed too. Our uplifting does not make us look down upon our fellow-worshippers. Nearer to Christ, we find ourselves nearer to one another. And in these moments of divine uplifting we behold each worshipper not as he is, but as he will be in the ages to come. We see men (in our own limited way) as God sees them. Then we grow patient and hopeful; patient with men who, in spite

of religion, are still hard and unreasonable, crude and irritating.

But enough. To prolong this homely sermon would imply that you are not easy to be entreated—and that would be an injustice.

Come, dear father, dear mother—as long as you can walk, come to God's house. Whether you can hear or not, come for our sake, for Christ's sake, for your own. On your death-bed you will never regret that you came to God's house as long as you could.

DOROTHY'S VOCATION.

BY EVELYN EVERETT GREEN, AUTHOR OF "MONICA," "OLIVER LANGTON'S WARD," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER VII.—SPEAKING OUT.

"YOU miserable little hypocrite! Why did you not tell us?" cried Mabel.

"I am perfectly ashamed of you, Dorothy," added Claudia. "I know your many faults full well; but I did think you at least straightforward."

"You little sly, deceitful thing!"

"We are perfectly shocked at your want of candour!"

"You deserve to be turned out of the house neck and crop! I always knew no good would come of your canting, hypocritical ways, and pretences of being better than other people."

Dorothy, who had just been dropped at her own door by Mrs. Seymour's carriage, stood perfectly still and silent under this inexplicable storm of railing. She did not understand a word of it, but as she was pretty well accustomed to her sisters' bursts of unreasonable anger, she did not think very much of it, and stood quite quiet until a pause came, of which she availed herself to ask what they meant.

"Mean, indeed!" repeated Mabel, in angry scorn; but Claudia had seated herself in a kind of majestic dignity, and motioned to Dorothy to do the same.

"It is idle to keep up this farce of innocence. Why did you not tell us before about these Seymours?"

"What about them? You always say you are sick of their very name."

Claudia beat her foot upon the ground.

"Why did you not tell us who they were, you impertinent little chit?"

"Who they are? I thought you knew that better than I. They are country cousins and poor relations to you, and to me very kind friends. I thought you knew all that long ago."

Mabel would have burst out with another storm of rebuke, but Claudia interposed, though her own voice quivered with passion.

"Why did you tell us nothing of the fine property he owns?"

"Manages, you mean," answered Dorothy, with a slight scornful smile, for she began to understand the situation better now. "Didn't you know that he was a land-agent? I believe I have said so, only you never will listen to a word I say about the Seymours."

The sisters exchanged glances; for a moment they began to breathe more freely; but they thought of Mrs. Dalrymple's assured words, recalled the attentions paid to the Seymours throughout the evening, and their hearts sank again.

"Did he tell you he was only an agent?"

"Well, no—not exactly."

"Then, how do you know?"

Dorothy paused to think how she did know. A new light was breaking in upon her own mind, and she was not sure that it was a pleasant one.

The next words were somewhat falteringly spoken.

"I—I—fancied so. He keeps having to go down to look after things. You always said he was so poor; of course I thought he was the agent of the property. I never dreamed of anything else;"



"'You will love her as a daughter?'"—*p.* 691.

and then Dorothy recalled the humorous gravity of Ralph's face, and the sleepy twinkle of his grey eyes as she had asked him one day something about the duties of an agent, and had expressed it as her opinion that he was very young to be entrusted with so responsible an office. Her own cheeks began to grow hot at the recollection of several remarks she had made, and pieces of advice she had given him on this and other occasions.

She was more meek than was her wont under the rigid cross-examination to which she was now subjected; but from everything that was gathered from her replies, it became more and more evident to the angry sisters that Mrs. Dalrymple's information had been correct, and that their own selfishness and petty pride had led them into the most fatal blunder that had ever befallen them. They were ready to tear their hair with rage and vexation; they were furious with Dorothy, yet almost altogether tongue-tied, for they remembered but too well how systematically they had snubbed all allusions to the Seymours, being a little bit ashamed of the part they were playing, and in great fear lest their vacillating father should change his tactics, and desire his elder daughters to notice his kinsfolk more. The only consolation derived from the interview was the conviction that nothing of a tender nature had passed between Dorothy and Ralph. She spoke of him with far too much ease and composure. He had evidently treated her from the first with the familiarity of a cousin, and possibly this was really a better state of affairs than if he had observed more of ceremony.

"He thinks of her as a mere child—as indeed she is," said Claudia to her sister, after Dorothy had at last been dismissed. "There is a little comfort in that; but it is high time that this intimacy is stopped. Why, she has been almost living with the Seymours this past month, and the children have gone there every week. Why didn't we find it all out before? How came papa to be so egregiously ignorant of what happened years ago, when they came into the property? Fancy that little chit being taken to Lady Forrester's, and Mrs. Montague-Mortimer's, and Gore House—places we would have given anything to be at—and our knowing nothing about it? I call it scandalous!"

"I always said she was a nasty little sly thing, and would do us some mischief one of these days. It's coming true now."

"She shall not be allowed to do it any more. Things must not go on like this."

"I don't see how you're to stop them. She has been coming and going at will there this past six weeks; to stop it now would do more harm than good. Everyone would see through us."

Claudia bit her lip. She had felt that her authority might be successfully exerted over Dorothy, but had not paused to consider what effect its exercise might have upon the Seymours.

"Something must be done. We must change our tactics, make excuses, and see as much of these people as possible. Dorothy must not have the monopoly. We must push the tallow-chandler connection as far as possible. I wish I could think she would take a fancy to him. At least, we must do what we can, and supersede her with the Seymours; they cannot really care much for the society of a mere child."

Mabel, however, looked less assured. She was in some things more acute than her sister.

"That remains to be proved. They may be hopelessly affronted by the way we have behaved. There will undoubtedly be something suspicious in the way we suddenly turn round."

"Dorothy did not think they were offended. She said they never appeared to notice anything amiss in our conduct."

Then the sisters exchanged glances in silence, not altogether certain that a well-bred silence and apparent lack of observation on the part of people like the Seymours was to be regarded as a favourable sign. Possibly it might express something rather more nearly akin to contempt, or at least an indifference that was almost as bad.

Still, there was nothing left now but to face the situation they had forced upon themselves, and make the best of it as far as was possible, recovering lost ground if it were by any means practicable.

Early the next afternoon Mr. Templeton and his two eldest daughters called at the private hotel in Strafford Street. Dorothy had been safely despatched in an opposite direction; and, indeed, she had not the smallest wish to dispute the field with her sisters.

The Seymours were both at home, and received their guests with quiet friendliness, and without the least appearance of pique. Mr. Templeton's somewhat blundering attempts at apology were cut short in gentle, high-bred fashion by Mrs. Seymour, who told him that in sparing dear Dorothy so much, he had done more than she had ever expected of him in making her visit to town enjoyable. Then, gliding off to impersonal subjects, she conversed during the visit with the greatest ease and cordiality; whilst the girls did their utmost to draw out Ralph, and to win him over to the easy cousinly terms he had evidently established with Dorothy.

Ralph, however, proved a little baffling, yet they could not tell why. He was easy to talk to; he had plenty to say for himself, and his cool, rather languid manner was not in the least repellent; but he perplexed them by his comments and replies. A good deal of what he said was decidedly enigmatical, and they had an uncomfortable feeling of being read through and through by those keen, sleepy eyes, whilst not at all certain that some of his smoothest speeches were not barbed with shafts of delicate satire that they were unable either to elude or detect.

Altogether, the interview was not entirely comfortable or satisfactory, and it was a relief at last to turn to Mrs. Seymour, and open the principal matter in hand. They wanted, now that they were a little less deeply engaged, to give a party in honour of their cousins. Would Mrs. Seymour give them a day when they were not otherwise engaged, which might at once be fixed upon, and the invitations despatched accordingly?

A smile of a slightly mocking character played round the corner of Ralph's lips as he heard this

proposition, and his face was set in lines that were a little sarcastic. Mrs. Seymour, however, quietly thanked Claudia, and gave her a choice of several evenings that would equally well suit her.

"We are quiet people; we do not go out very often—not more than once or twice in a week, certainly," she said. "We are not very fond of your London gaieties, but old friends and kinsfolk have a claim that cannot be set aside. We will come whichever day you please to give, Miss Templeton," and accordingly the Thursday in the following week was selected.

The guests took their leave, pleased at having gained their point and having partially broken the ice; but they had (the girls at least) an uneasy sense of having been seen through, and had they heard the conversation between mother and son that followed their exit, they would have been still less reassured.

"Evidently they have just discovered that you are Mrs. Seymour of Seymour Park," remarked Ralph, lounging back with his broad shoulders against the high carved mantel-shelf.

"It looks a little like it," answered the mother very quietly.

"I almost wonder you consented to go."

"I should be sorry to take any notice of such a paltry pride as they showed at first. Those things are far better passed over in silence."

"Yes, I believe you are right. It would be contemptible to notice it. I am glad they did not know before. It was really a pleasure to see them in their true colours, before they knew the true state of the case. I like to see and study human nature as it is, without the gloss or veneer of self-interest upon it. On the whole, it has been a very amusing episode, if not a very reputable one. I am glad these purse-proud people are not very near us in blood."

Mrs. Seymour smiled gently.

"Take care, Ralph; pride of blood is not so very much safer a possession than pride of wealth. And then, our little Dorothy belongs to them too."

A new light awoke in Ralph's eyes.

"She will not, I hope, belong to them much longer," he said, with exceeding quietness.

His mother well knew that very low, quiet tone of his—it was only used when his deeper feelings were aroused.

She looked at him, but did not speak. He was gazing straight out before him. His face seemed to have sharpened slightly in its outline: this was an evidence that he was thinking deeply. It was a fine type of face, the mother thought, set in such resolute lines, yet with something of underlying tenderness that would have escaped eyes less comprehending and sympathetic than her own, but was patent enough to her. His next words caused her no start of surprise.

"I daresay you have guessed that I intend, if I can, to make Dorothy Templeton my wife?"

"I have hoped it, my son."

He stooped and kissed her: an unusual demonstration with him.

"You will love her as a daughter?"

"I think I do that already. I have loved her ever since I saw her: first for her mother's sake, and then for her own. Ralph, do you think she knows?"

"No, not yet. She is wonderfully simple and child-like: that is part of her charm; but I am quite content to play a waiting game."

"You think you will win at last?"

"I hope so;" and there was a look upon his face that gave him the air of a man not used to defeat, and by no means prepared to accept it.

But the mother looked a little anxious.

"Suppose there should be another in the field?"

Ralph's smile was a little peculiar in its calm, quiet confidence.

"If there be another in the field, as you call it, and he has Dorothy's heart, there will be no chance for me as it is; whereas if I hold it, there will be no chance for him, and I can afford to wait my time patiently. I think it is my nature to be patient, and to take good as well as evil very much as it comes. A few weeks will settle all; but I have no disposition to be precipitate. Besides, the chances will be fewer, you will see. Dorothy will not now be permitted to run in and out at will. You will have two fashionable young ladies at your beck and call, instead. You see if I do not prove a true prophet!"

CHAPTER VIII.—MISS TEMPLETON "AT HOME."

"Now, Dorothy, your place is in the coffee-room till the people have done coming," said Claudia in her authoritative fashion, as the girl descended to the drawing-room about nine o'clock on the evening of their reception. "I, of course, must be on duty here, and Mabel will take the music-room under her special care. You must be down-stairs, seeing that the servants do their duty there. It is always much better for some one of the family to be in the coffee-room, and then, when people have done arriving, and the room is wanted for supper, you can come up-stairs."

Dorothy did not attempt to dispute Claudia's order, but she went down to her post with a little more gravity and less alacrity than was usual with her. She knew that for at least two hours she would be doomed to the dining-room, where nobody would stay more than a few minutes. She also knew that Mrs. Seymour and Ralph (the people she really wanted to see) almost always came early to such gatherings, and left early, so that if she obeyed Claudia she would hardly speak to them—for they by no means always visited the coffee-room on arriving at a house. And it was a whole long week since she had seen either of them. She could not tell exactly how it had been, but every day her sisters had found things that must be done, places she must visit with them, and engagements she must not neglect. They had never in their lives seemed to care so much for her society; and as a natural consequence, she had been prevented from making a single call in Strafford Street, and very much she missed the pleasant companionship to which she had grown used.

She had been a good deal puzzled, too, by allusions to "Harold Sopely," as if that great overgrown youth,

without two ideas in his head, could be anything to her; but Dorothy had paid little heed to words she did not understand. They were forgotten almost as soon as heard. She had other matters on her mind.

To-night had been eagerly looked forward to for many days, and now it seemed as if that were going to be spoiled too. However, Dorothy was not given to despondency, nor to selfish broodings of any kind. Her face was bright as she greeted the arriving guests, her laugh free and disengaged; she had plenty to say, and said it brightly and pleasantly, and no one would have an idea what a load sometimes lay at her heart, nor what a keen pang of disappointment shot through her as she saw through the open door the vision of a dark head and pair of broad shoulders vanishing up the staircase. They had come, then, and had gone straight up-stairs. She would hardly so much as see them all the evening!

A few moments later there was a momentary lull in the coffee-room, as is not unfrequently the case. For the moment Dorothy was alone there, and she turned to the open window, and stood there half concealed by the muslin curtain, to cool her hot cheeks with the fresh night air, and surreptitiously wipe away the tears of disappointment that had risen unbidden to her eyes. Two melancholy cats in a state of deep mutual irritation were performing one of those lugubrious duets so familiar to the ears of Londoners. At another time Dorothy might have been amused at their peculiar method of expressing displeasure, but now she did not even see them.

"What sweet and dulcet strains!" said a voice close behind her; "no wonder you are thus entranced—lost to all sense of sight or sound. Do you mean to cut me, Dorothy? Because, if so, pray say so, and we 'll proceed to argue out the matter in the fashion of those two sworn foes out there."

"Oh, Ralph!"—Dorothy turned quickly round, the sunshine all come back to her face—"I 'm so glad it is you! I was afraid I was not going to see you all the evening."

"Why so?"

"Oh, because, you see, it 's my place to stay down here till everybody has come; and then up-stairs, when the rooms are so full, one can hardly move. You didn't come in for coffee on your way up, so I thought I should hardly see you. I wanted to tell your mother how sorry I am that I have been too busy these last days to come and see her. Will you have some coffee, though?"

"Yes, please. What has made you so desperately busy all at once?"

"Oh, I hardly know. Things will turn up from time to time, you see," answered Dorothy innocently. "I 'm afraid I have been rather rude, never going anywhere; Claudia and Mabel say so, and they know. I hope I shall soon get through my duties, but things turn up so oddly. Your mother is not vexed, is she?"

"Not in the least." Ralph was looking down at her with that shadowy smile in his eyes she knew so well. "Now, how can we get out there?" he asked, indicating the little expanse of ground dignified by the name of garden. "Up-stairs the rooms are like an oven. I think it looks pleasanter out there; don't you?"

"Much pleasanter," answered Dorothy, laughing; "but my duty is here."

"Oh, that is all nonsense!" was the cool reply. "It 's ten o'clock—nobody expects anyone in the coffee-room after that. Here goes!" and he stepped over the window-frame and out upon the leads beneath; and in half a minute Dorothy had sprung lightly down beside him.

"Ah! we 've stopped that sweet concert; what a pity! Never mind; we 've got this place to ourselves, at least; and there 's room to breathe, which is something. How are the babies? All asleep at this hour, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes! at least, they ought to be. It wouldn't do to pay them a visit now."

"No, I suppose not; may I come another day? I pledged them my solemn word of honour that I would."

"Oh, do if you can! They would love it, poor little things. I think town-bred children are much to be pitied; all days are so much alike; and there are so few pleasures they can get—especially when they have no mother to take care of them."

"I thought that was your vocation," said Ralph; and Dorothy looked up quickly, wondering how and where he had learned the phrase, or if he had only employed the word by chance.

"I do what I can," she answered; "but no one can really fill the mother's place."

"Well, I don't know. It seems to me, from what I have seen of some classes of mothers, that the children don't get much good from them. There are the fashionable mothers, you know, who have not a moment to spare from morning to night to visit the nurseries or have the children about them; and there are philanthropic mothers, who are so eager over their 'cases' and their good works, that their own homes have to take care of themselves, and the children are placed under the care of some of these distressed 'cases' who stand in need of a character—I have seen homes of this description in which sufficiently curious anomalies are to be witnessed daily; and there are literary and clever mothers, who care only that the children should be 'brought on,' as Dr. Blimber would call it, and are little better to them than a kind of terrible head-governess. I have seen children who would shrink away at the sight of their mother—prefer any company to hers. For myself, I have had other experience. I have been blessed with the stamp of mother who makes herself from the very first the best friend and *confidante* of her children; I used to think that all mothers were of this kind. I found out my mistake very soon when I began to go out into the world and observe for myself."

"There are very few women like Mrs. Seymour," answered Dorothy warmly, and with an unconscious inflexion of wistful sadness in her voice. "I wish there were more."

"I'm glad you appreciate my mother," answered Ralph; and there was always something in the tone of the two words, "My mother," when spoken by him,



"'What *are* you doing, Dorothy?'"

that showed very clearly what the feelings of this son were. "I don't know how it is, but if anyone I meet doesn't seem to care for her, or to treat her with proper respect and reverence, I find it very difficult to restrain the contempt I at once feel. It may sound irrational, but it's an instinct in my nature, and I don't think it often plays one false. When I see my mother take to anyone, as she took to you, and see also that the feeling is mutual, then I know at once that we shall be friends."

Ralph spoke more gravely and earnestly than was his wont, albeit the lazy languor of his manner was not entirely laid aside. Dorothy, who was not herself in a jesting mood to-night, was glad to hear him speak in such a strain. All the restless sense of disappointment had utterly disappeared. She forgot that she had ever felt it as she paced the little enclosure by Ralph's side, quite oblivious of the flight of time. He asked her a good deal about herself, her habits, her plans for the future, what they were going to do when July came to an end, where they were going, and what the summer programme would be.

Dorothy did not know much about this. She had not heard what was going to be done, but it was pleasant to think that Ralph cared to know, that he felt a real interest in the things that concerned her daily life.

"Dorothy! Dorothy! Where are you?"

It was Claudia's voice at the dining-room window, calling to her with a very audible cadence of angry irritation in the tone. Ralph felt by the start of the little hand upon his arm that Dorothy was half afraid of her sister's displeasure; but he held it fast, and led her up to the window at which Claudia stood, a distinct storm-cloud upon her handsome face.

"What *are* you doing, Dorothy?"

"We are playing the part of a pair of Peris at the gate of Paradise, Miss Templeton," answered Ralph, speaking with the extreme deliberation that indicated his intention of being a little provoking. "Waiting until the time has come when we may claim an entrance there. Dorothy was detained in the lower regions by duties imposed upon her, I by doctor's orders, that forbid me to spend too much time in heated rooms. We have been enjoying a delightful ramble in your gardens. In the darkness all gardens are alike, and we have fancied ourselves in a blooming Eden, have we not, Dorothy? May we claim our entrance into the superior regions above? Thanks; how good of you to say so!" Ralph swung his long legs over the window-sill, lifted Dorothy after him as if she had been a child, and favoured Claudia with a little satirical bow, as he offered her his arm, that sent off the younger sister into a paroxysm of laughter.

There was no more depression for Dorothy that evening; she was engrossed by Mrs. Seymour for a good while, and was made happy in the assurance that no umbrage had been taken at her recent desertion, and that it was understood as a matter of course that she would come when she could. She did not see much more of Ralph that evening till quite late on, when he hunted her out and took her down to the partially deserted supper-room, to insist that she was properly refreshed.

"I 've done my duty by the world at large," he explained as he settled her comfortably in a corner, and supplied her with what she liked best; "now I 'm going to combine duty and pleasure by seeing after you and myself."

"Ah!" said Dorothy, "I thought there must be some ulterior motive for such a pretty speech. I daresay you are hungry yourself."

"Quite so," answered Ralph. "I 'm so constituted that I can only eat in congenial society. It 's an awkward thing to be so sensitive, isn't it? However, I can make up for lost time now."

They made very merry over their supper together now, however, and were so found by Claudia, who came down to look after the absent Ralph, whom she had missed once again from the drawing-rooms. Dorothy very well understood the black look upon her face, but Ralph again met her remarks with the utmost tranquillity, declined to move himself or to permit Dorothy to move, in reply to her very plainly expressed hints, and finally drove her discomfited from the field by his cool responses and masterly tactics.

"Does she bully you?" he asked with the greatest *sang froid*, as at length Claudia swept angrily away. Dorothy laughed, but looked a little nervous. She was acute enough to know very well what was meant by the sudden change of front exhibited by the family towards the Seymours, and she knew that Ralph's open friendliness towards herself would be hotly resented now. But she could not explain that to him, despite an uncomfortable feeling that he saw it all for himself, and all her answer was a rather inconclusive "No."

"Strikes me they rather try to put you in the place of Cinderella; and it 's a *rôle* that suits you very well, on the whole. One always wonders, though, at the sisters' craving to repeat the drama, as it did not end in a way particularly soothing to their feelings."

Dorothy laughed, and blushed a little nervously. She wished she knew how far Ralph grasped the situation; she was too loyal to her family to like to see them humiliated, even though the humiliation might not be undeserved.

Ralph saw her embarrassment, and at once changed the subject, and the rest of the evening slipped pleasantly by. He kept very close to her until they left, disregarding the manœuvres of the sisters to dislodge him from his position.

Dorothy slipped up to her own room almost as soon as the Seymours had left. She did not want the pleasure of the evening spoiled by a stormy scene with her sisters later.

CHAPTER IX.—PLOT AND COUNTER-PLOT.

"IT is time, Dorothy, that you should seriously consider the situation you have brought upon yourself, and decide how to act for the best; but, as your elder sister and our father's *confidante*, I cannot let you go on longer in this blind course of folly. What answer do you intend giving to Mr. Harold Sopely when he comes for it, as he shortly will do, with a full assurance of success?"

Dorothy was aware from the very first that something disagreeable was coming, but at this conclusion she was so astonished that she sat in absolute silence.

"It has, of course, been patent to us that you have been giving him every possible encouragement, until the time when you discovered that our cousin Ralph was a rich man, after which you changed your tactics, and, as was exemplified last night, endeavoured to engross his whole time and notice in a fashion that was sufficiently marked to raise both comment and criticism in several quarters. Such conduct is most unwomanly and out of taste, to use no harder an expression, and you have given Mr. Sopely and his son every cause to feel annoyed and aggrieved."

Dorothy had grown first red and then pale as this sermon proceeded. Now she forced herself to speak with great quietness and self-command.

"I am at a loss to understand you, Claudia. I have received a good deal of cousinly kindness from Ralph ever since I have known him, and last night was no exception, though I am sorry that I appeared, as you seem to imply, to neglect my other duties to talk to him. As for what you have said about the Sopelys, I simply do not understand what you mean."

"You do not know, of course, that your encouragement of the young man has been so marked that his father has been to papa to talk matters over with him, and gain his consent to the match."

Dorothy's face flushed crimson.

"If that is so, there must be some extraordinary delusion somewhere. I rather dislike the young man than otherwise. His attentions are disagreeable. He has never dared to address a single word of love to me, and I shall take care that he never shall. His father's action has been altogether precipitate and uncalled for; but I suppose people of that calibre have not the same instincts as ourselves. I thank you for warning me, Claudia. I will take care that there is no misunderstanding for the future."

But this was not exactly Claudia's object.

"The fact of the case is this, Dorothy: you are really rather seriously compromised. These people consider that you have been encouraging Mr. Harold Sopely's advances very emphatically, and I am bound to say that I cannot deny the charge. You had better think seriously about your answer. It is no enviable distinction to be known as a girl who plays fast and loose with her admirers."

A sudden gleam shone in Dorothy's eyes. It was very hard to listen patiently to charges like these—charges that had not one particle of real foundation, and were prompted only by a spirit of malice and jealousy. She was acute enough to know that her sister had some ulterior motive in speaking to her thus, but Dorothy had too much real generosity and nobility

of nature to wish to search too far for it, or to condemn on insufficient grounds. She rose quietly to put an end to the interview.

"I have never played fast and loose with anybody, Claudia, as you must know very well if you know anything at all about me. Mr. Harold Sopely has never been in the least encouraged. I do not know him at all well, and his society is altogether distasteful to me. I had no idea that he admired me. It is difficult even now to believe that he could entertain such an idea as you speak of, even for a moment. I will take very good care that it shall go no farther, and I do not wish to hear another word on the subject."

"That is very likely, my dear," answered Claudia, with a disagreeable sneer; "but you are hardly likely to get off so easily. You are too far committed to throw the whole thing up in this offhand fashion."

"I am not committed one whit," answered Dorothy, quietly and sturdily; and she went away without another word. She was not much alarmed by Claudia's vague threats, knowing that it pleased her sister to be oracular and mysterious without adequate cause; but the whole thing was offensive and disagreeable to her, and she wished she could find some means of escaping from the distasteful social calls now made upon her so frequently, as well as from the unfriendly *espionage* of her sisters. This wish was destined to be gratified in a fashion she little expected.

"I can't imagine what has become of Dorothy," remarked Ralph to his mother one day, about a week after Miss Templetons' "at home." "She has not been near us for ever so long, and though I am aware that her sisters desire to relegate her to the background now, I wonder she has submitted with such docility."

"Dorothy is a very good, unselfish girl, and always puts her own pleasure last," said Mrs. Seymour; "but I should like to have seen her, to say good-bye for our week of absence. You think you will not be detained for more than a week?"

"I think not; but I don't mean to go off without seeing Dorothy. I've got an idea that she is being bullied, and that's a thing I do not intend to stand."

Mrs. Seymour smiled a little, but made no comment.

"Can you call there with me this afternoon, mother?"

"No, my boy, I am sorry to say I cannot; I have promised to go to that recital with General and Mrs. Archer."

"Then I will go alone," answered Ralph. "If Claudia and Mabel are at home I shall be very graciously received;" and a rather odd expression passed over the young man's face. "It is delightful to find such cordiality amongst one's kinsfolk. One's heart quite warms to those who receive us in such generous, open-hearted fashion."

"Ralph!" said his mother gently.

Ralph laughed, but made no open rejoinder, and presently the carriage came and took Mrs. Seymour away. She sent many loving messages to Dorothy, and said she should be insistent of claiming a little more of her time when they returned after their brief absence. Ralph promised to deliver this message if he could see Dorothy, and mother and son parted, to meet again in the course of a few hours.

When Mrs. Seymour returned to her hotel, she found Ralph back before her. He was standing in one of the windows, leaning against the window-shutter in a contemplative attitude. His mother saw at once, from the slightly stern and set lines into which his features had fallen, that something had occurred to move or annoy him.

"What is it, Ralph?" she asked. "Have you seen Dorothy?"

"No; Dorothy is a close prisoner, and will be one for the next month to come, at least."

"My dear boy, what do you mean?"

"I mean what I say. Those children have developed scarlatina, the whole four of them. They have been ailing the past three days, and last night the doctor pronounced the verdict definitely. Of course it was at once settled that it was to be Dorothy's vocation to nurse them, and of course she took the office upon herself with all possible readiness."

"Has she had it herself?"

"Yes, luckily; and the sisters say they have not, which gives some show of reasonableness to their conduct. Mabel does not hesitate to say that 'of course' it was Dorothy who imported the infection from her 'disgusting district,' so it is only fair she should accept the consequences of her own ill-advised actions. In any case, I believe she would have taken the same course. I do not suppose any considerations of a personal nature would get her away from those children when they were ill and suffering. But it is made a convenient excuse for cutting her off in complete isolation, whilst they play their game unimpeded."

"You speak bitterly, Ralph; but after all, common caution demands isolation in cases like these. It would be impossible for Dorothy to nurse scarlet fever and to mix in society as well. You must see that for yourself; and we both know which course the dear girl would choose, quite apart from any kind of compulsion."

"True, mother; it is not altogether that which annoys me. It is something else that I heard to-day."

"What is that?"

"It was when we were talking of Dorothy's isolation, and the sacrifice it must be to be shut up so entirely for so many weeks. Mabel broke in with that would-be arch and piquant manner of hers, and said, 'Yes, it really *was* a pity, coming just now—much more of a sacrifice than if it had come at another time; and as for Mr. Harold Sopely, they did not know what *he* would say to it all!' I saw that I was meant to be interested and to ask questions, which I accordingly did. Claudia seemed inclined to hush her sister up, but Mabel would not be hushed, and went on, with many 'nods and becks and wreathed smiles,' to inform me in plain terms that something very like an engagement existed between Dorothy and that young cad Sopely. She evidently believed she was impressing upon my mind the fact that a deep and long-seated attachment existed between the two which would shortly result in matrimony."

"My dear Ralph! She must have been joking.

That poor young fellow may be very well-meaning, but he is not even a gentleman."

"Gentleman or not, they plainly desire to make up a match between him and Dorothy. There is no joking in the matter. You may guess, however, with what success they are likely to meet. I am almost glad the poor girl is to be condemned to isolation with Dorothy of late, and I confess I have never detected the least symptom of an inward pining after the youth without two ideas in his head. He has paid her attentions, as I have observed—attentions by which she has been almost visibly bored. Her sisters must be just as well aware of this as I am."



"'I have never played fast and loose with anybody, Claudia.'"—*p.* 695.

for a while. I can see that otherwise her life would be made a burden to her."

Mrs. Seymour looked both indignant and perplexed. "I do not understand people and their ways. How could they wish such a connection? How could they think Dorothy would dream of it when——"

Ralph interposed, saying with his peculiar smile—

"Whether they really think anything will come of it is quite an open question; but meantime it suits them to assume that things are so, and to talk of Dorothy as a girl whose affections are engaged."

Mrs. Seymour looked into her son's face.

"But you do not believe it, Ralph?"

"Believe what? That her affections are engaged?"

"To Mr. Harold Sopely?"

"No, mother, I candidly admit that I do not. I have had the privilege of a good deal of intercourse

"But, my dear boy, if they were, they surely would not speak as they did?"

Ralph's face was something of a study.

"My dear mother, is it possible that you do not see the game that the two elder Miss Templetons are playing?"

"I confess I do not, Ralph. My perceptions are not as acute as yours, you know."

"Do not crush me with sarcasm, mother. It is not so much a lack of perception as a reluctance to see evil, an incapacity for attributing motives. The fact of the case is plainly this (you must spare my blushes as I announce it; it is painful to my native modesty to have to speak out so unreservedly): my good cousins Claudia and Mabel evidently think that the owner of Seymour Park would be a valuable prize from a matrimonial standpoint, could he be but caught by a judiciously thrown bait. But that the Cinderella

of the family should catch the fish is against all the traditions of the family. Unluckily, however, the Cinderella has in this case made considerable running before they were awake to the valuable character of the quarry (the metaphor, is I fear, becoming mixed, but I trust the meaning is clear), therefore, the best thing to be done under the circumstances is to get her quietly out of the way, and, if possible, provided with a lover of her own, that shall put her out of the question altogether. Need I say more? What those girls wish is to make me believe that Dorothy's affections are already engaged; and my part is to accept their assurances with courteous certainty, although I do not believe a word they say."

"I am glad you do not believe it, Ralph. I only hope you may have somewhat misjudged the sisters—that they are self-deceived as well as deceiving. But why do you let them think that you believe such an absurd tale?"

"They would not believe it if they had the least perception, but courtesy demands that I should smile and wish all happiness to the lovers. My dear mother, the fact of the case is that I intend carrying out a secret plan of my own for the ultimate release of the captive; and for this, a little diplomacy and reticence will be necessary. You can be discreet, can you not, mother?"

"I hope so, my boy. But I like open dealing best."

"I will not ask you to do anything that is not open, nor, in fact, shall I do anything underhand myself; but it is not necessary to unfold the whole of our plans to comparative strangers. We can allow them to develop gradually."

"What is the plan, Ralph?"

"So far as you are concerned, it is merely to invite Mr. Templeton and *all* his family to Seymour Park some time in September. Gain his consent quietly—it will not be difficult, with his easy-going disposition—and then, when his approbation has been gained, all we have to do is just to keep a discreet silence. What will happen will be this—the father and the two elder daughters will come, whilst Dorothy and her small charges will be left in some sea-side lodgings, to which they will doubtless be exiled as soon as quarantine is over. But that will be no matter. Armed with the father's consent and approbation, we can soon swoop down and carry off the prey. Our *rôle* is only silence, and we are not people prone to talk of our affairs."

Meantime, Dorothy, shut up in complete isolation with her little sick charges, knew nothing of the plots and counter-plots of which she was the cause. She was face to face with anxious fears that drove all else from her mind; and if she thought somewhat sorrowfully of the break in her pleasant intercourse with the Seymours, at least she never wished to swerve from her plain course of duty; and as for the matter of Mr. Sopely, it was as utterly driven from her mind as if it had never existed. In the days that followed she had other things to think of.

(To be continued.)

THE CHRISTIAN LIGHT.

BY THE REV. HARRY JONES, M.A., PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S.

"And seeing the multitudes, He . . . opened His mouth, and taught them, saying . . . Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—ST. MATT. v. 1, 2, 14, 16.

THESE words form part of the Sermon on the Mount.

They were spoken in the open air, apart from the conventional surroundings of religious instruction.

And they were addressed, not to a select circle of disciples or students, but to a mixed multitude of men, women, and children, mostly unlearned, and, to a great degree, drawn together by motives of curiosity, or mistaken, though sincere, expectation.

It was to such people Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth. . . . Ye are the light of the world."

But it may be said that these were Hebrews, members of the chosen race; that they had been specially intended to show forth the Divine will; and that therefore these words were spoken with peculiar fitness to them as leaders in revealing the right way.

"What advantage hath the Jew?" says St. Paul. And the answer he gives is, "Much every way; chiefly because that unto him were committed the oracles of God."

It was well that the Jews should be called the "light of the world."

No doubt there was a peculiar significance in these words of Christ. They were fitly addressed, not so much to mankind at large, as to those who had received special illumination, or had inherited the teaching of God.

That we believe to have come to us. We possess and honour both the ancient law and the new commandments. If the words of our text suit only such as are specially instructed, we are not shut out from their application.

They have become applicable to the spiritual descendants of those to whom they were spoken. They are fitly addressed to Christians now. Indeed, we have proof how, from the very first, the Christian

was reckoned to be the torch-bearer of truth to the world.

To this the two great Apostles St. Paul and St. Peter bear conspicuous witness.

St. Paul, in his Epistle to Titus, speaks of his disciples, Christians, as those for whom our Saviour Jesus Christ gave Himself, that He might "purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And St. Peter (who, with St. Paul, had been a devout Jew) uses language which still more plainly shows how the words of Christ in our text come to fit ourselves. He is addressing congregations of Christians scattered about among Jews and Gentiles, and after referring to those of his own nation who (being disobedient) had rejected Jesus, uses these remarkable words: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God." No language could express more strongly the entrance of the Christian into the possessions and responsibilities of the ancient race who were led and taught of God to be the leaders of mankind. Christ's words come to the Christian with all their former significance and force, "Ye are the salt of the earth. . . . Ye are the light of the world." The saying holds good; it is addressed to *us*.

Now the first question which we may be disposed to ask is, "What did these Hebrews possess which led Christ to call them the light of the world?"

The answer is surely, "A revelation of, and faith in, the One God, in a living God," who supported them and promised better things. They lived and died in this faith. To them God was a reality, not wrapped up in clouds of human opinion. His real presence was felt in the desert and the city, in the tent and by the bedside. Faith in Him kept them together, or brought them back to Zion, the cradle of their hopes; and the spectacle of a comparatively small nation, a dwarf among giants, withstanding and surviving, as a nation, the force of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon (to mention no more) is as a candle set in a candlestick upon the table of history. This little steady speck of light amid all the clouds and darkness, conflagrations and eclipses, which have covered or changed the world, is the one most notable and abiding feature in the world's course.

There, as we look back, may be discerned a people which, with all their faults and backslidings, held to a faith or trust in one living God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, Ruler, Guide, and Judge of mankind, and that made them to be called the light of the world.

The vitality with which they outlived the nations about them can only be referred to in any short utterance such as this, but it must needs be noticed when we hear them called the light of the world. For we must not forget that the faith which kept that light burning is as needful and as precious as ever, and that the Christian must hold to this, or the very trunk of his existence is rotten.

Nevertheless, we have *more* committed to us than the fathers of old, and this addition to our inheritance makes the words of Christ still more applicable to the Christian than to the Jew.

The advent of Christ and the rise of Christianity are so much matters of history that we fail to realise the circumstances and effect of their appearance in the world.

Take the words of Christ alone. What a gift they were to mankind! What a new possession came, what a fresh light appeared, when they were spoken!

We have neither fathomed their full depth, nor exhausted our obedience to them yet. They are now the utterances to which men look when they are most deeply moved by social wrongs, or bewildered by the variety of religious claims. They are as fresh and full of Divine force as ever. We must indeed admit this; but then think of their first coming to mankind!

What a contrast was there between Christ and the world! What an invasion of the world His words were! The people were astonished at His teaching, for He spoke with authority, and not as the accredited teachers and preachers of their day.

There were among them, moreover, Jews, devout men, who became Apostles, and who saw something exceptional, unique, in Him. They left all to follow Him. "To whom shall we go?" says one of them; "Thou hast the words of eternal life." But they could not understand Him fully. So He felt. The Holy Spirit, He said, would bring His words — or, rather, their meaning—to their remembrance, to their minds after He had gone.

Meanwhile they followed Him lovingly on earth. But now and then they would say to one another, "What is this which He saith? We cannot tell what He saith."

Thus we may have a glimpse of the greatness of the gift, of the additional light which we inherit from God in Christ, and which makes the Christian the custodian and dispenser of the light of the world. The light itself is stronger and larger. One Epistle compares it to the sun.

Moreover, the Christian light differs from or exceeds that which had been of old, in the fact that it *spreads*, that it is intended to spread, and not merely survive or escape extinction.

To the Jews, as St. Paul says, were committed the oracles of God. They were as a light shining in a dark place. This light was not choked by the foul air of surrounding idolatry, it was not quenched by the waters of iniquity, it was not blown out by the force of persecution. It stood; it stayed and shone (with however feeble a ray sometimes), but still it survived, and its survival is one of the most notable landmarks in history. Nevertheless—and this is to the point—it did not prevail. It did not spread among the nations. It was a witness against them. It was not an instrument for their instruction or conversion.

Now here comes the special excellence of the Christian light. It was not set to shine as a mere stationary protest against moral and religious darkness; it was not merely carefully protected against extinction. On the contrary, it was aggressive.

When Moses gave the Law, he was charged to issue directions to a peculiar and separated people. He gave utterance to a list of prohibitions. His "duty towards his neighbour" was abstinence.

But what was the command of *Christ?* "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Here was the arrival of a gift, the lighting of a light, with fresh imperious conditions; so that if the men of old in Christ's time might be called the light of the world, those who came after Him were charged with a far greater responsibility. They were not so much the protected holders of a possession, but the bearers of a challenge. They were not the defenders of a solitary fort, but the leaders in a general campaign.

In the words of Peter (which I have already quoted) Christians were a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, to the end that they might show forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvellous light.

These words touch each as well as all, and yet this responsibility of the individual Christian is just one of the things we are likely to forget. We may be glad (when we think about it) that we have learnt any Christian truth. We may prize "Christian sentiment," as we call it. But perhaps we do not realise how much its acceptance by mankind, and righteous progress in the world, depends upon *ourselves*. We think possibly of the official arrangement for its defence and propagation. But behind or after the fact that Christians possess a better inheritance of truth than the Jews of old, comes another—viz., that the *Christian himself* is a vehicle for its furtherance; I mean, the ordinary Christian, as he might be called; for what Jesus said to the crowd of Jews on the mount of the Beatitudes, He says to the rank and file of Christians now—"Ye are the light of the world."

Ye, not merely your spiritual pastors and masters: not so much the official ministers of religion as the people at large. The people themselves are the real effectual upholders of the Christian light. The best lessons are unspoken, and are seen in that love of righteousness and truth, in that consideration for others, in that perception of God's presence, which can mark the daily round of any man or woman.

In these days we are too ready to divide duties. We allot them to appropriate "departments;" The Home Office must not interfere with the navy. The schoolmaster must confine himself to the school, and not teach the students of the hospital. And each separate branch of work is more and more subdivided. It takes half a dozen men to make a needle. This may be necessary, but it has invaded what is called the "province of religion."

There is no "province" of religion; it is *universal* in its purpose; it affects *all* duties of life. There is no more serious mistake than to count it among the departments, and to assume that the defence or spread of Christianity is the business of officials, or the self-imposed occupation of enthusiasts. It was to the *crowd* that Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world. . . Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The multitude of preachers is found not so much among the speakers as the hearers of mankind, or, rather, of Christendom. How effective they might be! If, indeed, the lives of professing Christians were all righteous, if they were obviously trying to conform to their creed, the machinery of Christian teaching might almost be stopped and taken to pieces. There would be then the widest propagation of the Gospel and promotion of Christian knowledge, though every pulpit were silent, and every theological chair empty.

The obedience I have imagined is indeed too much to expect; nevertheless, the point of Christ's teaching in our text is that the courageous Christian conduct of ordinary disciples is the best converting power. Battles are won by the brave rank and file. The wisest commanders are impotent without the right men.

God does not merely save and condemn us by and through ourselves. He *uses* us for His own purpose in saving and regenerating the world. We are fellow-workers with the Christ; and as the force of His ministry lay in and sprang from the fact that He ever did the will of God, so the doing of His will (though we were dumb) is our truest furtherance of His Kingdom.

But the doing must not be timid and secret. "Let your light shine before men," said Christ. And He would now say, Do not be ashamed of the name, position, and faith of the Christian. Let men see it. And yet let it not be seen and heard only in words and professions of belief. It is a good thing to make a confession of faith with the mouth, but these things are not the test which Christ was thinking of. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works." It should shine not so that it may win cheers and compliments, or forward some cause, but so that men may "glorify your Father which is in heaven." So that, in other words, they may perceive and admit the existence of One who gives such good hearts, such kindliness, such liberality, such power unto men.

The best comment on, the finest fruit of, a good deed is the testimony which it bears to *God;* and the full use of the Light of Christ is seen, not merely in the guidance which it gives to ourselves, but in the help which, through us, it affords to others in going themselves to the Light of Life Himself.

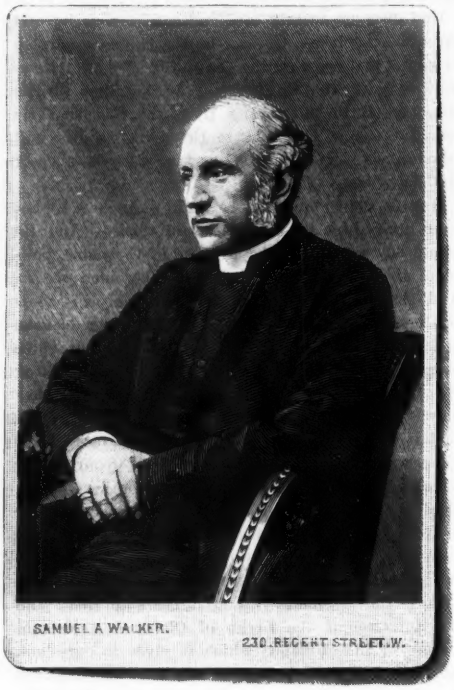
CHURCH WORK AT MARYLEBONE.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE REV. CANON BARKER, M.A., RECTOR OF ST. MARYLEBONE.

BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.

THREE-QUARTERS of an hour before service on Sunday at St. Marylebone Church, its able and energetic rector, the Rev. Canon William Barker, may be discovered on a sofa in his study preparing his sermon. There he thinks out the whole subject, arranging it in his mind, and seeing his way clearly through it; then, without writing a word, he goes straight to the church. The language and expression he leaves to the inspiration of the time. His idea is that concentrated thought for a brief period is more valuable than thought spread over a longer space. Moreover, he goes to the church full of the subject, and interested in it.

Saturday, however, is, he told us, "set apart for reading, meditation, and prayer." But, he informed us, the absolute preparation of the sermon itself "does not commence until three-quarters of an hour before service on Sunday, when, lying on a sofa, the whole subject is thought out from beginning to end, and the points to be treated are, in the order in which they come, allocated to the fingers of one hand." Canon Barker preaches entirely extempore, without a single note, and never writes a sermon; but on leaving the pulpit he could dictate the whole from memory even as he had delivered it. This manner of extempore speaking he believes to be the absolute secret of effective preaching.



THE REV. CANON BARKER.

The sofa on which so much hard thinking and sermon preparation have been accomplished occupies a somewhat prominent position in Canon Barker's study. It stands between the writing-table and the window, which is on the right hand from the door. The room itself is not large. Near the centre is a writing-table, above which is suspended a shaded lamp, so that bright white light falls directly upon it. Many mementoes cover the table. A reminiscence of Canon Barker's residence at Cowes, where he was vicar of St. Mary's, stands at his right hand, in the shape of a handsome silver inkstand, which was presented to him by his congregation and friends when he left that pleasant sea-side town. The writing-table itself was a present from friends at St. George's, Hanover Square, when he was curate, and other mementoes are from various foreign countries—Rome, Florence, Venice, and Greece. One, though from no foreign country, and apparently of little worth and quite unnoteworthy, is very valuable to Canon Barker, and would be highly esteemed by many, for it is one of Bishop Wilberforce's blotting-pads—simply a plain morocco slab, with a knob and a little paper on the other side, but valued for its memories of the well-beloved bishop. This little memorial was given to Canon Barker by Canon Basil Wilberforce. Photographs of friends and relatives, among them the sweet faces of happy children, are also ranged round the writing-table, and two elegant candlesticks stand in front of the writing-pad; also two vases of flowers. Cases of books line the walls on either side of the fireplace, and another large case stands beside the wall on the left of the entrance. These books embrace volumes of theology and exposition, and those in general use.

Canon Barker makes it a rule to be at his desk in his study at half-past seven in the morning, and we may say he works almost without intermission up to eleven at night. He has no dining hour. His habit is to lunch with his family at mid-day. Almost every evening in the year he has some engagement. Beyond and outside the work of his own church he has engagements all over the kingdom—England, Scotland, and Ireland—in connection with social questions, spiritual Church work, and temperance work, and it must not be forgotten, also, that he attends numerous ecclesiastical committees.

When Canon Barker first went to Marylebone as rector of the parish, some six years ago, there were but about thirty-five persons at the evening service; now there is an average of two thousand! The interior of the church is also entirely changed. Then



INTERIOR OF ST. MARYLEBONE.

it was fitted with the old high-backed pews, and might, perhaps, have been described as inartistic, unadorned, and ugly; now it is filled with open seats, the building is enlarged and dignified by a beautiful apse, frescoes by Armitage adorn the walls, and the sanctuary is enriched with many marbles. By entirely remodelling the interior, the comfort and convenience of the congregation have been much increased, and in decorating the whole, refined art has been pressed into the service of religion. It is now one of the largest and most beautiful churches in London.

These changes were not made without some difficulty. The fabric of the church—which was built 1813-17, at a cost of £72,000—is vested in the Vestry, who are the freeholders of the building. They have power to receive the pew-rents, levy a rate, and use them to repair and maintain the church; also to pay off the building money, which had been raised by bonds secured on the rates of the parish, as provided by an Act of Parliament.

The energy and patience of the new rector, however, were not daunted by difficulties. He consulted Mr. Thomas Harris, a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and who was then churchwarden, asking him to prepare a design embodying his views on the alterations. In May, 1883, a committee was formed, of which the Crown churchwarden—for the living is in the gift of the Crown—the Hon. W. H. Portman, M.P.—now Lord Portman—was the chairman, with the object of raising the funds. Mr. Harris's design was approved. The next step was to obtain the sanction of the Vestry. This caused delay, but on the 28th of February, 1884, after discussion, and the adoption of some slight modifications, it was obtained, on the condition that the work should not be commenced until all the money for the estimated cost had been paid over to trustees.

These funds having been raised or guaranteed, a faculty from the bishop was obtained, and operations were commenced on the 28th of July, 1884. A memorial stone of the new apse was laid by Mrs. Gladstone on the 8th of the following month. Service was discontinued for about fifteen weeks only, while the entire cost, including a new organ, which alone cost 3,000 guineas, amounted to about £25,000: and the remodelling remains a fine monument to the energy and patience of the rector.

We may suppose that the ideas which were carried out in the alterations are embodied by Canon Barker in the conduct of the services and Church work generally. Those ideas may perhaps be summarised in his words: "To utilise all legitimate means for the purpose of arousing the moral and spiritual life of the parish." Music, which is largely used in the services

and meetings, is but an agency, and Canon Barker's object is to get the people to worship and to hear.

The choir now consists of one hundred voices, and all its members, with but two exceptions, are voluntary. Seventy are highly trained boys; and under the direction of the talented organist Mr. Hodge, Dr. Stainer's favourite pupil, the choir has risen to a high degree of efficiency. Choral services are given, with address by the rector, and as many as 2,500 applications for tickets of admission to one service have been received.

The propaganda of total abstinence is regarded by Canon Barker as an absolutely essential part of the work of the Church. It is characteristic of him that he does not look at it from any abstract, or speculative, or theoretical point of view. "Total abstinence," he said, "in my view, is the most efficacious instrument for ultimately effecting a Temperance Reformation." That is the practical argument which he uses, and that is the point which he aims at and pursues with vigour and energy. There is a magnificent Band of Hope in connection with the church, and also a society for adults, numbering nearly 1,200 members. Both these form the St. Marylebone Church of England Total Abstinence Society, which is affiliated with the C.E.T.S., but does not adopt the general—or moderate drinking—section of that society. Its only pledge is that of total abstinence.

Thousands have taken this pledge. Meetings of both the Band of Hope and of the adults are held weekly, and social and artistic elements—on which, we judge, Canon Barker lays stress in his work—are introduced into them. Thus, the character of the meetings for adults are lectures, with magic-lantern views, and concerts, open meetings, deputations from other societies, addresses by well-known speakers, while not least are coffee concerts and conversaziones, which form a somewhat new and special feature, and have been very attractive, and bring the members into more intimate companionship. The Temperance Choir also gives valuable assistance. It will be seen that in the conduct of these meetings music and social intercourse play no unimportant parts, and it is just these two things which form part of the attraction in public-houses. The immense value, then, of sound counter-attraction is fully brought out.

Further, Canon Barker is chairman of a small board of directors, who manage two large and successful coffee taverns, which the parish owes to Lady Ossington. One of them bears her ladyship's name, the "Ossington," the other being named the "Star." These taverns are doing a great and growing work, and the weekly takings of the two may be estimated at not less than £120 weekly. The secret of their success lies in the management. The houses themselves are bright and clean, the articles are varied and of the very best quality. The manager is undefatigable business-like, and obliging, while he is also absolutely in sympathy with the work; and it may be added that the success of these coffee taverns has been obtained in spite of the really unfavourable position of at least one of them.

The meetings of the Band of Hope are of a somewhat similar character, but more suited to children.



CANON BARKER'S STUDY.

They have concerts, magic-lanterns, lectures, addresses, open meetings, Scripture meetings, and also a penny bank. The meetings of both organisations are held in the girls' school-room connected with the church.

The prominence thus given to the temperance work at St. Marylebone is not misplaced, for it is indeed an important feature. "I think we may say," said Canon Barker, "that hundreds of homes have been purified and made sweet." And he also said that "many formerly drunkards are now regular churchgoers and communicants."

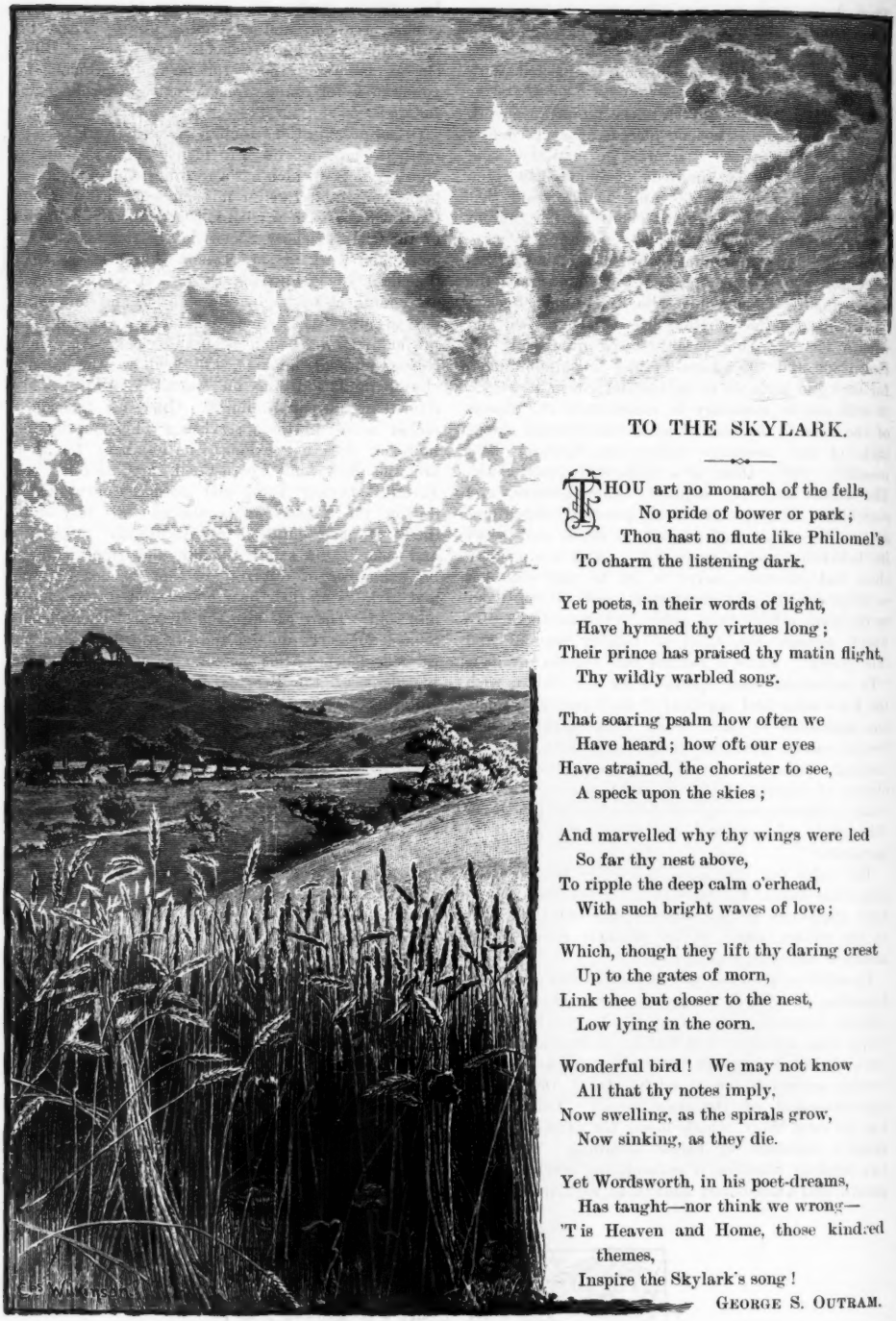
Another important organisation is the Church Society for "the Deepening and Development of the Spiritual Life." "My chief aim," said Canon Barker, "is to deepen the spiritual life of the parish, and with a view to this, a large body, numbering between 300 and 400 adults, besides juvenile branches for boys and girls, is in active and constant work." It will not be necessary to recapitulate the objects of the society, the conditions of membership, or the style of the meetings—which are, however, held monthly, while there is a half-yearly conference. The rules are very explicit, comprehensive, and searching. They include such practical obligations as "to be simple and modest in dress, and quiet in behaviour and conversation." And again: "To shun bad company, never to go to any improper or doubtful place of amusement, and to endeavour to dissuade others from going." Yet another: "To watch against the habit of talking scandal and idle gossip;" while a further rule enjoins members "To undertake some special work for Christ, with the knowledge and approval of their pastor, or someone appointed by him. Such work might include Sunday-school teaching, temperance work, district visiting, collecting for the missionary societies or objects of charity within the parish, urging others to come to church, and especially intercessory prayer for the whole Church, and for their own parish in particular."

The rules for the boys' and girls' branches are somewhat similar, but more suited to juveniles. Both have excursions in the summer and entertainments in the winter, while at the monthly meetings the members have tea together.

In addition to these two important and prominent branches of Church work, there are the Sunday-schools, numbering over four hundred children and thirty-nine teachers, and having a separate Children's Church Service in the girls' room at 10.45 on Sunday mornings, conducted by Mr. G. Denyer, the superintendent of the boys' school. This service has its own choir, which meets for practice at the rector's residence on Friday evenings. There are two lending libraries, a cathechising service once a month, and a missionary address at regular intervals. In addition, both girls and boys have excursions, cricket, rounder, and swimming clubs. There are also Sunday Ragged Schools and various Bible-classes, including those for men, for women, for young men, for young women, for pupil-teachers, and for girls.

Other organisations include a Needlework Society, mothers' meetings, a Provident Club, a Working Men's Society—which has a reading-room, and undertakes home and foreign mission work, lectures, etc., Central Schools, penny bank, benefit society, a branch of the Girls' Friendly Society, a District Visitors' Society, and work at the Mission Church of the Good Shepherd, in Paddington Street. Here the services are choral, as in the parish church, and on Saturday evenings the rector conducts a meeting for prayer and intercession at eight o'clock. At various seasons special missions are held in the mission church, and addresses on special subjects are delivered in the parish church. Great use is made of sacred music in these services. This lengthy list, however, does not exhaust the number; for there are the Sick and Poor Fund, a Children's and Invalids' Dinner Table and Soup Kitchen, where, during the winter—up to the end of May—hundreds of poor children receive dinner, some free, and some for a small amount, and from which a large number of dinners are sent to sick children and invalids at their own homes, and where soup is also sold. There are also the St. Marylebone Charity School for girls, an old Industrial School, and the St. Marylebone Almshouses. Canon Barker is also president of the St. Marylebone Central Mutual Building Society.

At present Canon Barker is contemplating a marked extension of work in connection with his church. It is none other than the building of a hall, with mission-rooms, club-room, and class-rooms for technical instruction, and all the necessary appliances for attracting and retaining a hold of the youths and young men of the place. In addition, he is engaged in taking steps to enlarge the boys' school to double its size, and it is hoped to carry on manual instruction, to fit up a gymnasium, a cookery centre, and a drawing centre. This school, it is believed, will supply a great local want, and be of immense service to the parish. For though the congregation is mainly a highly cultured and wealthy one, yet in the twenty-five thousand souls who people his part of the parish—there being three district churches—there are numbers of those who may be described as poorer brethren, and the rector is anxious to provide for these in a thoroughly practical and useful manner. And, indeed, we think that throughout his work may be observed a practical recognition of the needs of the time, and an endeavour to meet them in a satisfactory manner.



TO THE SKYLARK.

THOU art no monarch of the fells,
No pride of bower or park;
Thou hast no flute like Philomel's
To charm the listening dark.

Yet poets, in their words of light,
Have hymned thy virtues long;
Their prince has praised thy matin flight,
Thy wildly warbled song.

That soaring psalm how often we
Have heard; how oft our eyes
Have strained, the chorister to see,
A speck upon the skies;

And marvelled why thy wings were led
So far thy nest above,
To ripple the deep calm o'erhead,
With such bright waves of love;

Which, though they lift thy daring crest
Up to the gates of morn,
Link thee but closer to the nest,
Low lying in the corn.

Wonderful bird! We may not know
All that thy notes imply,
Now swelling, as the spirals grow,
Now sinking, as they die.

Yet Wordsworth, in his poet-dreams,
Has taught—nor think we wrong—
'T is Heaven and Home, those kindred themes,
Inspire the Skylark's song!

GEORGE S. OUTRAM.

OF OFFENDING THE LITTLE ONES.

(A MOTHER'S CONFIDENCES.)



"I find him clinging to my skirts."

HOW good of you to receive our confidences with so much interest and sympathy! There is no one to whom we could have opened our hearts in the same way; and I think parents want a little sympathy and counsel from outside in what they feel a very responsible part.

I suppose it is natural to take special pleasure in one's own finds, but we were both a little elated to hear that you had not come across Evan's theory of the "Parent's Code" anywhere. Of course I thought that proved the "three nots" to be a great discovery; but you know Evan, and how his greatest fault is that you can't make him think enough of himself. After the first gleam of pleasure he only said—

"Ah, I fear I'm on a false scent, if so many great thinkers have passed by what you call my 'find,' and taken no notice of it."

I was nearly provoked with him, for preferring everyone's opinion to his own; but you will, I think, admire my tactics—I only said—

"Well, of course, I am no judge, having only heard what may be called the introduction; let us have the talks you promised, and then I shall know better what to say."

"Do you really care so much about the subject, wife? It is very good of you; and it will be a great help to put the whole thing into words, and see how it looks in your eyes."

So you are "most anxious" to see how Evan will work out his theme? I am grateful to you for caring, because I shall have to listen with the more attention if I have to report to you. I shall just take a few notes at the time and work them out fully afterwards.

* * * * * *

Yesterday, nothing occurred to spoil our talk, and we sat long, so full of it all that we did not notice how time was passing—rather provoking, for I like Evan to go *fresh* to his duties on Monday morning. I plunged, neck or nothing, into the subject.

"I have been thinking about it all the week, Evan, but I cannot see how it is possible that loving parents like ourselves should *offend* their own children. Heartless, wicked parents may, or nurses, or cold-blooded strangers; but, truly, I don't see how the charge of 'offending' belongs to such as we are."

"I wish I could feel so safe. What do you take the word 'offence' to mean?"

"Oh, to vex them, try them, hurt their feelings, do the sorts of things that other grown-ups do to us when they 'offend' us."

"I'm not sure that's it. I doubt, indeed, if the idea of vexing, or of hurting feelings, belongs to the word at all. It is only in its secondary or tertiary sense that 'offend' comes to have this meaning."

"What is the original meaning, then?"

"An 'offence' is simply that which causes us to stumble—as the orange-peel on the pavements, for instance, which causes to many every winter a stumble and broken limbs. I think I'll plump for the candidate who will agitate against the importation of oranges!"

"Nonsense, Evan; you know you like an orange now and then. But go on; I have not quite caught your notion."

"I have it, madam; suppose that some 'offensive' person managed his walking-stick so that it should trip up our little maiden, now that she begins to make small runs across the floor?"

"Oh, is that all?" I asked, smiling, knowing very well that no one about us would be guilty of such maladroitness. But the suggestion was disturbing. I wanted our darling in my arms, though she had been long asleep.

"Your smile, vigilant mother, means that you will take care none of the children comes by such heedless mishap. But, dear, has it occurred to you that there are other offences than such as these to trip up the little feet?"

Where was Evan going now? But I had no need to ask. A flood of light broke in on me; and I cannot describe to you how, in this unbearable light, our whole living, everything in and about us, took the shape of a possible stumbling-block to the children. I felt myself go white, and Evan noticed it.

"Why, Mary, does a first glimpse of the power for evil in the hands of parents frighten you out of your life? Let us think the matter over quietly, and you will see that 'offend not' is a loving and a possible counsel. It shows where danger lies. You see, even you did not suspect that such as we could be the cause of injury or ruin to our own children. Then, the very fact of such a law being laid upon us is a pledge that we shall be made able to keep it. Our part is to use our common sense, to consider, first, how it is possible to offend, and, next, how we may keep clear of offence."

Evan's words were reassuring.

"Please go on," I cried; "we have no time to lose; the mischief may be done while we think all is right."

"It puzzled me for a long time to attach definite ideas to 'despise' and 'offend'—I mean, I could not see where the one began and the other ended. Now I think I have it: the one belongs to our sins of omission, the other to our sins of commission; we despise the child when we fail to do our whole duty by him—I mean, when we *neglect* any part of a parent's work; we offend when, by our own very fault, the means and opportunities of wrong-doing are put before him."

"I'm not sure I see; but if you go on with 'offending' it may all come clear."

"Have you ever had to 'scold' one of our babies for the odd little naughtinesses that babies do—the scratchings and pullings that look as if they were meant to hurt? Have you ever said, 'Naughty baby!' with sad and serious air?"

"You know I have often enough, and *I* know how you have tried to upset my gravity and spoil the effect."

"And what was the effect?"

"A very odd one, when you come to think of it: I noticed it first in Hugh; the little fellow—he was not six months old—was tugging viciously at my hair: I don't think the darling meant to hurt me; how could he know about hurting? But I thought it time he should learn, so I just said 'Naughty baby!' with a sorrowful face, when the child really blushed—a lovely pink spread over face and neck, the little head drooped, and the lower lip began to tremble ready for a cry."

"Very touching! How did you account for it?"

"I don't know, unless it was that he felt I was displeased with him."

"In other words, felt he had done wrong. And that is the marvellous thing; the little beings come to us with *conscience*, sense of right and wrong. I don't mean that they know which things are right and which wrong; that distinction the child learns to read in his mother's eye. If you had said, 'Naughty baby!' when he was quite good, he would have believed you all the same, and the dear little head would have been bowed in shame. The training of the conscience remains with us, and must be the business of our lives. But is it not marvellous that a child, only old enough to 'take notice,' should have a sense of right and wrong, and should be overwhelmed with shame when he has done the wrong?"

"It is truly! And it is another proof that there is more in the children than we suppose. But what new responsibility it puts upon parents! If the children come to us, knowing of a right and a wrong, and wait upon us to find out which things are right and which wrong, what watch we must keep over ourselves!"

"Yes, that's it, over ourselves and over them: every child is born with a sense of law:—

> "Keep him now
> Under the law as then; that, as he grows,
> 'Due followeth deed in course,' the rule he knows
> His times t' interpret. And law-compelled be thou,
> Nor drop some heedless trespass in his way,
> That, stumbling over, his weak knees shall fail—
> Offence shall come, but do not thou betray
> His soul to sin!"

"You mean that, in the first place, we must bring up the children to do as they're bid, and that when they fail they must suffer in some way?"

"Just so; obedience is the estate of the child, and his whole duty in the world, and he must learn it. Christ Himself, we are told, learnt obedience through the things which He suffered: though elsewhere we read, 'I delight to do Thy will, O God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.' But the two are not contradictory. It is they who have learnt to obey who delight in obedience; and shall we spare our children the pains which shall bring them this—the highest joy of living?"

"How do you mean, dear? If I tell Hugh he is not to leave the dining-room, and find him clinging to my skirts in our bedroom, am I to punish him?"

"A look may do; reproof of eye alone is punishment to a well-brought-up child. Only, don't allow him the disobedience. Sin is bred of allowances. 'Go back to the dining-room, Hugh,' should be obeyed without appeal, and instantly."

"But how? I'm afraid I often allow small faults of this kind. How am I to make Hugh go back, and stop him from coaxing me to let him stay, or to go back with him?"

"Expect him to obey, and look at him with quiet expectant eyes until he does so, and Hugh will go. But if he detect the least sign of relenting or indulgence in your face, it were better you had not given the command, for it will not be obeyed."

"But you don't know how difficult it is when you have a child about with you all day as I have Hugh: now that there are two besides in the nursery, I cannot always be enforcing obedience to the small biddings one gives without thinking!"

"It must be weary work, dear as the little fellow is. But there are two helps. In the first place do not be always giving little 'biddings.' Have a few broad general rules that must be obeyed at all hazards, and then let the boy go his way, even at the cost of small mishaps. In the next place, think once more of the power of habit, the *use* which is second nature. The child who is brought up to do as he's bid from his first understanding moments is used to obey, and does it without struggle. But the child who is allowed to get his own way, to give a dozen reasons why he should not go to bed yet, the parents yielding and delighting in his wheedling ways, why, such parents are training their child for a life of lawlessness. It is they, poor parents! who are preparing hard things for him in the future. We know the old story of the man brought to the gallows, who would whisper a last word to his mother:—'T is you who have brought me to this!' and his brutal revenge was to bite off the listening ear.

"Obedience is the beginning and end of the whole duty of a child; and if, indeed, he must learn it by the things which he suffers, why, in this even he is no worse off than his 'Almighty Lover!' Beware of the luxury of pity and the love of ease which would yield the point rather than vex the child. Heaven help the proud and foolish parent who sets this cause of stumbling in his child's path!"

"Oh, Evan, can we ever bring up the children rightly?"

I had, somehow, expected softer words than these.

"Let us go on with good heart, Mary: all comes easy to those willing to learn and earnest to try. But we have not done yet. Secure obedience, prompt, glad, and lasting, and the rest comes easy, but, all the same, the rest must be considered."

"Are you thinking of the cultivation of their minds?"

"Something of the kind: it is sad how many careers are spoiled in the nursery! But, perhaps, parents sin here more by way of omission and neglect than by positive offence. That is, they despise their children. There are parents, fathers especially, who stimulate intellect at the expense of all besides, turning out infant prodigies who die early, or if they live, are developed in one direction only—are defective in moral insight, in spiritual growth, even in physique; men who have run to brain. But I doubt if this fault is very common, and for an excellent reason: not many of us are so far overweighted with intellect ourselves as to err on these lines."



"'I noticed it first in Hugh.'"—*p.* 706.

"May we be happy about this, then? We commonplace people are not in much danger of causing our children to stumble intellectually."

"We can't go quite so far as that; there are moral offences which begin as offences against the reason, which 'we commonplace people' are very likely to commit. A man has dealt fraudulently with his creditors. There is not a word of pity for them, but for him—'Poor fellow! what a blow for his wife and children!' Some religious or social movement is talked of: the thing is intrusive to us, because we do not want 'to be bothered' with work outside our own doors.' We say, 'Well, but who is to know whether the work of the missionaries is now more than skin-deep? Perhaps, after all, the religions they've got are best suited to the heathen,' and so on, endlessly, calling evil good, and good evil. And there, all the time, are the little pitchers opening long ears for the poison."

"I see what you mean; we teach children to use their wits to prove the wrong, and not the right. Oh, Evan, how good we should be, to be *fit* to bring up a child! It all lies in that!"

"Yes, I think so; but here is more than our own 'being good.' It seems to me that a child can be taught to feel aright about things only as he is taught to think clearly. Now, another point. Have you noticed how careful and tender our Lord was over the bodies of men? He went about doing good to suffering bodies, and every case of sad disease seemed to fill Him with the poignant pity which issued in healing. Now, it would not be hard to prove that ninety-nine out of every hundred cases of disease and deformity are the fault of the parents of the sufferers. 'Who did sin, this man or his parents?' is a searching question for our day."

"You mean what is called heredity? The bodily condition of the parents being passed on to the child?"

"Not exactly; heredity, I think, may be dealt with. Otherwise, what a poor chance in life would many of us have! But we start far more evenly than is commonly supposed. For example, a narrow chest is the immediate cause of half the lung-trouble we doctors have to contend with. And yet it has been recently said on good authority that the width of the chest in infants only varies with their size; that is, no child is born with a narrow chest. Inherited tendency to lung-disease he may have, but that may be dealt with through the whole course of his bringing up, not by physic, but by education."

"I don't think I see quite what you mean."

"Don't you? Well, perhaps the 'consumptive' child is a stiff instance of what I mean. But give me time, and I could make it clear. Let us take a more obvious case. I wonder how poor Ted Carter is going on."

"Ah! poor little fellow! I fear he will suffer from hip-disease all his life. But, now, you can't say that was anyone's fault. In sliding down the banisters he lost his grip, and came down with great force on the tiles of the hall."

"Do you think he had ever been told he was too young for this amusement?"

"Yes, I have often heard his mother tell him not to do it."

"And he has gone on as before?"

"Well, you know what a coaxing little rogue he was before this accident. You really couldn't say no to his beseechings."

"And his mother didn't? She forbade the thing, and let him do it?"

"I fear that is the fact."

"Then the evidence is plain; it is she who has cast the stumbling-block which is to make her son go weak and shattered, feeble in body and fractious in temper, for the rest of his days."

"But, my dear, don't you think you are judging poor dear Mrs. Carter rather harshly? There never was a more loving mother."

"Nay, Mary, I don't judge; it is the facts as you tell them me which pronounce judgment. Did she not fail to teach her bright little boy to obey her? And was not his disobedience the cause of his fall? But I could tell you of a hundred cases of fragile children with little vitality in them—here, through some fault of diet; there, because they are crammed into ill-ventilated bed-rooms and sitting-rooms, all gas and bad air, or taken at night to poisonous assembly-rooms. There is no time even to enumerate the ways in which parents are as stumbling-blocks to their children, sending them forth, rickety, puny, with narrow chest, big head, spindly limbs; and why? Because they will not be at the pains to know and carry out the few common rules of health, ignorance of which should be a punishable offence in parents of every degree."

"Do you really think our Lord had all this about the children's health and well-being in His mind when He said, 'Take heed that ye offend not one of these little ones!' I always thought it meant, Beware how you set a bad example."

"That, no doubt; but not that only. I do believe our Lord had in view every part of a child's nature and every means of doing any such part an injury. Nor do I think we shall be wrong in attaching great importance to the physical well-being of our children. Matter and spirit are so closely connected I doubt if the soundest, sanest development in any line can be attained unless as mind and spirit are moved by the spring of thorough health."

"You seem to think of what people call 'poor health' rather as a fault than as a misfortune."

"And so I do—in most cases—and so I hope we all shall soon. Notice our Lord's ineffable pity for every misery that comes of early stumbling-blocks, and you will believe that the woe pronounced against those who cause the offence is no idle word. 'Whoso causeth one of these little ones that believe in me to stumble, it were better for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.'"

BRAMBLES.

BY LADY LAURA HAMPTON.

WHAT a tangle the thicket was! such masses of woodbine, briars, and blackberries matted together in and out amongst the hollies and furze, forming a formidable barrier to man and beast, with their array of thorns protruding in all directions ready to repel intrusion, whilst the delicious scent of the honeysuckle, the sprays of delicate pink and white roses, the opening buds of the brambles, and bunches of late gorse, courted attention to their beauty from every passer-by.

"How unaccommodating you are, to be sure!" grumbled a young bracken frond as it tried to poke its curled head up between the furze branches. "There, I know my figure will be quite spoilt, just because you will bar the way I ought to grow with your horrid prickles!"

"What can you expect, when the bramble is so overbearing!" replied the offender. "If I am stiff and obstinate, commend me to her self-will. Positively, since I gave her a lift up in the world, I can hardly call this piece of ground my own; and as for acknowledging her obligation to me, why, she would cover me up and ignore my existence entirely if she could. Talk of my prickles, indeed; you should just feel her thorns!"

"Or mine," laughed a spray of the briar rose, as it swung backwards and forwards in the breeze till it caught in a holly tree. "But then I only use them to climb by, and I must do the best I can for myself."

"If others suffer in the process or not," answered the holly, as its torn leaves testified to the tenacity of the speaker.

"Well, I am sure you need not talk," they exclaimed simultaneously, "when you are spikes all over."

"True; but no one can say that I use them except in self-defence. Keep yourself to yourself, that is my motto," and every leaf seemed to bristle and draw itself up as it spoke.

"Dear, dear, what is all this wrangling about?" buzzed a bee, as it alighted on a piece of honeysuckle, the only silent member of the group.

"Thorns," it answered, laconically, as if loth to be drawn into the discussion.

"Very good things too in their way," he replied, "but then they must be sure that they are in '*their*' way, and not in the way of others."

"What do you mean?" they all queried at once, for the bee being a great traveller, and intimately



BRAMBLES.

See p. 708

acquainted with all sorts and conditions of flowers, was held in high esteem amongst these uncultivated wildlings.

But the bee was now busy in the hayfield the other side of the hedge, and though the bramble threw out a branch laden with blossom to attract his attention, he tarried not to answer, and the trailing thorns caught in the dress of a hay-maker whose pretty face, looking gloomy and ill-tempered under her white sun-bonnet, fairly melted into tears as a large rent was the result of the vigorous pull she bestowed to free herself.

"Why, Mary, what is the matter?" exclaimed a lady who had approached her unperceived. "Alone, and in tears! How is it that your companions have deserted you, and Robin too?" she continued, smiling; "it is seldom that you are to be found at opposite ends of the field."

"I am sure I don't know, ma'am, and I don't care," began Mary; but sobs choked her voice and belied her words, and in a few moments her friend had drawn her to a seat on the hay by her side and was listening to the incoherent recital of a tale, where girlish conceit and self-will on the one hand, and obstinacy and pride on the other, had resulted in a lovers' quarrel, which with all its misunderstandings promised fair to be a serious one.

"Ah, Mary," continued her friend as she rose to go, after promising all the assistance in her power, and gathering some briar roses as she spoke, "we talk of the thorny path of life, and forget that it is often we ourselves who make it so, with our tempers, and want of consideration for others. What we call self-respect, firmness, proper pride, self-help—good traits in themselves, and apparently as harmless to others as these young green shoots on the side of this spray—are apt to harden in time into conceit, obstinacy, overbearing self-will and self-assertion, if left uncontrolled. Then we grumble at the tangle when the thorns which cause it spring from ourselves; we complain of faults in others which our tempers have aroused; we mourn over estrangements which our pride entails. And, child, let us remember, also, that whilst it is true that there 'are briars besetting every path,' and therefore 'an earnest need for prayer,' by it we can avoid the thorns, and amid them discover the flowers. What scent more exquisite than that of the gorse, what fruit more sweet than the blackberry, what flower lovelier than the rose? And so, many who at first appear crabbed, disagreeable, uninteresting, if sought in the right way are found to have some qualities to render them lovable, some blossoms deep set amongst the brambles, waiting but a ray of human love to make them expand and bear fruit in the full sunshine of the Divine."

A ROSE BEDEWED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TUNE ST. ELWYN'S," ETC.

A FAIR evening of early June. The level sunshine lies in bars of gold upon the woodland path, and, transforming the oak leaves to living emeralds and their trunks to pillars of rugged bronze, lights up with well-nigh supernal glory the white-robed figure of a young girl, whose tripping feet hasten lightly over the mossy carpet beneath the trees.

Arrived at a point where four ways meet, she pauses, and glances with wistfully expectant eyes first along one green avenue and then another. Suddenly her face becomes illumined beyond the radiance of sunshine, and, with a gesture of gladness, she waves her hand. Her feet want to run, but she restrains them to the briskest pace consistent with maiden coyness, and being met with eager, manly strides, Grace Herbert and her lover are soon side by side.

"Am I late?" she queries, rather breathlessly, for, though she did not hurry, her heart beats audibly. "Aunt put every obstacle in my way that she possibly could. I *am* so glad that she is neither my parent nor guardian, for to obey her would be so hard. Oh! Max, what a lovely beauty!"

The latter exclamation is evoked by the placing in her hand of a magnificent shell-pink rose, with a spray or two of lilies of the valley bending caressingly over its regal head. The girl's softly rounded cheeks outrival its blushing petals as she notes that the stems are bound together with azure ribbon in a three-looped knot.

"It is the first of the year; I have watched it for days," Max tells her. "I rode Favell into a white foam this afternoon, because I so feared it might be spoiled after all by that heavy shower."

"I'm so glad it was not," Grace artlessly owns. "It's such a love! But a few drops still linger in the little hollows. They look like——"

"Like what, darling?"

"No, I won't say it, Max; it sounds sad."

"Like tears, you were going to say, you poetical little goose!" declares Max, gazing down at her with eyes full of fondness. "Why did you stop short?"

"I don't know—at least, I suppose I *do* know! I'm afraid, Max, that in a fashion of my own I am rather superstitious. That's dreadful for a—for a Christian girl, isn't it?"

Grace's brown eyes look up at him in grave and self-reproachful concern. But Max only laughs, and tucks her hand under his own well-developed arm.

"Of course it is dreadfully silly," the girl continues; "but just for the moment I did not *quite* like that the first rose you ever gave me should be so bedewed."

"Imaginative child! There, we will shake the tears away. What have tears to do with you and me, my Grace?"

"Nothing, I hope, Max. I won't be silly! It is such a comfort to me, dear, to feel that father knows and approves of it. No one else can possibly come between us, even if they would."

Half an hour later, Grace hurries home alone. She will not let Max come beyond the point "where the houses begin," because she knows he is to speak at a temperance meeting presently, and she would not make him late. Just before turning into the gate of her aunt's syringa-bowered cottage, she steps aside to speak to a young woman who is running in the opposite direction.

"There's nothing the matter, I hope?" she anxiously queries.

"It's Miss Mary, miss. Another attack like she had Thursday night, only worse. You'll excuse my stopping, miss; I'm off to the doctor now."

The maid speeds away, and Grace, signalling to her aunt, who is watching for her at the parlour window, quickens her own steps in the direction of an imposing-looking stone-built house about thirty yards further on, on the opposite side of the way.

"I've just met Hannah. Dear Mrs. Melville, I am *so* grieved!" are her first words to a silver-haired lady, who appears, with careworn face, in the hall as she enters.

"Mary is a trifle better again these last few minutes. Come in, dear; come in and speak to her."

Thus bidden, Grace follows Mrs. Melville into a small back apartment, luxuriously furnished as bed- and sitting-room in one, where, on a couch, lies a girl of about the same age as herself. The rich flush in Mary Melville's wasted cheek, and the glitter of her large clear eyes, pierce like a knife to the heart of her friend.

"Sit down, Grace dear," she murmurs, almost inaudibly. "Don't be frightened; I'm all right now. It was only a passing faintness. What a lovely rose!"

"Yes," answers Grace simply; but the flowers, now fastened in her brooch, rise and fall somewhat more perceptibly as she speaks. "It is the first I have seen."

"I did not think I should ever see another!" whispers the invalid as if to herself, and with her eyes fixed almost hungrily upon the beautiful flower. "And I love roses so! But God is very good. May I smell it, Gracie dear? Just once more!"

Grace unclasps the spray, and lays it in Mary's transparent fingers. Mary knows nothing about Max Ayliffe. She is too intently fixing her gaze upon the exquisite form and colour of the flower to note the significant ribbon with which it is tied. A struggle goes on meanwhile in Grace's breast. Few acts of kindness may she henceforth do for the dying girl—few pleasures are still possible to that suffering soul. Can she—*can* she resign the earthly form of that precious rose, and receive its spirit, sanctified by sacrifice, a very rose of heaven, the more deeply in her heart? Grace spoke without presumption when she called herself a Christian girl. A gentle "inasmuch" is sounding in her ears. Shall she withhold her lover's flower from Him who gave both the love and the flower?

"Keep it, Mary darling! Keep it for my sake," she says. "It will talk to you, as you lie here, of the summer-time out-of-doors. No, I can't take it back, dear; it is yours."

A lovely, tremulous radiance of mingled smiles and tears on the face of the sick girl is her reward. She will always remember her friend with that look lighting up her wasted features; for it was the last she ever saw. Before the next day dawns Mary Melville's spirit has passed away. She died, Grace hears, with that rose in her hand.

Grace means to tell Max all about it next time they meet; she thinks he will understand. But the hour of reunion is delayed. The girl's father, meeting with an accident in the hay-field, sends for her to return home at once, and she must thus leave the village of Redlock, where for three months past she has been staying, without a word of farewell to any of her friends. But she will come back again before long, she says, if only for a day, and leaves the greater part of her property behind as a pledge of this *revoir*.

Somehow, she does not feel that she can explain to Max the sorrowful destination of his love-gift by letter. She could not well express her feeling about it on paper. It will be time enough, she still thinks, when they meet. But the weeks pass on; Mr. Herbert's disablement, though nothing to cause serious apprehension, is tedious, and he cannot do without the loving care of his only child. Golden September is brooding o'er the restful land ere it is possible for Grace's promised revisiting of Redlock to become an accomplished fact.

She has not heard from Max for three whole days. But the last letter she received from him, fond and full of longing, told casually of how busy they all were, getting the last of the late harvest safely in. She will not allow herself to entertain for one moment the thought that peeps in at her soul's door to suggest that, however hardly pressed, he might have found time for his accustomed note. 'T would be treason! Her Max, her strong, broad-shouldered, sunny-faced lover with the frank blue eyes, is far above suspicion such as that. He could not possibly have written. It has been as keen a disappointment to him as it has been to her. She has sent him word, however, to expect her at Redlock by the 1.40 train, and he will surely welcome her with his own dear smile the moment the train stops.

How slowly they go! What tiresome delays! Surely they will arrive far behind time. But at last the familiar little station is reached, and Gracie's

hand is on the carriage door long before the train draws up.

Eagerly, with flushed cheeks and the quick breath ebbing from her parted lips, Grace scans the group waiting on the platform. Max Ayliffe is not there!

She feels bewildered. She disbelieves her senses. hand is swallowed up in his mighty, kindly grasp, but surprise is mingled with the cordiality of his greeting. Max could not have understood that she was coming to Redlock that day, his father declares, for he has himself gone over to Bilbridge to look at a horse, and thought it likely he might stay the



"'It is the first of the year.'"—*p.* 710.

Surely he has not grown weary of waiting and gone away? But no; the clock points to only three minutes past the appointed time. Like a lost creature she stares blankly up and down the platform. The other passengers, one by one, pass out of the station; she will soon be standing there alone, but Max has not come!

Pride at length appears to her help. Gathering herself together by a great effort, she gives up her ticket, and sets her face towards her aunt's cottage.

Strange to say, almost the first person she meets upon that road is Farmer Ayliffe himself—ruddy-brown, jovial and merry, as of yore. Her small night. He did get her letter; oh, yes, that was right enough. The farmer took it of the postman himself. There must be some mistake.

With a heart lying like cold stone in her breast, Grace parts from the farmer, and pursues her lonely way. Oh, the sadness, the desolation of the stubble fields that lie on either hand! Oh, the inexpressible dreariness of the dusty white road that she sees before her through a mist of tears!

But she bears up in presence of her aunt. *She*, at least, shall not guess that anything has gone wrong. She makes a round of calls among her friends, in spirits that seem almost wildly high; and

laughs off any allusion to the absent Max with an assumed indifference that is hideous to herself.

Next morning she collects her belongings to return home. Her aunt is confined indoors by a cold, so she goes back to the station as she came, alone; a boy having been sent on beforehand with her trunk.

Another lonely figure is wending the same way. He overtakes her, and they walk together. Poor John Melville! He has not yet recovered from the blow of his sister's death. The two were devoted to one another with a depth and tenderness of affection rarely to be met with even in the most united families. It is a comfort to him to talk about her to someone who loved her too. And Grace, despite her own misery, cannot but try, with sweet womanly words, to console him, speaking softly of the glad reunion that is to come by-and-bye. Death cannot separate those whose souls are truly one. Estrangement, that is parting—that is bitterer death!

John is going as far as the next junction by the same train as Grace. They stand together on the platform, and he naturally steps behind her into the same carriage. She is neither pleased nor displeased at the *rencontre*—not knowing or thinking aught of wrong. She does not see the white, lowering face that gazes after them from the shadow of a bridge on the other side. She little dreams that Max, returning from his horse-buying expedition, has arrived upon the scene just in time to catch sight of the pair entering the train together.

The above circumstance, did it stand alone, would be insufficient to shake in the least Max Ayliffe's confidence in his betrothed, but, unfortunately, it has been preceded by an incident of far greater import. An evening or two previously, at the close of a public meeting in a neighbouring hall, Max found a pocket-book lying on a chair. Being one in authority at the said hall, he opened it to discover the name of the owner. It was John Melville; and from between the folds, crushed and withered, fell Max Ayliffe's ribbon-bound rose! Rose, and faded lilies, and three-looped bow intact!

What wonder, then, that, seeing the two together, he turns away with clenched hands and burning brain, vowing madly to trust womankind no more; while the sky seems stone above him, and the earth's foundations reel beneath his feet. Grace is false—is false—is *false!* And until his spirit rises from the terrible shock, all faith, and love, and good in life for him are at an end.

Grace goes home, and waits, and prays. Then she writes, and asks him the meaning of his silence and his strange neglect. The answer comes by return of post, just four bitter words—"*Where is my rose?*"—nothing more.

"Then," thinks the girl, while hot tears fall blistering on the cruelly blank page, "he is angry because I parted with his gift! Someone has told him about it. Oh! but he is *not* the Max I loved, if he could grudge to a poor dying girl even his own love-gift to me! If he does not understand that, he could never understand me."

At first, she thinks she will write again, and plead with him, seeking to justify the action by which it seems he has been so incensed; but pride forbids. She feels herself wronged; she judges him exacting and unfeeling. What sort of a husband might such a lover make? If he could break with her for such a cause, the dissolution of their engagement is a fortunate release!

Foolish, foolish Grace! She packs together the few small presents she has received from him, and sends them back, though her heart-strings bleed with the wrench.

It is a sad autumn that follows.

> "The days are dark and dreary,
> It rains, and the wind is never weary."

Grace grows wan and listless; she has begun to doubt whether she acted wisely in answering her angry lover not a word. She wishes—oh, how she wishes!—that, with gentle dignity, she had laid before him the exact circumstances under which she had let go her precious rose—the rose bedewed, in fact and memory too, with so many soul-wrung tears! But it is now too late! No communication has passed between them since her last decisive act; he is probably consoling himself with another love ere this!

And yet—she gave the rose for the Lord's own sake. No after-folly could wipe out that. *He* knows just all about it. Will He let her suffer her whole life through for the sake of a sacrifice made to Him? The lingering superstition, born of her own imagination, that has clung to the remembrance of the dewy rose, melts and vanishes in the light as she opens her heart to Him. He is Lord of all—there is no wrong on earth that He cannot right. She lays her case before Him, submissively, yet with a great hope, as she has never felt able to do before. Then she rests and waits.

* * * * * *

A terrible railway accident! The news spreads in the country round more quickly than the telegraph can flash it. Five killed; twice as many injured. Max Ayliffe, of Redlock, is reported to be wounded unto death. He has been carried home, for the disaster took place close to Redlock, but lies in a precarious state—not expected to live throughout the day.

Pale, but unfaltering, is Grace when she tells her father she must go. She cannot let Max pass away without telling him she loves him still. She thinks she can bear it, if only she may whisper one fond word into his dulling ear. This is no time for false pride or reserve. The farmer and his wife will understand.

The journey to Redlock is one long, silent prayer for mercy and for strength. Oh, if she may but reach his side in time! That is the only hope she dare confess.

Seeing nothing, hearing nothing, she hurries along the desolate country road. The farm is in sight. Does he yet live? She has reached the gate—the door. She knocks with trembling, eager hand, and her whole being seems to stay its life-motion to listen for the answering foot.

It comes! It is steady and firm. Another moment, and she stands face to face with Max himself! One arm is in a sling, but the other is strong and ready to keep her from falling in deadly faintness to the ground.

* * * * * *

It is his father who was so badly injured. They were travelling together, and in the report of the accident their identity has been confused. But the farmer himself is not in quite so desperate a case as was at first feared; the doctor now entertains strong hopes of his recovery. All this is explained, with much besides, when Grace, hysterical with joy, becomes once more conscious of the world around.

"Oh! my Gracie," whispers Max, leaning fondly over her, "is it wrong to feel thankful for the outcome of what has proved so terrible to some?"

"We can pray for them and pity them out of our own glad hearts!" murmurs Grace. "Thankful, eternally thankful, we cannot fail to be. Oh, Max, how good God is! But how much suffering might have been spared by either of us speaking out frankly at the first!"

"We will never forget that," answers the young man earnestly, "as long as we live."

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

"BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS."



ONE of us were meant to live alone or to die alone; even the most capable spirits cannot afford to lose the help, counsel, and fellowship of others, the inspiration of cheer and sympathy, the hearty co-operation of fellow-workers. The Master Himself sent out His servants two and two, knowing the depressing influences of solitude, the worth of consultation and mutual aid. We heard once of an open-air preacher who decided he could do his work better quite alone, but when his eyes were closed in prayer, his hat disappeared, likewise his Bible and his camp-stool, and he was left to regret the spirit of independence he had carried too far. We may not need our comrades to protect us against thieves, but all the genial influences of Christian fellowship are valuable to shield us against discouragement, morbid forebodings, mistakes, and despair. Mr. Moody told of a fireman, whose brave efforts had almost failed, but who was so cheered by those around, that he persisted till he rescued the life in peril; so, when we almost leave off believing in ourselves, it gives us new hope to find our friends believe in us still, and expect the results for which we have ceased to look. "So-and-so is very gifted," some will say, "but very unapproachable." The gifted So-and-so would do better to cultivate a little more sociability, for unselfishness demands we should adopt the friendliness which will warm the hearts of others; and we cannot come out of the shell of self without sowing the seeds of real and lasting blessing. "I believe in a committee of one," sometimes say those who are the head and centre of good works; yet it might be better for such also to take in helpers, thus enlarging the privilege of doing good, and putting the work on a basis which will ensure its continuance were one frail human life removed. Let us wisely and prayerfully draw round us a circle of friends and fellow-workers; no Christian existence has a right to be one of isolation. And none need ever *die* alone. When the faces around us are fading, then, like President Edwards, we may calmly say, "Now, where is Jesus of Nazareth, my true and never-failing Friend?"

A FLOWER-TEXT MINISTRY.

The Bible Flower Mission (110, Cannon Street) exists to spread the Word of God, and to visit each patient in our various hospitals and infirmaries with a bouquet of flowers to which a text is attached. Friends anxious to help may extend this good work by cultivating and supplying suitable flowers, also ornamental grasses, mosses, ivy-leaves, and "everlastings," or by writing texts on the bouquet-holders, making lavender-bags, and taking collecting-cards. Into shadowed places the beautiful children of sunlight carry their cheer, by means of this tender ministry, and we may well believe that the Bible-messages are blest in many a case beyond those which are openly recognised. One worker writes:—"The flowers are eagerly sought after, and by their agency an entry is obtained into many homes where otherwise it might be impossible to enter." Some of the texts are sent to relatives engaged in the North Sea fisheries, some are ranged on the mantel-shelf, some are nailed up conspicuously; we are told that souls passing into the Shadow-valley have been cheered and comforted by the precious promises. The little children greet the visitors with

a chorus of welcome; not a few of these little ones have learnt already to love the Good Shepherd, and one little fellow followed the visitor to the bedside of a sceptical patient, just in time to hear him say, "God can't cure me; if Dr. —— can't, then nobody can."—"God can do everything," said the child. The visitor quoted Scripture words, but the patient remarked, "I don't believe all the Bible."—"*I* do," said the child warmly, "and I read it every day." When the lady departed, she saw the child still sitting beside that bed, reading his own text, and chatting in his simple love and faith; who knows how the little fellow's ministry might be used by the Great Physician? An old man of seventy-eight took out a label from his pocket, saying, "I've travelled all over the world, and never met anything so nice as this: 'If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?'" The old man would repeat that text over and over again, when kept awake in the night. A man, believed to be dying, was given some beautiful roses, and he asked, "What is the paper at the back?"—The answer was, "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me."—"Strange sort of love!" said the poor fellow, half bitterly, as he thought of his troubles; but next week he was better, and asking for the mission lady, and ere he left the hospital cured, he told her that he had "spelt out" that message she brought, and he believed in the love of Jesus, for he felt the Saviour's presence within his heart.



"The flowers are eagerly sought after."—*p.* 714.

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD!"

A touching incident of faith and devotion to a cause has recently come under our notice. An old lady, a member of a village chapel in North Hants, though about eighty-seven years of age, and having but three shillings weekly from the parish, and five shillings quarterly for taking care of the little chapel, yet managed to pay seven shillings into a clothing club for a few clothes, and out of that small sum bought a "communion cloth" for two shillings. And more! When she died, which event occurred last April, she left her goods to her two sons, who are poor men; and all the wood in an out-house—which she had herself gathered on the common, and carried in a bag on her back for over a mile—to light the fire in the chapel. Let those who will, sneer at the humble gifts. Surely the words of the Master, spoken centuries ago to that other poor woman who brought to Him the alabaster box of ointment, apply also to this poor widow of our day—"She hath done what she could!"

ST. PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Dr. Marcus Dods has contributed, in his exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, an important volume to the Expositors' Bible Series

of Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. In his eighth section we would have wished a fuller exposition of the central doctrine of the Atonement than Dr. Dods has given us. His comments are very cogent and suggestive, as far as they go, but they do not go far enough, and they leave in the mind a sense of incompleteness which is by no means satisfactory. In these days of "watering down," clear and undiluted Scriptural teaching is sorely needed, and we should have accorded a warmer welcome to this bright and scholarly work had the point in question been more emphatically insisted on. Apart from these important considerations, there is much helpful thought in this book, from which real benefit may be derived. The concluding chapter, on "The Poor," deserves to be widely read and deeply studied.

THE ORPHANS' HOME AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

Dr. and Mrs. Alexandrian are doing good work in the extension of God's Kingdom in Scutari. Despite much opposition, their medical mission has branched out into many promising directions, and they have had over four thousand patients of varying nationalities in the dispensary. Twice a week, free of charge, the sick poor come to consult the doctor, and a suitable opportunity is taken for prayer and a Gospel talk. Earnest testimony is given as to the value of these efforts from several residents in Constantinople, who have seen for themselves the work going on. The native Protestants stand greatly in need of encouragement and help, and even the Turks seem to appreciate the service in the waiting-room on dispensing days. Poor leprous beggars are not forgotten, but are visited in the old neglected institution where they live; and, although the Government forbids the introduction of the Bible, medical aid is rendered to them, and they are told of Jesus, of salvation, and of the Resurrection. The Orphans' Home is an important part of the work. Protestant Christianity must no longer overlook these little ones, several of whom have been gathered in to receive a good education and religious training in the Orphans' Home, and have been saved from misery and distress. In three months these children had learnt by heart the Lord's Prayer, Psalm xxiii., the Commandments, and many hymns. The average expense of each child is reckoned at about one pound a month. New or second-hand clothes for any of the little ones, whose ages vary from three to thirteen, would be very useful, and parcels may be sent to Mrs. Alexandrian, care of Mr. H. Grattan Guinness, Doric Lodge, Bow Road, E.



SCUTARI.

IN THE THICK OF THE BATTLE.

Surely those City Missionaries who defend God's truth amid the East End taverns, socialistic and atheistic clubs, and haunts of gamblers, may be said to be in the thick of battle. At any time opposition may rise to personal abuse and ill-usage; but with tact, courage, and fervour, the Master's servants hold their own, and generally manage to secure a fair hearing at last. The landlord of a small beer-house asked the missionary to preach while the game of cards went on, instead of stopping it altogether, but the answer was that he brought tidings of a prize which *everyone* may win. Atheists and men of varying shades of thought have all their arguments to bring forward, and it is only by recourse to the simple Word of God that the missionary can be armed for such encounters. Again and again it is proved that the words of Scripture do not fall void to the ground, but strike root in soil that seems most unfavourable. A respectable-looking man stopped one of the workers one day, and reminded him of an address he had given in a public-house on the words, "What shall I do, then, with Jesus?" That appeal had brought about a change of heart in one of the listeners at least, and he told the missionary he had since forsaken the drink. A young sceptic, who had hotly opposed Christian preaching, was visited in illness, and was softened in spirit and pointed to the Redeemer. To his old friends he said when near his end, "My sins, which were many, are forgiven. I used to think I was happy when I denied the Saviour, but I am a thousand times happier in believing Him and trusting Him."

GREETINGS AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Miss V. M. Skinner, the author of the "Friendly Letter Series," has certainly the gift of saying much, and that to the point, in little compass. We have

lately received some additions to this valuable series—letters to Japanese ladies, soldiers, deists in India, and maid-servants. We have heard it said that Japan has so many new things, it is ready for a new religion, and many of the ladies, whose ideas are becoming European, must be open to the influences of such an appeal as Miss Skinner has written. "We English Christians," she says, "have no more precious gift to offer you than the priceless treasure of the Word of God. The Gospel of Jesus Christ has made our country what it is." This Gospel is powerfully upheld in the other letters likewise, the appeal to soldiers being based on the account a soldier gave of his conversion—"The Lord said to me, 'Halt! Attention! Right-about turn! March!'" In the letter to the maid-servants mention is made of THE QUIVER "Order of Honourable Service," now numbering more than three thousand members. Anyone who sincerely takes to heart the Scriptural counsel put forward in this letter will most surely prove "a really good servant," approved of God and man. Some say the age of letter-writing is past and gone, and they contrast the treasured epistles of their youth, passed from household to household and read and re-read, with the hasty scrawls which bid fair in their turn to be supplanted by cheap telegrams. We may not all be able to write such personal appeals as the "Friendly Letters," but is there not room in our own correspondence for just some helpful word that may do Christ's work, and awaken and stimulate some undying soul?

A SUMMER-DAY SERMON.

The beautiful Christmas hymn counsels us to "Rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing." The anthem of peace and goodwill echoes not less clearly through these summer days, when earth and sky and sea are smiling, and it is a joy to live and listen to Nature's secrets. Let the toilers, the hard-pressed and discouraged in the race, come out and hear what the mosses and wild hyacinths and brier-roses and all the bright garden-flowers have to say; even the trembling, wind-blown grasses have a voice of cheer and comfort, and the birds seem calling to us to arise on the wings of prayer and soar heavenward too. Surely the sermon of summer, spoken by every phase of Nature's glory, witnesses to the goodness and beauty of our God, to His lavish, deathless mercies, to His changeless remembrance, His resurrection power, and His abiding promise that the seasons shall not fail. Sun-crowned heights and foaming waves declare His majesty and strength, and the half-hidden wildflower, that drinks His dews amid the bracken, whispers of lives that are poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon them, and the God of heaven will provide. It will be a blessed ministry if, by our aid, weary sick-nurses, Christian workers, toilers in shop and work-room, and feeble children can be brought this summer from city surroundings to be taught the wonders and glories of Nature's shining pages.

> "Yet teach us still how far more fair,
> More glorious, Father, in Thy sight
> Is one pure deed, one holy prayer,
> One heart that owns Thy Spirit's might."

Amid heaven's fadeless summer the flowers most prized spring from the humble, prayerful heart, and



such a garland the poorest among us may bring to the Lord of all. There are hearts that mourn among those who gaze on flowers and meadows now. Let them not grieve to think that birds can sing and blossoms smile, though sorrow has darkened their lives. Is it not better so, and is not Nature's very thanksgiving an assurance of God's love and presence still? Round our restlessness His rest abideth, and He who arrays the frail vale-lily will neither forsake nor forget His children. Perhaps we feel sometimes we would like to *keep* these fairy-footed waterfalls, these grassy hills, these daisied plains for ever. What can surpass the woods and fields and glens on a perfect summer day? Can heaven itself be fairer? The poet Whittier has expressed this sense—that now and then we feel we could forego the unknown music and strange splendours for these familiar valleys, wood-paths, and hum of bees! Let us be very sure that both now and hereafter the God of Nature and of grace will give us nothing but the *best*. His summer benisons are only foretastes of undreamed rapture in the land where none hunger and thirst in unfilled yearning. Who shall picture the leaves and flowers dewed by that river which flows through the city of gold? There, where we see Jesus, what seemed bright here will be lost in undimmed light. When we awake, we shall be satisfied.

"PRESENT BOOTS!"

"Present Boots!" is the order, and numbers of well-polished little well-clad feet are ready for inspection. For it is a boot review to-night, and prizes are to be given for the best kept among them. Not long since, the boots were given away by the London Congregational Union to the poor children present, on the recommendation of Board-school teachers and inspector, and now the children are invited to tea, the boots inspected, and small prizes distributed. During the last three years between 7,000 and 8,000 boots of all kinds have been thus distributed to poor children in London, and last winter over 1,000 pairs of a special kind were given away, having high "uppers" of leather, and thick soles of wood, covered with gutta-percha and iron plates. The method of giving these boots to children nominated by the teachers guards against the distribution being made to undeserving cases, and the great usefulness to the children is obvious. It is an admirable and very practical form of Christian philanthropy, and we hope Mr. Mearns' "Booteries" may be well supplied for little feet that may deservedly need "shoeing."

THE LIBRARY TABLE.

At this season of the year, when so many of us are spending a large portion of each day in the open air, if we are to read at all, we prefer a book in sympathy with our surroundings; and of the books on our library table we take up first this month one by Mr. H. W. Worsley-Benison, entitled "Haunts of Nature" (Elliot Stock). Each chapter will be found to be a chatty little essay, complete in itself, on some point of natural history or botany. Among the most interesting chapters are two upon "Wild Roses" and "Lamps of the Hedgerows" respectively, but it is difficult to make a selection where all are alike interesting and deeply instructive. The book would make an admirable companion for a summer holiday. —The same publisher sends us a new translation of "The Imitation of Christ," now for the first time translated in rhythmic sentences of irregular measure, in accordance with the Latin of Thomas Kempis himself. We can commend this edition to all who wish to carefully study this venerable work.—Mr. Elliot Stock has also sent us a volume of verse by Mr. E. G. Sargent, entitled "Through Cloud and Sunshine," in which will be found some very musical hymns, including several for children, that go admirably with popular tunes.—Messrs. Marcus Ward and Co. have just published for our contributor, the Rev. J. R. Macduff, D.D., a very pretty little work which they call "The Golden Psalter," which comprises a very tastefully arranged reprint of the Psalms, with a thoughtful introduction by Dr. Macduff, printed and bound alike in gold. The work would make a very acceptable gift-book. —Total abstainers will be glad to welcome a little book of practical suggestions recently published by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, under the title of "Hold the Fort," the author of which is Mary Pryor Hack.—Dr. Dale's "Impressions of Australia" (same publishers) have been collected in a handy volume which ought to be in the hands of everyone who is thrown into the society of those who contemplate emigrating to the new world. Dr. Dale had admirable opportunities of seeing what was best worth seeing in the life of the Australians, and he has recorded his impressions in a form alike clear, concise, and interesting. He is a shrewd observer, and gives his readers the full benefit of his observations.—"The Threshold of Manhood" is the title of a volume of bright and earnest sermons to young men, by the Rev. W. J. Dawson, also issued by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. Mr. Dawson has evidently felt to the full the need there is for earnest and thoughtful study of the needs as well as the dangers of young men in great cities, and he has prepared a work which ought to be very useful to others who are labouring in the same wide field.—The same publishers send us a translation of Victor Tissot's "Unknown Switzerland," by Mrs. Wilson, which we can commend to all who are proposing to visit Switzerland and who cannot read the work in the original.—Another work which should be the companion of every Continental traveller is the fourth edition of "The Christian Traveller's Continental Handbook" (Elliot Stock), which gives a list of Protestant places of worship in cities and lands which, alas! are given up to faiths less pure.

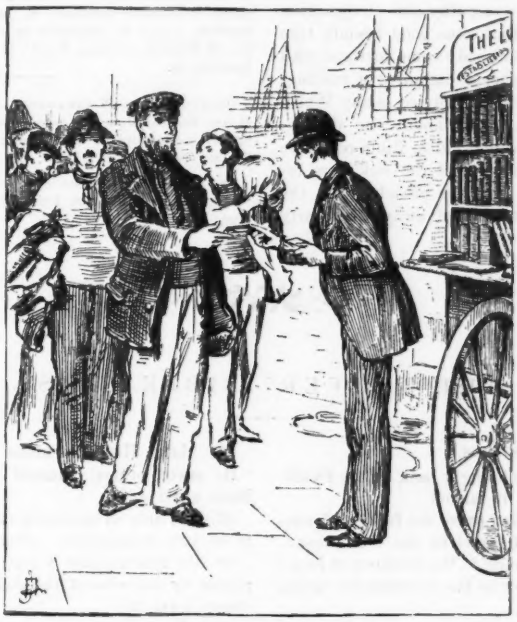
THE LIVERPOOL BIBLE CARRIAGE.

In connection with the Seamen's Christian Friend Society (255, Burdett Road, E.), an earnest work is reported from the busy neighbourhood of Liverpool. By means of the Bible-carriage a large number of Bibles and helpful books have been sold, thus opening the way for Christian conversation and personal appeals. Hundreds of thousands of tracts have been distributed along the docks, and surely some of the social progress in Liverpool may be traced to work like this, whereby lives that seemed hopeless have become living witnesses to the power of the Gospel. The missionary visits the sailors in the boarding-houses, goes on board the various vessels in the port, and in every way endeavours to secure these wandering lives for God and good. A foreign seaman remarked once, "It is good to be a Christian, for one meets with friends all over the world," and a worker connected with this Society well said to a stranger that although they could not converse freely to each other, one name was dear to them both. "Yes," said the foreigner, "Jesus is *best*." A young seaman at Preston related to the missionary how he was once in great peril in Cardigan Bay. The captain bade his crew pray, for the end was near. The cabin to which the young sailor went for a Bible was on fire, and in the midst of the storm his cries for help could not be heard. With difficulty he extinguished the fire, and, said he, "if ever prayer was answered, it was answered then, for while our

crew waited on God in prayer, the sea ran us safely into a creek." It is for those exposed to similar perils and to manifold temptations that the Seamen's Christian Friend Society desires to maintain and to extend its labours till "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth."

EMPLOYING THE UNEMPLOYED.

"You have saved me from a miserable life," writes a labourer who has been sent out to Canada by the Self-Help Emigration Society. In London he was out of employment; when he wrote so satisfactorily he was on the farm of a former emigrant of the Society, who had been sent out some three years previously. The contrast is striking, but it is only one of many. Here is another, of a shoeblack boy, who became engaged at a saw-mill when he arrived at Canada, but not very long afterwards obtained work at thirty-seven shillings per week; while a third case is that of a father and mother with a large family, who were in a condition of starvation in one of the counties of the Old Country, and were doing well in Canada, the father receiving thirty dollars a month as a gardener, while four of the children were in service. The remarkable success of this Society, which, according to the Report of the Department of Immigration for the Province of Ontario, "is the most practical of any engaged in assisting emigration," seems due chiefly to the two following causes: The care exercised in the selection from the unemployed of those likely to succeed as emigrants; and, secondly, the fact that it has fifty places in Canada where honorary agents are prepared to aid the immigrant in finding employment. Further, the agents are furnished with funds by the Society to assist the immigrants with board and lodging should they not be employed directly. The emigrants are thus cared for until they obtain work. Further, they are encouraged to raise their own passage money if possible; and so economically is the Society worked, that "approximately every £2 contributed helps one person from penury in England to plentiful employment and better prospects in Canada." Commencing in 1884, as an outcome of the "Outcast London" work of the London Congregational Union, it is absolutely unsectarian and non-political in its working, and it has now on its Committee the Earl of Aberdeen, Lords Dorchester and Monkswell, the Rev. Andrew Mearns, and other gentlemen. In 1885 one hundred and fifty emigrants were sent out, and the numbers had increased to nine hundred and two in 1888, of whom the greater number went to Canada, and some to Australia; while during the spring of this year (1889) parties of emigrants were forwarded almost every week. Such a Society as this, encouraging the golden principle of self-help, and seeking to raise people from the mire of penury and distress, and set them on the firmer ground of self-help and self-respect, is surely an admirable example of practical Christianity. Further particulars of this successful work of employing the unemployed, and helping men to help themselves, may be obtained from the able secretary, the Rev. R. Mackay, 2, Fleet Lane, Farringdon Street, E.C.



THE LIVERPOOL BIBLE CARRIAGE.

AMONG THE POOR WELSH.

Surely the world is gradually brightening into dawn! Never were so many channels of sympathy and help overflowing, never was there such yearning over spiritual needs in every direction. If any place looked like Vanity Fair, it might be Rotten Row, when fashion reigns supreme; yet only the other day, in the midst of a whirl of pomp, our attention was caught in that locality by two circumstances showing tender thought. An aged lady had armed herself with a bag of biscuits, and was surrounded by quite a flock of little birds, heedless of the neighbouring din of wheels, twittering gleefully as they responded to her familiar call. And within a few

yards of the busy scene, a sandwich-man walked up and down with clearly printed texts of Scripture, caught by many an eye—witness that some unknown one had remembered that the rich need mission-work as well as the poor. It has lately entered into the heart of a lady, who has worked much among the poor Welsh, that a mission might be started on *their* behalf in London. Hundreds are lonely in the great metropolis, to whom the the familiar, wondrous tongue of Cambria is dear; indeed, some have not acquired the English tongue at all, and experience many trials and difficulties. Mrs. Stuart Rendel, Holmdale, Dorking, who has taken up this scheme, will be glad of practical sympathy and co-operation in the work. We hear that some good friends, true to the Welsh cause, have already come forward with promises of aid. The scheme embraces a reading-room for men needing help and advice (many Welsh sailors being often disengaged about the docks); also a registry office, provident clubs, Bible-readings, sewing meetings, the visitation of the sick, care for the aged Welsh poor, and the preaching of the Gospel. Many who have drifted away from early associations might respond to an invitation into a pleasant room, where the language of the father-land would awaken precious memories, and the old Welsh hymns might stir eternal echoes within their hearts.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

List of contributions received from April 18th, 1889, up to and including May 21st. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month:—

J. J. E., Govan (eighteenth donation), 5s.; Lucy K., 1s.; L. A. W., Bristol, 5s.; Tynwald Hill, Liverpool, 5s.; J. J. E., Govan (nineteenth donation), 5s.; A Reader of "THE QUIVER," Berwick, 3s.; J. E., Balcombe, 2s. 6d.; Mildred, London, N.W., 5s.; S. Wilcock, Croydon, 2s. 6d.; E. S., Lancaster, 1s.; C. A. B., Ipswich, 2s.

ORPHAN HOMES, WALTHAMSTOW.—Mrs. Parsons, of Eastfield House, Walthamstow, has asked the Editor to acknowledge the following donations to the Homes:—A Reader at Kingston-on-Thames, 3s.; From Beryl, 5s.; A Reader of THE QUIVER, £1.

The Editor has also received a subscription of 2s. 6d. towards "THE QUIVER" Lifeboat Fund from Master J. C. Kingston, Hyde Park, W.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

97. When the ark was brought back by the Philistines, to what place was it taken?

98. In what way did God prove the faith and obedience of the children of Israel in the Wilderness?

99. What did God promise to the children of Israel as the reward of obedience to His commands? Quote passage.

100. What does St. James give as a means of mutual help in spiritual things?

101. By what name did God first make Himself known to the children of Israel?

102. What does St. John say is the reward of faith in Jesus Christ?

103. Why did the Israelites so much desire a king?

104. In what way did Samuel recognise Saul as the one chosen by God to be king?

105. Who is it tells us that faith is essential to sincere prayer?

106. In what way did Joshua know how to divide the land of Canaan amongst the various tribes of the children of Israel?

107. What does our Blessed Lord say is the great virtue which best helps us on the road to heaven?

108. In what words does God express the care He has for His people whom He redeemed from captivity?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 628.

85. "He fell down from off his seat backwards, and his neck brake." (1 Sam. iv. 18.)

86. About His miraculous power, for they said: "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." (St. Matt. xxvii. 42.)

87. The duty of trust and confidence in God, and so to be very courageous. (Deut. xxxi. 7, 8, 23.)

88. He ordered that a copy of the Law should be placed by the side of the Ark as a witness to them. (Deut. xxxi. 26.)

89. "Ye have the poor with you always." (St. Mark xiv. 6, 7; Deut. xv. 11.)

90. By the sight of the stones which had been taken out of the bed of the river. (Josh. iv. 6, 7.)

91. God preserved him while in the ark of bulrushes, from which Pharaoh's daughter took him and brought him up as her own child. (Ex. ii. 5—10.)

92. Belief in the Resurrection of Jesus. (1 Cor. xv. 13, 14.)

93. To hasten their death, because the next day was the Sabbath, and the Jews objected to their hanging upon the cross on that day. (St. John xix. 31—33.)

94. "He is not here, He is risen—remember how He spake to you saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." (St. Luke xxiv. 6, 7.)

95. "Forbearing one another and forgiving one another if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Col. iii. 13.)

96. "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart." (Psalm xxxii. 11; Phil. iv. 4.)





THE STORY OF THE WELL.

See p. 757.

ABOUT CHINESE GIRLS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CHILD-LIFE IN CHINESE HOMES."



THE PAI-LOW.

CHINESE girls! what a cloud of faces seems to rise up before us as we begin to think of them!

The girls shut up within the high, prison-like walls of many a noble and wealthy home! the girls of middle-class families, strictly secluded also from the eyes of strangers and of men!

Besides these, there are the girls of the farm-houses, brought up in the freer life of the country; and the girls of the poorer classes, who from their earliest days have to work hard for their daily bread.

Small children there are, who stagger about with heavy babies on their backs, or spend their days, from early dawn till dusk, in pasting together the soles of Chinese shoes, plaiting silk to lengthen men's "pig-tails," making lanterns, or fancy boxes, and paper money. A considerable number also spend the days of their young lives closely confined to the embroidery frame, their eyes being often permanently injured by the long working hours consumed in this ill-paid industry.

Last of all come the poor children who first see the light beneath the roof of some frail mat shed —the outcasts of society, who are brought up to beggary as a trade.

How wide, then, is the range over which we glance when we speak of these Chinese girls! and yet, though divided by so deep a gulf in most respects, some circumstances of their lives are alike in every case.

Whether the eyes of our wee Chinese lassie open first beneath the roof of some proud mandarin or in a beggar's wretched hut, the welcome she receives is rarely a cordial one; indeed, she is looked upon as an intruder, and not infrequently she disappears, and is seen no more, after the first hour of her existence.

But, supposing that she is able to tide over the numberless fatalities which seem to beset the early days of so many Chinese girl-babies, then, if it be true, as is sometimes asserted, that children who are watched the least carefully thrive the best, then surely Chinese baby-girls should flourish amazingly.

When the Chinese infant is about a month old, the day of naming arrives—an occasion celebrated with general rejoicings when the little stranger is a boy; but who would think of making any special demonstration of joy at the addition of a girl to

one's family? Still, the baby must have a name, even if it be only "Daughter Number One, Two, or Three," as the case may be.



CHINESE GIRL AND BABY.

Not unfrequently, however, she receives some such suggestive cognomen as "Beckoning a brother," "Lead along a brother," or "Come, younger brother." "White Water-lily," "Beautiful Pearl," "Better than Gold," are also some of the names not infrequently bestowed upon girls.

In many parts of China all the girls, from the children of wealthy parents (not of Tartar race) to the daughters of common beggars, undergo the torture of foot-binding, with the idea of producing the "golden lilies" which Chinese taste admires. The gait of these daughters of the Flowery Land is most uncouth to Western eyes; but in the poetical language of their native country, the movements of a girl thus deformed resemble "the waving of the willows," or are like "the green bamboos stirred by the summer breezes."

Chinese girls have, not infrequently, pleasing faces; but this applies more particularly to those of the middle and upper classes. The younger children wear their luxuriant raven tresses twisted into a heavy plait hanging down behind, secured with many yards of twisted scarlet cord. Up to the time of marriage, girls part their hair smoothly at the forehead, as the sign of their single estate; but when the wedding-day arrives, the young bride's hair is drawn back, and all the short hairs are pulled out by tweezers, with the idea of making her forehead appear broad and high.

With regard to dress, a Chinese girl is little troubled by any considerations of fashion. There is a slight difference, scarcely apparent to Western eyes, in the cut of the costumes of the girls and women of different provinces; but, speaking generally, the same attire is worn by the aged grand-dame and her year-old grand-daughter, by the mandarin's child and the daughter of a poor coolie. Their clothing differs, not in shape, but in the material of which the garments are composed and the manner in which they are ornamented. With reference to this question of dress, a well-known American missionary lady, who has lived and worked for many years in China, writes:—

"In one thing the Chinese woman is exceptionally blessed—she has inherited from former generations a style of dress at once modest, economical, and becoming. It takes but eight yards of yard-wide cloth for a complete suit of winter garments, and there is no waste in cutting nor in unnecessary appendages. Its truest economy, however, is in that saving of mental worry which comes from always cutting by the same pattern and the obviation of all need of fitting. It allows unrestricted play to every muscle, is of the same thickness over the whole body, is not in the way when at work, and it has little weight, while it has all needful warmth." Probably some of my English girl readers may hold different opinions upon this subject, and think there are two sides to this, as to most other matters.

As regards the instruction of Chinese girls, the general idea is that they are incapable of receiving a liberal education, being considered greatly inferior to their brothers intellectually.

"The feminine mind is unsteady in purpose, and easily swerved from the right," gravely asserts one ancient authority; while another informs the women of China that they do not need to study much beside the Four Virtues and the Three Obediences; the Four Virtues relating to the girl's behaviour, conversation, deportment, and employments, and the Obediences concerning a girl's dutiful subjection to her parents, a wife's to her husband, and a widow's to her son.

In the "Nu-Er-Ching," or "Little Girl's Primer," which is used by all girls who are taught to read at all, one of the maxims runs thus: "If, after marriage, you have no son, it will be your duty to persuade your husband to take another wife!"

From the age of eight or nine, little girls of wealthy families are usually kept closely guarded within their own homes. "Women should keep within the threshold of the inner apartments—even to old age they should not go beyond the doorway," says one of those Chinese authors who have handed down to posterity the fame of women of ancient times, who are considered types of what women should endeavour to attain to.

The superintendence of the kitchen is always noted by these ancient authors as one of a woman's most important duties. She should see that the vegetables are fresh and properly washed, that the meats are well flavoured, and that the whole meal is well served.

The example of an aged lady of rank, who used to go to her kitchen at daybreak to prepare gruel for her servants, lest they should suffer from cold while prosecuting their work, is quoted as worthy of imitation.



A CHINESE GIRL'S FEET.

A woman's duty, it is said, is to make shoes for herself and her children, to spin and weave, to cut out and make her own clothing and that of her husband, to wash the clothes of the family, and to care for the silkworms.

Hospitality is strictly enjoined by the example of a good lady of ancient times, who always pressed her guests to remain longer, however lengthy the period they had dwelt beneath her roof. Her family was in poor circumstances, and on one occasion, when cupboard and barn were alike bare, she emptied the straw from her mattress to obtain fodder for a guest's horse, and cut off her own hair to obtain the wherewithal to purchase wine and food for the refreshment of the gentleman himself.

In the annals of Chinese history, moreover, there are not a few examples of women who have been familiar with the literature of their country. Many of them were famous for their acquaintance with the classics, and especially the Historical Books; some were poets of no mean order; while the sage remarks of others on various subjects are not infrequently quoted. Yet, at the same time, while Chinese writers are fond of giving instances of women of past ages who have displayed extraordinary virtues, or been the possessors of exceptional talent, very sarcastic remarks about the sex frequently appear upon the same page, such as: "Women have no right to form an opinion upon any subject; silence alone becomes them." It is considered advisable, moreover, that girls should not, as a rule, be taught to read, "lest they should suffer from the contaminating influence of bad books!"

A widow, or betrothed girl whose intended husband dies, even if only a child in years, is always exhorted ever to remain faithful to the memory of the departed. They are advised to follow the example of those heroines of antiquity who disfigured themselves by cutting off their ears and noses rather than marry a second time; and even in the present day



IN A MISSIONARY SCHOOL.



THE MANDARIN'S DAUGHTER.

young girls are constantly warmly praised for "their constancy and purity" when, under these circumstances, they commit suicide.

The current numbers of the *Peking Gazette* constantly contain accounts of cases of this kind which have been brought before the notice of the Emperor. They are invariably applauded, and usually an Imperial command is issued to honour their memory by the erection of a "Pai-low," or ornamental archway. We can hardly wonder, therefore, at the weird attraction which suicide seems to possess for many Chinese women.

As an instance of the great care bestowed by one of the eminent ladies of the past in bringing up her children, it is noted that her little daughter, who had been betrothed at the age of six, hearing, when she was thirteen years old, of the death of her affianced husband, stole away in the twilight of the day on which the news had come, and drowned herself in the lotus pond in the garden.

The extraordinary idea that sick parents will recover from an illness if their child—unknown to them—cuts off a piece of his or her own flesh and mixes it with their food, is the occasion of many curious paragraphs in the Chinese papers of to-day (curious, that is, to Western eyes). One constantly sees cases of this kind mentioned as having been brought under Imperial notice, and the girls in question—for it is girls who most frequently perform this "act of filial piety"—are generally honoured with a tablet to commemorate their filial devotion.

But time would fail me to tell the many strange stories of women or girls worthy of most honourable mention, from a Chinese point of view, for their unselfish devotion to their parents or betrothed husbands.

Very numerous, too, are the instances of noble women of ancient times, who were brave and courageous in times of extreme danger, humane and filial beyond the ordinary lives.

And, beside these, there is the maiden of Chinese

romance. The ideal in most cases differs from the real; but, surely, rarely is the discrepancy so wide as we find it here.

The maiden of popular, almost classical, Chinese stories is a surpassingly beautiful damsel—"her eyebrows long willow-leaves, her cheeks almond flowers, her lips the blossoms of the peach."

Moreover, her eyes have "the wistful brightness of a lake in autumn," while "her footprints are like the flower of the lotus." The heroine of all Chinese romances is almost invariably a remarkably clever young lady. She is quite able to compete with her admirers in the composition of elaborate poetry, formed, according to custom, upon given *bouts-rimés*.

An English translation of a short poem which one charming young lady—Yao Sien by name—composed and wrote upon a scroll on which some willows were cleverly painted for the adornment of the walls of her father's summer-house, runs as follows:—

"The mournful willows beside the pond,
Tell me who planted—tell me, who?
The flying bats flit beyond, beyond,
They trouble the waters in passing through;
But the willows are there, with their light blue leaves,
And the men depart—who grieves? who grieves?"

These lines are introduced to the notice of the young gentleman by the father of the lovely poetess, with the thoroughly Chinese remark: "Can't you honour this rubbish with a laugh? Are the lines not terrible nonsense?—wretched rhymes, too?"

But he goes on to observe that his poor garden is just then honoured by the presence of a youth of extraordinary talent, who, if he will but deign to leave behind him a memento of his visit in the shape of a poem from his elegant pencil, will indeed lend an irresistible attraction to his poor belongings.

In compliance with this flattering request, the young man matches the young lady's rhymes as follows:—

"The willows wave to the winds of spring,
Their branches ruffle the pond below;
But can a beautiful living thing,
Behind her crimson portal, know
The sorrow and suffering, night and day,
Of one who is sighing far away?"

After a variety of adventures, the heroine of this story is at last united to the young student who so satisfactorily "paired" her rhymes.

On the day after the wedding, however, she warmly urges upon her bridegroom the duty of marrying another beautiful young lady, who had been betrothed to him by mistake, and upon hearing a report of his death, had attempted suicide rather than consent to another betrothal. The marriage took place, but, by the Emperor's special intervention, both young ladies were allowed to rank as first wives.

Their state of felicity is enlarged upon in the last chapter of the story—"they were supremely happy, and rivals only in beauty and grace."

They used to address complimentary verses to each other; and, indeed, says the writer, it would not be possible to describe their perfect happiness.

In another popular love story, unmeasured scorn is heaped upon the head of one poor young applicant for the fair lady's hand because he possessed no imagination, and was quite unable to compose the poem required of him. The art of rhyme-making forms, indeed, a part of every Chinese student's course. The heroine of this story, after passing through many alarming adventures, is at last on the eve of marriage with her betrothed.

"She shows her generous and noble spirit" by putting her dearest friend in her place. This is as easily done in China, where the bride's face is closely veiled, as it was in Midian of old.

Some such climax as this frequently occurs in Chinese stories, giving them a quite unique, and by no means agreeable, character of their own. These few glimpses between the covers of widely read, almost classical, Chinese romances will give some idea of how the maidens of the Flowery Land are taught to look upon marriage, of how wide as the poles apart are her ideas upon the subject as compared with those which are instilled into the heart of an English girl, and consequently, how difficult is the work of Christian missionaries, who have to contend against the mass of heathen customs and superstitions which for thousands of years have dominated the Chinese nation.

MARY I. BRYSON.

DOROTHY'S VOCATION.

BY EVELYN EVERETT GREEN, AUTHOR OF "MONICA," "OLIVER LANGTON'S WARD," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER X.—SICK CHILDREN.

FOR one long, strange week Dorothy lived as in an indescribable shifting dream, in which day and night were inextricably mixed and blended, and nothing was clear save a very real anxiety, and the necessity for constant watchfulness.

Wilfred was very ill indeed, the throat symptoms being so severe as to raise the gravest fears for his life. Winnie was quite sufficiently ill too, though never in danger; and though the eldest and youngest had the fever more slightly, they were ailing enough to be very wretched and miserable; and poor little Bernie fretted sadly whenever Dorothy was out of sight.

As the three boys were all in the same room, and Dorothy's anxiety for Wilfred kept her constantly at his bedside, Bernie was tolerably well satisfied; but if ever he awoke to find her absent, his little wailing cry would always begin, and often she was called up from her much-needed rest by one of the worried nurses, because "Master Bernie *would* keep crying and disturbing Master Wilfred."

So Dorothy had her hands full, and had no time or thought to spare for the great world without, of which she saw nothing, and heard so little. Yet there is something very sweet in the loving, clinging dependence of little children, and no attractions of any kind would have drawn the sister from her post. Her self-imposed charge was very sacred to her, and her heart yearned over the little motherless things, who were left so utterly alone in their illness and danger, the father never doing more than sending a message of inquiry, and the sisters keeping away as if they had been stricken with the plague.

Perhaps one of the saddest parts of it all was that the children never even asked for them, or seemed to remember the existence of anyone but Dorothy. Now and then they spoke of "Cousin Ralph," and wondered if he would ever come to see them again; but of father or other sisters they never seemed to think, and probably their presence beside them would only have caused distress or fear.

For a whole long ten days Dorothy saw no one from the outside world, except the doctor, and she felt as if living in a world alone, forgotten by everyone, and isolated by the force of circumstances almost as completely as if she and her little charges were stranded on a desert island.

She did not in the least resent the total desertion of all her friends; she knew it was best that strict quarantine should be observed, and she knew that Claudia's orders would be very stringently enforced. No one would be admitted even if they desired it, and who would desire such a thing?

Sometimes—often, indeed—her thoughts would turn towards the Seymours, and a longing she could not altogether check would rise up in her heart to see them once again; but she well knew that they, of all people, would be hindered if possible from obtaining access to the nurseries, and she tried to laugh at herself for the foolish hope she entertained at first that they might try to come. Why should they? Of course it was an understood thing that people going about in society should keep away from infectious illness. It was weak and foolish to dream of such a thing. Yet Dorothy knew that in her heart of hearts lingered a sense of disappointment, when day after day passed without bringing any sign from them; and when the pressing anxiety for the children had passed, and there was a little more leisure for thought and for the sense of loneliness also, the girl became conscious of a little depression of spirit that did not altogether owe its rise to physical weariness, or the strain of nursing; and though she blamed herself for it, and tried to argue it away, she found it quite imperious to any arguments of her devising.

But a surprise was in store for her which did more than make up for any previous sense of sorrow or desertion. She was reading a story-book to her little charges one afternoon, and as she had her back to the door she had not observed how it had been noiselessly opened, when a sudden, simultaneous cry of delight broke from all the children, causing her to look round in quick surprise.

"Cousin Ralph! Cousin Ralph!" shouted Bertie and Bernie, and Wilfred's eyes sparkled as they had not done for many long, weary days. Winnie, who was lying on the sofa well wrapped in dressing-gown and blanket, held out her arms with a little shriek of joy, and Dorothy felt as if sunshine and a breath of fresh air had suddenly penetrated into that shut-up room.

"Ralph!" she exclaimed, in glad surprise; "how good of you! but do you think you ought?"

"Ought what?" he asked smilingly, taking her hand in his, and holding it as he looked down at her with the pleasant, subdued smile in his clear grey eyes.

"Ought to be here—in our fever hospital—exposing yourself to infection, and the danger of spreading it?"

He laughed lightly.

"I shan't spread it any more than a doctor.—No, you monkeys, I'm not going to carry you about to-day. You must be content with the supreme pleasure of looking at anything quite so beautiful. I'm for ornament, not use, this time. How are you getting on? Why Willie, boy, you look as if you ought to be hired out to a farmer as a scarecrow! What's Dorothy been doing to you, eh?"

"Poor little chap, he can hardly speak yet. He has had a fearful throat," answered Dorothy softly, as she smoothed back the child's fair hair; "but we are getting on famously now, aren't we, Wilfred?"

He glanced up and smiled, and said "Yes" in a hoarse whisper. Ralph's face, as he looked down at the boy, was very pleasant, Dorothy thought—so strong and manly, yet so very kind and gentle too. He talked a little while to the children, evoking a great deal of laughter, and bringing smiles and colour into the little wan faces such as had not been seen there for many days. It was so delightful to see a "new person" after being shut up so long; and then Cousin Ralph was such a favourite, it was no wonder his visit was enjoyed. He had not come empty-handed either. He had brought a big box of toys and books, and though Dorothy said it was almost a pity to bring them to little people who would only make them infectious, he laughed and said that they could go to the fever hospital afterwards, where they would be very warmly welcomed by other little patients.

"Poor little things! they will want amusement badly enough these next weeks," said Ralph, leaning back against the window shutter, and looking with quiet scrutiny at Dorothy, who stood beside him. The children were engrossed in the examination of their new treasures, and for the time being in no need of attention from their elders. "How are you getting along yourself, shut up here all your time? And why do you isolate yourself so utterly from all the world?"

"It is better to do so under the circumstances," answered Dorothy. "I'm not sure that I ought to let you be here. I can't think how you got in."

"Why, up the back stairs, to be sure, like other people. Where there's a will there's a way. I was determined I'd find out why you never answered my mother's letters."

"Letters!" repeated Dorothy, in amazement. She had not received one from Mrs. Seymour all these days. Yet she did not say so; some instinct of loyalty to her foolish, treacherous sisters, who had evidently



"'Cousin Ralph! Cousin Ralph!' shouted Bertie and Bernie."—*p.* 727.

withheld them, kept her silent. She, instead, said something about things having been confused and disorganised, and her own press of duties. But Ralph was one of those half-convenient, half-tiresome people, who never require things to be explained. He grasped the situation at once, passed it over in silence, but proceeded to enlighten Dorothy as to what had happened during the preceding days.

"The day but one after I called here last, and did not see you, we were obliged to leave town on business, and only got back yesterday. My mother wrote to tell you this, as she thought you would otherwise be expecting to see her; she wrote once or twice, and told you not to be afraid of sending a letter to her. We are not at all afraid of infection, and paper can be properly disinfected, as you know, before it is sent away. As we heard nothing, I decided to come and look you up; as you say, a house with illness in it is always more or less disorganised. I thought there might have been some mistake. It seems to me I have not come too soon. You look fagged to death, Dorothy. It is high time somebody took you in hand. My mother wishes me to say that she expects you to drive with her every day for the future, from five to six o'clock, beginning from to-day. The carriage will wait for you at the corner of Carlington Street, and we know that you can be trusted to be punctual."

Dorothy's face flushed. After being shut up in the sick-rooms for all these long days, the thought of tasting the fresh air again, and of seeing the face of her kind friend, and getting the chance for a little quiet talk, was infinitely refreshing; but she hesitated.

"Do you think I ought? Would it be right of me to drive—about infection I mean?"

"You can change all your clothes first—keep a special driving suit; and as it's my mother's own carriage, I suppose she is the person to settle what risks she likes to run. She will be careful enough—you need not be afraid; but fresh air you must have, and after all your day's work up here, you will not be disposed for much walking. You had better do as you are told, Dorothy."

Dorothy wished for nothing better, as her face plainly showed.

"If the children will only spare me."

"They must spare you—I will reason with the little monsters. It's nearly time we were off. Just you go and change your dress, and I'll explain matters to these small tyrants, and I'll take you to my mother."

Dorothy had only one more objection.

"What would Claudia say?"

"Claudia has nothing to do with it. Her fear of infection keeps you in an exaggerated state of isolation. It is impossible things should go on like this.

Who cares for Claudia? She will not dare to face you, and if she tackles me or my mother, I think—yes, I really do think—that we may possibly be able to hold our own."

Dorothy could not help laughing as she ran away, her heart beating with a joyful sense of happiness and relief. It was such a comfort to have someone to talk to again, someone to whom to confide her anxieties, and from whom she could ask counsel in those numberless little matters that arise in the management of sick children, and that are so well understood by a mother.

Mrs. Seymour listened with the greatest interest to Dorothy's account of the past ten days. It was very plain that the strain upon the girl had been somewhat severe, at any rate during the first days, and the tears stood in her eyes as she told of little Wilfred's suffering and danger, and the two long terrible nights when it was one hard battle the whole time to keep him alive.

"And you were alone all that time, dear?" asked Mrs. Seymour. "Did nobody come near you to help you?"

"There were the nurses, you know; and the doctor was very kind. He or his assistant came every few hours; but Wilfred cried so if I left him; besides, I couldn't: I was too anxious. Poor child! it was so terrible to see him like that. I'm afraid it will be a long time before he gets up his strength again."

Mrs. Seymour's sympathy and interest were very comforting. Ralph was a silent but attentive listener to all that passed.

"Were you not very lonely, shut up there all day, my dear? Did it not seem hard to be debarred from all the pleasures that must always be somewhat engrossing to young people at your age? Did you never regret the choice you had made?"

"Oh no; you see, they wanted me, poor little things. They have no mother, and they depend on me. I could not have enjoyed anything whilst they were so ill; and you know when one is with sick people, and especially when there is danger too, it is difficult to think of anything else. The things that seem pleasant and important at other times look so small then. Other thoughts come at such times, and put out everything else. Do you know what I mean?"

Mrs. Seymour took and pressed Dorothy's hand in token of sympathy; tears stood in the girl's eyes, but her voice was quite steady.

"I could not help wondering if I had taught the children right—taught them what would help them through the dark valley, if they were called to go. They have nobody else, and I have tried; but I often think I am too young or too ignorant to teach them as I should. I think dear little Wilfred was ready. He has always been such a good, gentle child, and when we all thought he could not live, and he could hardly whisper even, he was so exhausted and his throat so bad, he just managed to say, 'Pray, Dolly—pray,' and he folded his hands together, and his lips seemed to follow what I said. But I wish I were better myself—more fit to teach them, and a better example for them. I do hope they will grow up as their mother would have wished. She was such a sweet, good mother to us all till she died."

"I think, Ralph," said Mrs. Seymour that night to her son, "that if you can win our dear Dorothy for your wife, you will be a very fortunate man."

"I am quite of your opinion, mother," was the quiet reply.

CHAPTER XI.—THE SISTERS.

As the month of July ran its regular course, Claudia and Mabel began to congratulate themselves upon the way matters were turning out, and to feel that prosperity was smiling once more upon them.

Dorothy was safely out of the way, shut up in the third storey in complete isolation. The children were progressing favourably—so favourably that not even the most conscientiously disposed person could cast a reflection upon them for not offering assistance in the nursing; yet that most convenient of all barriers—infection—drew its magic circle round Dorothy and



"'It shows the way the wind is settling, *I* think.'"—*p.* 731.

her little charges, and there was not the smallest danger, so said the sisters, that the isolation of her position would be invaded. And as soon as ever the move could be accomplished without risk, the whole of the nursery establishment, with Dorothy at its head, would be packed off to some out-of-the-way seaside place, there to remain until the London house was opened again to receive its inhabitants. Mr. Templeton and his elder daughters would meantime pay a round of visits, or amuse themselves at fashionable health resorts; and they were quite determined during these months not to lose sight of their newly found friends and kinsfolk, the Seymours.

Claudia was very well satisfied with the state of affairs as regarded the Seymours, now that Dorothy was safely disposed of. She met Ralph often, and watched him closely, and there was certainly no other girl to whom he paid any marked attention. Indeed, she flattered herself that it was to her, or to Mabel, that the greater part of his conversation was addressed. Mrs. Seymour, too, responded to their many advances with quiet friendliness that almost amounted to cordiality, and since the first few days, no more letters had come from her to Dorothy. Claudia had felt a few qualms at suppressing these letters; but she was very anxious to break off all communication between the Seymours and their acknowledged favourite, and she was foolish enough to believe that she could play such a trick with impunity. Of course if inquiries ever were made, people would fancy it was an oversight that the letters did not reach Dorothy. There is always confusion and blundering at a time when there is serious illness in a house, and servants are prone to acts of neglect or forgetfulness. It was a source of some triumph, both to Claudia and Mabel, how very few questions were asked by these cousins with regard to Dorothy and her little charges—only just the regular conventional inquiries that everybody made: nothing of a special nature. It was certainly "out of sight out of mind" with them, and Mabel laughed in open triumph. She was playing a game of her own as well as Claudia, and the aim of each was to try and secure the hand of the wealthy cousin for herself. Ralph was so strictly impartial in his attentions that it was difficult to say which sister had the better chance, but Claudia did not even recognise Mabel as a rival, being placidly certain of the power of her own charms, whilst Mabel secretly laughed at her sister's pretensions, feeling quite positive that her lofty airs of superiority, and the statuesque style of beauty she affected, would be little to the liking of the lazy Ralph, who would be certain to want more animation —as indeed had been evinced by his admiration for Dorothy, transitory as this had been.

Mabel was nothing if not animated, and she had acquired the faculty of saying smart things in a sharp, ready fashion that she found decidedly telling with the young men of her acquaintance. She often had quite a little group round her, listening to her sarcastic comments on the people about her, and it did not occur to her that though people might laugh at a gift of wit which enabled its owner to ridicule everybody and everything in an amusing if somewhat flimsy fashion, yet it hardly put her own character in an amiable light, or encouraged observers in the wish to become more closely acquainted.

With Ralph she very soon began this kind of would-be brilliant talk, thinking, from the slightly sarcastic comments she often heard from his lips, that he, at any rate, would appreciate and like it. Possibly he appreciated it at a truer value than she would altogether have cared about; but his indolent manner encouraged her to proceed, and it was always pleasant to get a listener who never seemed eager to take his share of the conversation, but was willing to leave it all to her. Mabel loved the sound of her own voice, and was never weary of talking to Ralph, especially when she thought that their interviews were being observed by others.

When some little time had passed by, and she felt the ground somewhat safer under her feet, she wondered if it might not be a good plan to turn Dorothy into ridicule for the benefit of her quondam admirer. Mabel had seen enough of the world to be aware that a cooling or passing admiration very soon changes into something approaching dislike. No doubt Ralph was half ashamed already of his former attentions to the younger sister, and if so, he would be quite ready to join in the laugh against her.

So Mabel broke ground cautiously at first, but becoming emboldened by a certain undefinable interest in his manner, she went on more fluently, laughing over Dorothy's grand aspirations after a vocation, and making merry at her expense in a variety of ways.

"People with grand ideas generally do have to come down in the world," remarked Ralph on one of the occasions on which Mabel was entertaining him with reminiscences of Dorothy's "follies." "The question remains whether it is better to aim high, content to fail and take the lower place, or to be satisfied always with so low a level that idealism itself cannot raise one from it."

But Mabel never troubled herself to follow her companion's train of thought.

"It is such fun to hear Dorothy talk sometimes; but I daresay you have found that out for yourself. One would think she was going to do such wonderful things—set the Thames on fire, at the very least. And then, when all is said and done, what does it all come to?"

"Why, not much, does it? Only a few weeks of complete 'and entire self-sacrifice. In a beautiful, noble, generous world like the one we live in, such things are a mere matter of course—hardly worth considering—not, at least, by people like you and me."

Mabel felt for a moment rather as if she had received a slap in the face; but the last words, coupling her name with Ralph's, brought back a measure of self-satisfaction.

"Oh, Dorothy is a very well-meaning little thing indeed. I would not for worlds say a word in her disfavour. She is always pleased to have some good work on hand; and really she is so fond of those children that it is no sacrifice for her to be with them. Dorothy is not much more than a child herself—she

always has preferred the nursery to the drawing-room. I believe in her heart of hearts she is quite pleased at being spared the necessity for going out, and having the right to spend all her time up-stairs, reading story-books and playing with the children—really and truly I do. At least, I should be sure of it if it were not for poor Mr. Harold Sopely."

"Sick and convalescent children are not generally considered the most attractive companions—sole and only companions, at any rate. They are apt to be cross and snappish, and the society of any four people palls sometimes when there is never any change; but then Dorothy, as we know, is peculiar. Perhaps she likes it. How does she manage to get air and exercise? Does she never leave the house?"

Mabel looked a little confused.

"Really I don't know what Dorothy's private arrangements are; but she is very well able, I am sure, to take care of herself—she always was. She generally manages to do anything she wants to do, and I don't suppose the art will have deserted her at this juncture. I daresay, if the truth were known, she is having a very fine time up there."

"I should think there could not be a doubt of it," answered Ralph; but something in his voice and in the look upon his face made Mabel quickly change the subject, she hardly knew why.

But if she was a little disconcerted at the result of this conversation (though she hardly understood how it was that she did feel disturbed by it), at least she was soon restored to complacency by the piece of intelligence that Claudia had gleaned from their father.

"Do you know, Mabel, Mrs. Seymour has invited all of us down to her house in September! There are to be a few friends of Ralph's there, and she wants to get up a pleasant house party to meet them. Could anything be better? A whole fortnight, and perhaps more, at Seymour Hall! It shows the way the wind is settling, *I* think;" and Claudia looked very well satisfied.

"Is Dorothy asked too?"

"We are all asked—the whole family; and of course father accepted—even the children are included; it was a regular family invitation. It was much better to accept it quietly like that; but of course we shall not say a word to Dorothy about it; and when the time comes, she and the children will just stay where they are, and we shall arrive without them. It will be easy to make excuses, and every hostess would be relieved to be rid of so large a party from one family, especially with a lot of delicate children. Things could not be turning out better; and it is plain the Seymours like us very much, or they would not ask us down like that. The house and property belong to Ralph, though Mrs. Seymour does live with him; and the invitation must of course be really his. It shows very clearly that he is anxious to prosecute the friendship. He does not wish to lose sight of us."

Mabel was delighted at the prospect. She felt quite certain of outshining Claudia in country life, whatever doubt there might be of her doing so in a drawing-room. She rode better, walked better, played a far stronger game of tennis. Her vivacity and energy would have more scope, and she would be able to shine with brighter lustre.

It was just as well for their peace of mind that they did not hear the colloquy taking place at that very time between Ralph and his mother.

"You asked them all, then, did you? There was no difficulty made, I suppose?"

"No, none at all. I am aware we should both have preferred asking only dear Dorothy and the little ones: but, of course, we must study other people's feelings. Harold Templeton is my cousin and Dorothy's father, and I shall be pleased to welcome him as a guest; and as for dear Dorothy and those poor little mites, when we have once got them we will not let them go in a hurry. But the elder girls must come with their father, as a matter of propriety. They need not be much in your way. There will be other people in the house; and they are fond of society."

Ralph's face wore one of its inscrutable expressions.

"He consented to bring the whole train with him?"

"Oh yes—he did hesitate, but merely conventionally, and I insisted."

"They will leave Dorothy behind if they can," said Ralph. "They talk of her in a way that makes my blood boil. You can see their game now?"

"I have seen something—I know what you think," answered gentle Mrs. Seymour; "but I have tried to believe it a mistake."

"I am sure you have—it is like you to do so. Perhaps, if I prove right in this also, you will be convinced."

"What do you think they will do?"

"Pack Dorothy and the children off to some outlandish sea-side place, and then arrive without them—as I said from the first."

"That would hardly be polite."

"Possibly not; but it is what will be done."

"It must not be allowed. You have said that too."

"I do not intend to allow it!"

Ralph's face was stamped again with its look of invincible resolution. He had a way of setting his features as if they were carved in flint.

"No, I do not think you will allow it," said his mother, with a little smile. She was proud of this resolute boy of hers. She was not sorry sometimes to see obstacles arise in his path. His masterful way of sweeping them all before him gave her such a keen sense of pleasure.

"These poor children, too—I quite long to have them under our roof; but a blow of sea-air first will do them most good of all, and August is a capital sea-side month. When the days begin to draw in, and they have got back some of their strength again, they will enjoy the life in our disused nurseries all the more. I shall not let them go in a hurry; I shall talk to Harold about it. I believe a winter spent in the country would make new creatures of them."

"Well, keep them as long as you please, mother—the longer the better. We shall prove rather dangerous people to Mr. Templeton at this rate, if you rob him of his four little children, and I of one of his daughters!"

Mrs. Seymour smiled, and then reverted to the first topic.

"Are you confident of getting Dorothy to come, if her people are set against it? She may feel it her duty to stay where they sent her."

"I think that difficulty can be got over," answered Ralph coolly.

"It is not as if we had any authority——"

the realisation of my dream. Will you be a perfect angel, and do as I ask?"

"I do not wish my wings to grow prematurely. I doubt if they would altogether suit my style of beauty; but if you will tell me what you want, I will see what can be done. I don't know that



"He complimented her in gently ironical fashion."—*p.* 733.

But for once in his life Ralph cut his mother short.

"Pardon me, my dear mother, for contradicting you there; but by the time this anticipated capture takes place, I flatter myself that I shall have some authority over Dorothy."

CHAPTER XII.—A RIVER-SIDE PARTY.

"You here, Ralph!" cried Mabel.

"Even I, fair cousin. Is it such a great shock to your feelings?"

"Dreadful!—I don't know how to get over it. Are you going to stay long?"

"Ten more days, I fear. There will be no escaping me, you see. You did not bargain for such an infliction when you accepted Mrs. Castleford's invitation."

Mabel's eyes were dancing with pleasurable excitement. She knew very well that Ralph and his mother were guests at this pleasant house beside the Thames; indeed, the sisters had manœuvred somewhat diligently for an invitation on that very account; but it pleased her humour to affect an astonishment she did not feel, and she did not know that Ralph saw through the affectation.

"We are here for ten days or a fortnight ourselves. I call this a perfectly charming house, though I have never stayed in it before. Ralph, I am going to demand a solemn promise from you. I have set my heart upon a certain thing: you are to assist me in I am a very good hand at the realisation of lofty ideals."

"Well, mine is not anything so very sublime, after all. I have set my heart on learning to row."

"On learning to row, have you?"

"Yes, I have indeed. You see, I can ride, and I can skate, and I can play tennis, and do a variety of things like that; and I enjoy them all immensely; but I can't row. I have never had the chance of learning; and I should *so* like to add that art to the list of my accomplishments. Will you teach me, Ralph?"

"With all the pleasure in the world. I love to take my ease in a boat. You shall do all the work, and I shall have all the pleasure."

Mabel ran indoors to dress for dinner with a face beaming with complaisant satisfaction. She felt convinced that during the next week at least she was going to have a very good time.

The very next day she claimed Ralph's promise, and he showed no disposition to shirk. There were always plenty of boats about on the shining reach of river before Mrs. Castleford's smooth lawns and brilliant flower-beds. They found a boat suited to their purpose, and pushed out into the flotilla.

Mabel was not so utterly ignorant of the art of rowing as she professed to be. She managed to avoid the hopeless ungainliness that characterises the first attempts of the real beginner, and she had thought and attention to spare for other matters than her

soulls. She thought her cousin looked very handsome in his white flannels, as he lounged back against the dark blue cushions in the boat's stern, and gave his advice and directions in his lazy, half-humorous way. The girl was prettily dressed herself, and looked her best. She wondered if by chance he admired her as much as she admired him; but it was not likely that he would betray himself if he did.

He complimented her in gently ironical fashion upon her proficiency in the new accomplishment, to which she seemed to take as easily as a duck to the water, and Mabel did not detect the irony, and was greatly delighted with her lesson, and only wished he would have kept upon the pleasant subject of self the whole time. But Ralph's patience had its limit, and at last he broached another subject.

"And where is Dorothy all this while?"

"Oh, down at Shag's Bay with the children—having a halcyon time of it, I believe."

"Shag's Bay. I know that little place slightly. It is very pretty, but fearfully out of the world."

"Yes, that's just why Dorothy likes it so much. She cannot endure fashionable watering-places. She loves to bury herself with the children right away in some lonely, out-of-the-way spot. She is not much more than a child herself, you see."

"So they will dig in the sand together, and paddle and play at horses all day long, and never feel the need of any society except their own."

"That is about it. Dorothy is almost as much of a baby as Winnie, when she can throw off the yoke of custom and fashion."

"I almost wonder you are all so easy in your minds to leave such a crew of babies to shift for themselves. Generally it is thought necessary to send one wise head on such an expedition."

"Oh, there is nurse with them—a most experienced woman; and Dorothy has plenty of sense, even though she is childish in many things."

"And the children are better?"

"Oh, yes, quite well; only as there *has* been infection, it is better for them to go to a very quiet place, where they are not likely to see a soul."

"And how long will they stay there?"

"Oh, I don't know; Claudia and Dorothy will arrange all that. If Dorothy had her own way, I believe she would never come back at all."

"What curious taste she must have!"

"Dorothy always was curious—not in the least like us."

"So it seems. You would not care to bury yourself for an indefinite period in an outlandish place, where there was not a soul to speak to?"

"No; I should hate it," was the laughing answer. "I like society, and always did. I never professed to be an eccentric, like Dorothy."

"She must be peculiarly eccentric, especially for one of her apparently sociable temperament. One would quite have fancied society congenial to her, if not an essential element of life, and have said that she would hardly have cared for a prolonged exile in absolute solitude, especially after a period of previous isolation."

"She has the children," said Mabel quickly.

"Ah! true. She has the children."

Then there was silence; and Mabel was conscious of feeling a considerable access of irritation and disappointment. It was not at what Ralph *said* that she inwardly chafed, but at the attitude of his mind, as implied rather than expressed. Rallying her courage, however, and casting about in her mind for some defence to make that should not sound too much like a defence, she hit upon a happy excuse that she thought would serve her purpose well.

She looked at Ralph with a sort of arch seriousness, and laid a finger on her lips.

"I wonder if you could keep a secret?"

"I should not like to promise."

"Well, after all, I don't know if it is such a great secret—at any rate, I don't suppose it will be one long; but if you are anxious about Dorothy, and think her likely to pine away in neglected solitude, I think you are troubling yourself without a cause."

"I had not pictured the pining process with any great vividness."

"I don't *know* anything," pursued Mabel, with an air of complaisant mystery. "You must not think I am betraying secrets. Nobody has *said* anything, but somehow I do not fancy that Dorothy's solitude will be very long uninvaded."

"Ah, indeed!"

"We have had a good many rather marked and pressing inquiries as to her destination; and this is a free country, and there is a little hotel at Shag's Bay, remote as the place is. Other people like solitude too, sometimes. I fancy we shall hear that a certain Mr. Harold—well, never mind the rest—has taken a violent liking for retirement."

A curious smile flickered over Ralph's face. His sleepy eyes were fixed with an almost disconcerting penetration upon his companion's face.

"Ah, indeed! I heard something of that before—just a whispered rumour. How is the little romance progressing?"

"It got rather checked, of course, by Dorothy's isolation; but you know what the song says about absence making the heart grow fonder. I really think it often does."

"I am sure of it," said Ralph.

"So in that case, you see, it will not be strange if we do hear a piece of news one of these days."

"You think Dorothy favours this admirer, then?"

Mabel laughed, shook her head, and closed her lips tightly.

"I am not going to betray Dorothy's confidence to anybody," she said, "least of all to a sarcastic creature like you. What would you say to any girl who had betrayed herself before the magic question had been put?"

"That would have to depend upon circumstances. Generally, I admit that such conduct is somewhat harshly criticised."

Mabel stopped suddenly. She became aware that she was treading somewhat dangerous ground. She was not altogether sorry when the voyage came to an end. It had begun prosperously enough, but somehow things had not turned out quite to her liking towards the end. She had an uneasy feeling that to try and

hoodwink Ralph Seymour partook of the nature of playing with edge-tools, which is proverbially disastrous.

If only, however, the subject of Dorothy could be avoided, and those tiresome children, whom people would pity and inquire for (and when talk of this kind went on, the elder sisters often felt as if their conduct might be secretly criticised), be permitted to drop into oblivion and obscurity, there was no reason why all should not be plain sailing still. At ordinary times Ralph could be pleasant enough; he paid a proper amount of cousinly attention to both sisters, took Claudia in to dinner the first night, and afterwards instructed Mabel in the mysteries of sundry games. He could not be said to be marked in his attentions, which were of an impersonal and ordinary kind enough, but it pleased the sisters immensely, and raised their hopes and aspirations to a high pitch.

Mrs. Castleford's was a house where there was always something going on of an amusing and enlivening character. To-night an expedition by road and river to an old abbey some ten miles away was under eager discussion. The weather was delightful for out-of-door pleasure parties, warm and genial, without oppressive heat, with frequent showers to lay the dust, without interfering in any objectionable way with pleasure parties.

"No time like the present," was a favourite motto of the hospitable hostess, and accordingly, next day was fixed for the picnic. Some of the party were to drive, some to ride, and others to go by boat. Most of the younger portion of the company decided in favour of the boats. It was a little warm for riding, and the carriages were voted dull.

Mabel elected to ride, for she had fancied she had heard Ralph say he should go on horseback. She thought he would not care for the exertion of rowing ten miles up stream, as he would be doomed to do when there were so many ladies to be transported. But to her great annoyance on descending next morning to breakfast, she saw by his white flannels that he meant to join the water party. She, however, was dressed for the saddle, and could not make any change now. She hoped to make up for lost time later in the day; after all, she might not have succeeded in getting into the same boat as Ralph, in which case she would not be any worse off than she was at present.

Her cousin came to her side to assist her to mount; and when, with a sudden impulse of good-nature, she exclaimed, "I wish poor Dorothy could have been with us to-day," he gave her a glance that made her heart quite glow for a moment.

Softer, pleasanter, and more generous feelings began to stir in Mabel's heart as she rode along that bright summer's day. She began to have a perception that there had been a lack in her life all this time. She felt a little ashamed of some of her past thoughts and feelings, and wondered if, after all, this determined pursuit of her cousin was either well-judged or likely to be successful. Might not Ralph be really a pleasanter companion as cousin, or even brother, than in a nearer relation still? And was he a man likely to be "caught," as the saying goes, by a woman's clever artifice? Mabel was vain and shallow, and spoiled by over-indulgence and a want of wise control in her earlier years, but she was not altogether bad-hearted. If once her better nature, usually so dormant, could be thoroughly awakened, it was possible that she might develop into a character altogether different from her past self. She thought of Ralph's last glance at her, and a new idea came into her head.

"I don't believe he 'll ever care two straws for me for my own sake. I 'm almost sure he 's half in love with Dorothy; but if I talk to him of her, and put a stop to all that humbug about Harold Sopely, perhaps he 'll begin to like me for my own sake, and that would be a great gain, for I should like to be friends, if we can be nothing else. I mustn't say a word of this to Claudia, however; she would call it all folly, and make me change my mind. But, really, if he won't marry me (and I don't believe he will), I 'd as soon he had Dorothy as anybody. She 's a good little soul, and though I know I should be jealous of her at first, I suppose I should get used to the idea of her elevation; and she never bears malice."

Engrossed in reflections such as these, half selfish, half good-natured, Mabel was more silent than was her wont; but she made up for that at the picnic itself by an unusual brightness and animation.

"Ralph," she said, as they rose from the repast, "I've got a letter in my pocket that I think will interest you. I 've not had time to read it yet. It 's from Dorothy."

"Shall I row you out on the river where you can enjoy it in solitude?" asked Ralph, a subdued smile in his sleepy eyes.

"That would be capital. Then you shall share it, if the contents are not of too private a nature."

"Too much engrossed in raptures over Mr. Harold Sopely," added Ralph, with great gravity.

She looked at him, laughing and flushing.

"Exactly so. I will spare you the raptures of that description."

They stepped into a small sculling-boat, and Ralph turned its head leisurely down stream. There were long reaches of shining water before them as they floated placidly along. It was a sleepy sort of day; a haze hung over the river, tempering the heat of the sun. Mabel opened her letter and looked it through, Ralph watching her with a covert interest in his eyes, that in anyone else would have been eagerness. When she had glanced through the four pages, she looked up with a smile at him, and asked:

"Do you want to hear it?"

And he answered briefly. "Yes."

So Mabel began to read the cheerful letter that seemed to breathe Dorothy's spirit in every line. So engrossed were the pair in their occupation that they ceased to pay any heed to their position, and were only aroused from their abstraction by the sound of a vigorous shout of warning.

Looking quickly round, and aware of the rushing and roaring sound of water in their ears, they saw in a moment their peril. The boat had drifted into the weir channel whilst they were otherwise occupied, and now was being rapidly sucked down towards the head of the fall.

(To be continued.)

RIGHT AND WRONG AMBITION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH MARRIED," ETC., ETC.

"THERE!" said a little shoeblack boy to me one day, as he gave a last touch to my boots, and stuck his brushes into each other with a look of triumph, "there, they can't shine more." This boy had succeeded in life, and was at the top of his profession. Without striving to force himself into some position for which he was unfitted, he had aimed at succeeding in his own line. This is the right sort of ambition, and it is one that we can all gratify.

We may be sure that he who cannot play well a subordinate part in the drama of life will do no better if given a higher *rôle*. The great natural philosopher Faraday, who was the son of a blacksmith, wrote, when a young man, to Sir H. Davy, asking for employment at the Royal Institution. Sir H. Davy consulted a friend on the matter. "Here is a letter from a young man named Faraday; he has been attending my lectures, and wants me to give him employment at the Royal Institution. What can I do?"—"Do? put him to wash bottles. If he is good for anything, he will do it directly; if he refuses, he is good for nothing." Faraday washing bottles would be quite as successful a man as Professor Faraday lecturing at the Royal Institution, if both kinds of work were equally well done. The carpenter who makes good chairs and tables, better deserves a crown than a king who cannot govern. We must all admire and consider successful the crossing-sweeper whose honest pride it was that he could do "an ornamental piece of sweeping round a lamp-post!"

> "If I were a cobbler, I'd make it my pride
> *The best* of all cobblers to be;
> If I were a tinker, no tinker beside
> Should mend an old kettle like me."

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," is the motto of noble ambition. The other day I asked a young officer if he played polo. "No," he said, "I do not, for I have not time to practise it enough, and I hate doing anything badly." This is the feeling of a man who is ambitious in the best sense of the word. He hates doing anything badly.

The late celebrated head-master of Uppingham School used to say that every boy is good for something. Probably we who are grown up are all good for something, and would excel if only we would try to do so in our own line. This, however, is what we do not do. Each man wants to boast in another man's line. He thinks that in order to "get on" and be successful he must leave that state of life into which he was called by God.

We speak of a man's "calling" in life, implying by our words a belief that God calls each of us to his own place: that is, to the place which he is capable of filling with the greatest credit. By giving to us certain tastes and capacities, God calls us as certainly as if we heard a voice from heaven. False ambition says, "Leave this calling as soon as possible, and force yourself into a position which is more 'genteel,' into one which is presided over by 'the bestial goddess of comfort and respectability.'" From this false ambition come jealousy, grief from loss of fortune, all the torments of wounded self-love, and a thousand other mental sufferings—the commonly enumerated moral causes of insanity. They are griefs of a kind to which a man who is ambitious in the best sense of the word should not fall a prey. There need be no disappointed ambition if we set before ourselves the true aim in life, which is to amend ourselves, and do our "level best" in whatever sphere we are called upon to work.

> "All service is the same with God—
> With God, whose puppets, best and worst
> Are we; there is no last nor first,
> There is no great, there is no small
> To the Soul that maketh all."

No position in life is so low that a really noble man cannot raise it, nor any so high that a base man cannot degrade it. I am not urging anyone to live an indolent, unaspiring, vegetative life. I am only saying, "Covet earnestly the best gifts." Be sure it requires much more perseverance and energy to perfect character than to become a "great success" in the estimation of the world. Instead of telling people—especially young and enthusiastic persons—not to be ambitious, the true policy is to urge them to be far more ambitious in the right sense of the word than they generally are, and to encourage in them a "divine discontent" with imperfection of all kinds, especially with badly done work.

"But what a rare thing is success in life!" said Endymion; "I often wonder whether I shall ever be able to step out of the crowd."—"You may have success in life without stepping out of the crowd," said the Baron. This answer of the Baron's seems to us to sum up the true philosophy of life: "You may have success in life without stepping out of the crowd." It is well to be assured of this, for to succeed in life is the natural ambition, if not of every young Endymion, at least of his parents for him. If to succeed in life it were necessary to become very famous, very powerful, or very rich, success would be the monopoly of but a very few people. It has been calculated that not more than one in four thousand may be expected to attain

distinction, and that not one in a million possesses that wonderful thing called genius.

But there is a real sort of success that cannot be monopolised. Our being's end and aim is to be good and to do good. Here everyone may succeed, for character is a kind of wealth that knows no failure. "They truly are faithful who devote their entire lives to amendment." Every man may make his life successful in this sense. And as one is never so successful as when he least thinks of becoming so, such a one will probably gain in the long run more happiness, and exercise a greater influence in the world, than his more grasping neighbour.

"Oh! keep me innocent; make others great," was the prayer written by Queen Caroline Matilda of Denmark with a diamond on the window of her castle at Frendsborg. The more we know of the lives of the great, whether from history or from personal acquaintance, the more we become aware how many of them would say:—

> "'T is better to be lowly born,
> And range with humble dwellers in content,
> Than to be perked up in a glistering grief,
> And wear a golden sorrow."

Earthly success is uncertain of acquisition, brief in continuance, disappointing in fruition. Not so with the success that is aimed at by true ambition. It is certain to all who seek it. It is endless in duration. It never disappoints:—

> "'T is not in mortals to command success,
> But we'll do more, Sempronius; we'll deserve it."

Epictetus once received a visit from a certain magnificent orator going to Rome on a lawsuit, who wished to learn from the Stoic something of his philosophy. Epictetus received his visitor coolly, not believing in his sincerity. "You will only criticise my style," said he; "not really wishing to learn principles."—"Well, but," said the orator, "if I attend to that sort of thing, I shall be a mere pauper like you, with no plate, nor equipage, nor land."—"I don't want such things," replied Epictetus; "and besides, you are poorer than I am, after all. Patron or no patron, what care I? You do care. I am richer than you. I don't care what Cæsar thinks of me. I flatter no one. This is what I have, instead of your gold and silver plate. You have silver vessels, but earthenware reasons, principles, appetites. My mind to me a kingdom is, and it furnishes me with abundant and happy occupation in lieu of your restless idleness. All your possessions seem small to you; mine seem great to me. Your desire is insatiate—mine is satisfied."

We conclude with an historical anecdote which illustrates the difference between right and wrong ambition. Henry the Fourth of France made the good and happiness of his people so much his peculiar care, that he diminished as much as possible both the expenses of his table and his wardrobe, contenting himself with wearing a plain grey habit, with a doublet of either satin or taffeta, without the least ornament. He used often to banter his courtiers on the magnificence of their apparel, "carrying," as he said, "their castles and their woods upon their shoulders." In his elegant comparison between Henry and Cæsar, Montaigne says, most truly: "If Cæsar conquered more cities and won more battles, Henry acquired more real glory in making his people happy, after having delivered them from those tyrants who oppressed them. He joined to the talents of a warrior both moral and civil virtues, which Cæsar never possessed. They were both ambitious, but the ambition of Cæsar was crime—in Henry it was virtue."

WHAT IS MYRRH?

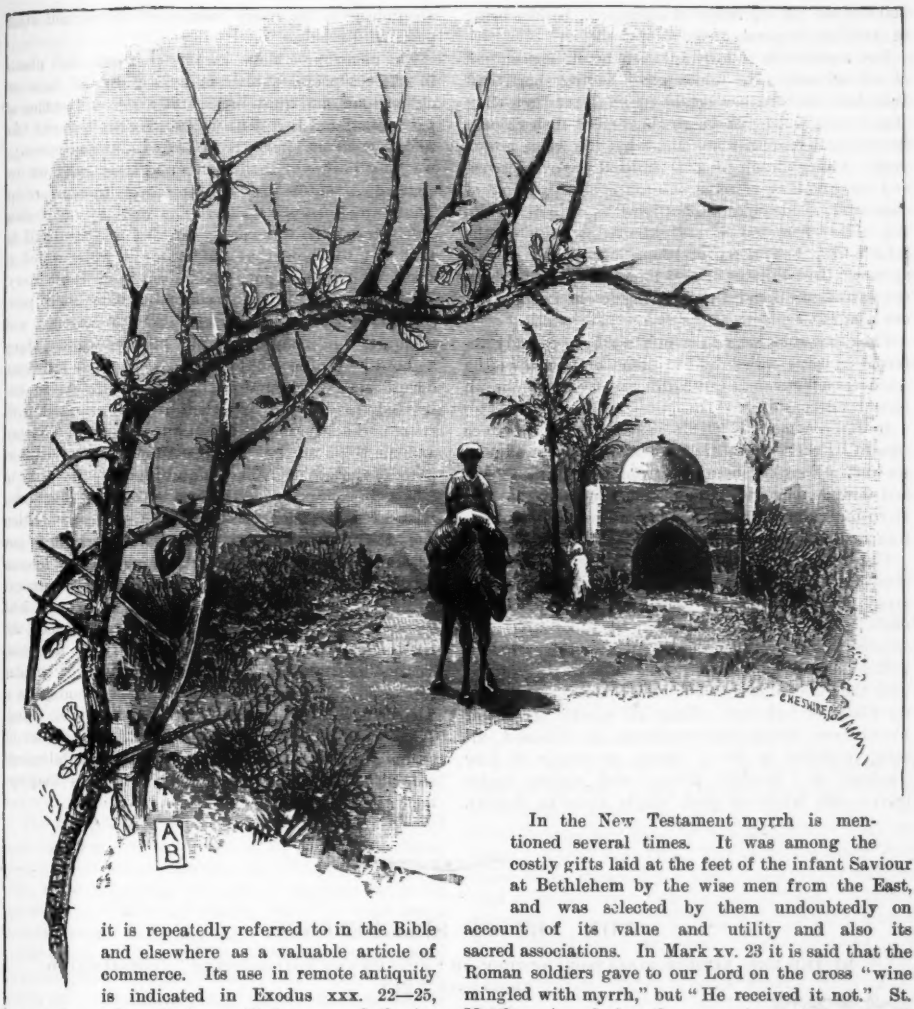
BY THE REV. W. SPIERS, M.A., F.G.S., F.R.M.S.

THE student of Scripture botany does not always find it easy to determine with absolute certainty what precise plant corresponds to the one denoted by the original Hebrew or Greek word used by the inspired writer. We have already found this to be the case in our previous papers on Bible plants. But in regard to the plant now under consideration no such difficulty is encountered. Both on account of its name and the familiarity of Easterns with it, the identification of this fragrant perfume and the plants which produce it is a matter about which there can be but little question.

The only caution that need be given by way of preventing confusion is that the reader should bear in mind that in the two first occurrences of the word myrrh in the Authorised Version—viz., in Genesis xxxvii. 25 and xliii. 11—it is probably the produce of a species of rock-rose that is referred to, the Hebrew word being a different one from that which commonly denotes myrrh. The correction of this is made in the margin of the Revised Version, and the explanation of it is, of course, that the general term myrrh was occasionally applied to fragrant exudations from various plants.

The Hebrew *mōr*, the Æolic Greek *myrra*, the Latin myrrha, all signify the myrrh-tree known to modern botanists as *Balsamodendron*, and belonging to the natural order of *Amyridaceæ*.

From very early times myrrh has been celebrated as a perfume, and has been used not only in the making of incense, but also as a medicament. Consequently



it is repeatedly referred to in the Bible and elsewhere as a valuable article of commerce. Its use in remote antiquity is indicated in Exodus xxx. 22—25, where it is specified as one of the ingredients of the holy oil for anointing. "Moreover the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take thou also unto thee the chief spices, of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half as much, even two hundred and fifty, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty, and of cassia five hundred, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive oil an hin, and thou shalt make it an holy anointing oil, a perfume compounded after the art of the perfumer; it shall be an holy anointing oil."

In Esther ii. 12 its purifying qualities are suggested, for it was to be used on that account in the king's palace at Shushan.

In Psalm xlv. 8 the sweetness of its perfume is indicated,: "All thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia." Another reference to its fragrance is found in Proverbs vii. 17.

In the New Testament myrrh is mentioned several times. It was among the costly gifts laid at the feet of the infant Saviour at Bethlehem by the wise men from the East, and was selected by them undoubtedly on account of its value and utility and also its sacred associations. In Mark xv. 23 it is said that the Roman soldiers gave to our Lord on the cross "wine mingled with myrrh," but "He received it not." St. Matthew, in relating the same circumstance, says it was "vinegar mingled with gall" that was offered. As there are several species of myrrh-tree, it is probable that this "gall" was myrrh of a rather acrid kind, or it may be that the word was used in its more popular or general sense. In the narrative of the Redeemer's interment, as related by St. John, Nicodemus is said to have brought "a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred-pound weight." (St. John xix. 39.) This special use of myrrh seems to have been learned from the Egyptians, whose methods of embalming the dead are fully described by Herodotus.

Ancient authors agree in fixing upon Arabia as the original home of the *balsamodendron*. It is indigenous also to the opposite coast of Africa. It is not astonishing that it should find its way to Palestine, for Arabian merchants travelled in all directions with their merchandise, and Palestine was at the crossing

point of the old highways of commerce, besides being in itself an important centre of trade.

The myrrh-tree is low and scrubby in aspect, not at all attractive in appearance, having short, stiff branches, with rather bright green leaves, growing close to the wood. It bears clusters of insignificant flowers, and the fruits are somewhat like large brown peas. A very strong odour is emitted from the wood and bark, and the resinous substance, the "myrrh" of commerce, exudes like oil, but hardens on exposure to the air. There are several kindred species of the myrrh-tree, but none of them correspond to the aromatic garden herbs of that name, several of which are natives of Britain, and belong to the Umbelliferous plants.

The other substance to which we have already referred as being called by the name of myrrh in the Authorised Version is quite different from the one we have been considering.

Its Hebrew name is *lōt*. It was amongst the articles carried by the Ishmaelites to whom Joseph was sold when they were on their way from Gilead to Egypt, and it was one of the things that Jacob sent to the Egyptian ruler when his sons, along with Benjamin, returned to Egypt for the purchase of food.

The difference of name in the Hebrew shows conclusively that this substance could not have been the myrrh which has already been described, and this is made all the more certain by the fact that the *balsamodendron* was not a native of Palestine. Modern writers, as we have already stated, identify the *lōt* with the gum called *labdanum*, which is exuded from the *Cistus* or rock-rose. There are several species of *Cistus* from which this substance is obtained, all being described by Mr. J. Smith, ex-curator of Kew Gardens, as "shrubby plants, with simple entire leaves, and white or pink single rose-like flowers, abounding in the rocky country of Gilead and other parts of Palestine."

The mention of these various perfumes and plants in the Scriptures throws many a gleam of light on old customs, and quite incidentally gives us touches of patriarchal and Palestinian life. We are brought face to face with the ancients in their industrial pursuits, we get glimpses of their habits and tastes, and we are enabled to enter into the spirit of their worship. These are lines of thought that we may not follow out into details, but merely to hint at them will be sufficient to show that no toil is in vain which is spent in inquiring into the minutiæ of Bible story. Researches of a scientific character have their part, as well as those which have to do with language and antiquities, in illuminating the inspired page. Many a chord in the sacred text has been silent till some devout and open-minded traveller or naturalist has learned to touch it, and then it has vibrated with sweet and subtle harmonies unknown before. Nature and the Bible are not in opposition, but are counterparts of each other. They stand together, not face to face as in conflict, but side by side for mutual support. Both are revelations from Heaven, the one written and the other unwritten, and although it is not pretended that all the questionings of the human spirit can find an answer from the study of nature, yet when conducted reverently that study will lead to truth and to God. Thus Science becomes the handmaid of Faith, and Reason the ally of Religion. To the Christian the Bible will always be the "greater light," but Nature wisely and devoutly studied is a "lesser light," and is also ignited by the Divine Hand. Thus regarded, the study even of a simple flower or an obscure plant may become not only an intellectual recreation but also a profitable religious employment.

THE ART OF SELF-DEFENCE.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR FINLAYSON, AUTHOR OF "EVANESCENT PHILOSOPHIES," "CONSECRATED INFLUENCE," ETC.

"HAVE you ever studied the art of self-defence?" said a young fellow to a man of magnificent physique and noble bearing.

The elder man looked at his questioner with a quiet smile, and then answered thoughtfully—

"Yes; I have both studied and practised it."

"Ah!" said the other eagerly. "Whose system did you adopt—Sutton's or Sayers'?"

"*Solomon's*," was the reply; "and as I have now been in training for some time on his principles, I can confidently recommend his system."

Somewhat abashed, the youth stammered out—

"Solomon's! And what is the special point of his system of training?"

"Briefly this," replied the other: "*A soft answer turneth away wrath.*"

For a moment the young man felt an inclination to laugh, and looked at his friend anxiously, to see whether he was serious. But a glance at the accomplished athlete was enough; and soon a very different set of feelings came over the youth, as his muscular companion added, with solemn emphasis, "*Try it!*"

The recommendation is worthy of everyone's serious consideration. There must be times in the lives of all when we need a system of self-defence; and to go into training on Solomon's method will avert many a painful conflict. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity;" and precisely because "the tongue can no man tame," so it is well to watch and discipline it constantly, lest by a single hasty utterance we commit ourselves, doing to ourselves more discredit with our own lips than all the

loquacity of friends and foes combined. Fuller quaintly says: "Learn to hold thy tongue. Five words cost Zacharias forty weeks' silence." In the presence of detraction, defamation, insinuation, or prejudice, we shall do well to remember the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom we read, "He opened not His mouth." If in the conduct of life we are accustomed to throw ourselves upon God, then in moments of temptation or irritation we shall not seek to play a regular sonata of words, but to await, like the Æolian harp, the inspiration of the passing breeze. As Shakespeare truly says—

"The silence of pure Innocence
Persuades when speaking fails."

There may be times when prudence dictates silence, and, again, circumstances where prudence of a high order may justify us in speaking to our own vindication. But the part of prudence is ever to remember that the Preacher says, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin." True, a multitude of words is not necessarily, or of itself, a sin. Loquacity is more a matter of temperament and constitution than of morals or religion. But, then, mankind being what it is, a talkative tongue becomes to many a temptation and a snare. A foolish person often speaks without reflecting; a wise man more often reflects without speaking. It is the empty vessel that makes the most sound. As still waters run deep, so is it often with great thinkers and great natures. There is a wholesome caution in the words of Pope: "It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles—the less they have in them, the more noise they make in pouring it out." The thought of the Psalmist, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle," is a resolution that should be ever present. None are so habitually truthful as those who are uniformly calm and quiet.

The Italians have many pithy proverbs which point out the prudence and profit of lip-control. *A causa persa, parole assai* reminds us, "When the cause is lost, there is enough of words." Another favourite proverb is, "He who speaks sows, he who keeps silence reaps." And the safety that is in silence is pithily put in their proverb, "Silence was never written down." Their maxim, "Of thine unspoken word thou art master; thy spoken word is master of thee," conveys a wholesome caution which we do well to lay to heart. The Persian proverb declares "Speech is silvern, silence is golden"; and we have a blunt saying, "He who says what he likes shall hear what he does not like," which conveys a worldly motive for prudence in speech. The law of retribution is stated in a higher strain in the Spanish maxim, "The evil that issues from thy mouth falls into thy bosom." Temper the tongue. The tongue's not steel, yet it cuts. "He tied a knot with his tongue he couldn't undo with his teeth." Pythagoras inculcated the maxim, "Be silent, or say something better than silence." And there is much wisdom in the dictum of George Herbert, "Speak fitly, or be silent wisely." Confine your tongue, lest it confine you.

A young girl, a factory operative, embraced the religion of Jesus Christ, and openly avowed herself on the Lord's side. Thenceforward in her home and in the mill she was subjected to open rudeness, cruel taunts, and petty persecution, all of which she bore bravely, without complaint. Perhaps those who so treated her little knew that she was suffering from a weak action of the heart. But one day, after coming home from the Lord's Supper, the meanness, the cowardice, and the treachery of this fiendish conduct broke out into open blasphemy of her Lord and Master, and of His sacred ordinance. This was more than the poor girl, in the delicate susceptibility of her renewed nature, could bear, and bursting away from these devilish tongues, she cried, "Oh I cannot stand it when turned against Him!" The King heard her wail and delivered her from the strife of these slanderous tongues, calling her from earth into the paradise of God. When her dress was unfastened there was found a strip of paper stitched near her breast, with these simple words, "*He opened not His mouth.*" Was she not in her measure as true a heroine as any victor on the world's battle-field? They do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but she an incorruptible. Is there here no lesson for you and me?

"O! many a shaft, at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant,
And many a word at random spoken,
May soothe or wound a heart that's broken."

Pascal says that if everybody knew what one says about another behind his back, there would not be four friends in the whole world. There are many men of whom it may be said without exaggeration, in the spirit of Pope's line—

"At every word a reputation dies."

Alas! too many Christians are wont to ignore the Levitical precept, "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people; neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord." (Lev. xix. 16.) The best Christians have cause to be humbled for sins of the tongue whereby God is dishonoured and men are injured. It should be remembered that backbiting is in Scripture classed with sins of the worst kind. (Rom. i. 29, 30.) The government of the tongue is one of the most important duties. There is much forcible truth in the lines—

"If wisdom's ways you wisely seek,
Five things observe with care:
Of whom you speak, to whom you speak,
And how, and when, and where."

May the Holy Spirit help us to lay them to heart and to reduce them to practice in our lives!

The Gospel is full of lenity and candour and kind constructions. It "hopes better things" of those of whom it has heard indifferent accounts, and by this very "hope" makes them better. Bishop Joseph Hall says: "There would not be so many open mouths if there were not so many open ears." This witness is true. The Christian will find it well to be occasionally blind and deaf and dumb. Suspicion begets suspicion. Many a friend has been transformed into a foe by being suspected unjustly. By placing the most charitable construction upon anything said, many a foolish misunderstanding may be avoided. And to

those who are distressed by the tongue of defamation and detraction, the words of Gottfried Burger may come as balm: "When the tongue of slander stings thee, let this be thy comfort—they are not the worst fruits on which the wasps alight." By making such detraction an occasion of heart-searching, honest self-examination, and careful instruction, we may distil honey out of gall, and turn the spear of an open enemy into the tender stroke of a secret friend. Thus we may live unharmed amid these poison-tipped arrows.

Augustine relates in his "Confessions" the great abhorrence which his sainted mother Monica had of everything like slander. The force of her example and the fruit of her precepts were seen long after her death in the fact that her son caused these lines to be carved on the table to which his guests were invited—

> "He that is wont to slander absent men
> May never at this table sit again."

The precept is one for daily practice. How frequently is the honesty and integrity of a man disposed of by a smile or a shrug, by a mysterious insinuation on the part of those who would shrink from a plain detraction! Christina Rossetti truly says: "Party feeling, whether called religious zeal, or national antagonism, or political creed, becomes simple malice, and is simply devilish, when it leads us not only to condemn opponents, but to wish that they may be really as unworthy as history or rumour makes them, to court and hug and blaze abroad every tittle of evidence which tells against them, and to turn a dull ear to everything which tells in their favour. Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." The Christian should daily pray for preservation from misconstruction, misrepresentation, insinuation, exaggeration, detraction, prejudice, or defamation. And if in our daily conversation the language of our lips breathe the spirit of Him who spake as "never man spake," we may, in spite of many infirmities, enter into the spirit of the following lines:—

> "Not all who seem to fail, have failed indeed;
> Not all who fail have therefore worked in vain;
> For all our acts to many issues lead;
> And out of earnest purpose, pure and plain,
> Enforced by honest toil of hand or brain,
> The Lord will fashion, in His own good time
> (Be this the labourer's proudly humble creed),
> Such ends as, in His wisdom, fitliest chime
> With His vast love's eternal harmonies.
> There is no failure for the good and wise;
> What though thy seed should fall by the wayside,
> And the birds snatch it—yet the birds are fed;
> Or they may bear it far across the tide,
> To give rich harvests after thou art dead."

If kindness and courtesy be the law of your lips, you will speak to hearts that no preacher's voice can penetrate, and of you it may hereafter be true, "He being dead, yet speaketh." Your conversation may not, unless with intimate friends, include formal religious words, for it is often easier so to speak than to infuse the spirit of religion into all our words. But if you are Christ's, you will seek to bring every word you speak, every action you do, under the control of Christian motive; and if the whole tenor of your conversation be pervaded by a spirit of piety and sincerity, it will be none the less Christian conversation. The secret of religion is religion in secret. It is breathed forth from the life rather than from the lip. The secret of pure lips and a pure life lies in the pure heart. The heart is the root, the language is the fruit; the heart is the fountain, the words are the streams; the heart is the treasury, words are the talents brought out of that treasury.

There are times when silence is more eloquent than speech. But there are also seasons when words spoken in fitting circumstances, and at a critical moment, come with electric power on individual hearts. "Let your speech be alway with grace seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." When this text was referred to the Rev. Charles Simeon by a lady who desired an explanation, he pointed out the word "seasoned" as meaning a proper proportion, not a whole handful of salt, but "seasoned" with just the right measure. "Temper is," said Bishop Wilson, "nine-tenths of Christianity," and where this is constantly recognised and acted upon, the conversation of anyone of good natural gifts of mind and manner may be more permanently useful, even when proceeding from reserved and timid natures, than the utterances of those who are naturally brilliant and attractive. Winsome words make life sweeter and homes happier; we should cultivate the habit of looking, as far as we can, at the bright side of things, reflecting this habit in our utterances, and thus leading others to emulate a cheerful tone in conversation. For, as Cowper says—

> "Though conversation, in its better part,
> May be esteemed a gift, and not an art,
> Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,
> On culture, and the sowing of the soil."

Example is contagious, and evokes imitation. More wasps are caught by honey than by vinegar. There are words that wound more grievously than blows, and men may "speak daggers" though they use none. The temptation to say a smart thing or a "harmless witticism" should be resisted if it gives another pain. Many may unconsciously indulge a habit of carping, captious, censorious, cavilling criticism, which stamps the mark of a sarcastic nature (often mistaken by youthful ignorance for cleverness), or fastens upon them the character of an unworthy cynicism, making them secretly abhorred of all. The Spanish say, "A goose's quill often hurts more than a lion's claw." And there is another Spanish proverb which conveys its own application: "Live with wolves, and you will learn to howl." The antidote to the destroying power of words is the constant prayer, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: keep the door of my lips."

A young man was sent to Socrates for instruction. When charged double fees, he asked, "Why charge me double fees?"—"Because," replied Socrates, "I must teach you two sciences: the one how to hold your tongue, and the other how to speak." The religion of Jesus Christ does both. Our wisdom is to learn from the Master how to practise these two sciences in the battle of life. In the life of our Lord we have the best examples of the power of silence and the power of speech.

JACKY AND JACKY'S SISTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DOUBLE DUTCH."



"Her arms firmly clasped round the unresisting quadruped."—*p.* 745.

CHAPTER I.—THE HEROINE'S HERO AND THE HEROINE.

JACKY was a little curly-headed, grave-faced dumpling of a boy, with an expression in his brown eyes so profound that one had the impression that he was habitually pondering the deepest problems, and that he was always on the point of arriving at some happy solution, which, alas! he never quite succeeded in reaching. He was so round and plump that he looked more like a little Cupid or cherub that had come floating off the rolly-poly clouds of some old picture than a real little three-year-old boy. Jacky did not float about in the air by any means; he was far too substantial for that, although he would not walk about if he could possibly help it, but he sat in his sister's arms upright and dignified, looking around with a slow, superior air, as much as to say, "What are sisters

meant for but to carry their brothers about?" And though she was but two sizes bigger than he, being only seven years old, she had to clasp her little hands around his fat body and carry him wheresoever he went. He evidently regarded his sister as a sort of animated perambulator, and never for a moment dreamed but that she was as devoid of feeling as one of those useful machines. But Jacky's sister did not go on wheels, and moreover she had her feelings. If she tried to snatch a rest by leaning her back against a wall or sitting sideways on the thwarts of a boat, Jacky considered that he was being imposed upon, and in an injured tone of voice he would urge, "Go on, go on," and the little maid would have to stir herself.

Unfortunately Jacky believed in rest and motion combined.

Thus "Jacky and Jacky's sister" were always bracketed together. What the little girl's Christian name was, never transpired; sufficient honour for her it was to be known as "Jacky's sister." This we know—that she was one of those ministering spirits going about in frocks who never for a moment think of themselves.

There are many of them up and down the world, unlike us ordinary mortals (who can be unselfish sometimes by an effort), but, like God's flowers, bright because they cannot help being bright, scattering fragrance around them because they cannot help it. God bless them! it never enters into their heads to think of themselves; really they have not got time or room, they are so busy and full up with thoughts of others.

Jacky's sister had much to think about, but, unlike Jacky (whose thoughts doubtless took the form of lofty speculation), hers were of a practical nature.

There was her mother, who had to go out to work two or three days in the week, and who had betweenwhiles to keep the house clean and find time to dispose of the fish her father caught—her thin, anxious-looking mother, who was always struggling to "make both ends meet." What this apparently athletic feat could be was always a great mystery to Jacky's sister, but she knew it was connected in some way or other with bread *minus* butter, and boots without soles. She could never quite work out the dark saying, and sometimes gravely questioned whether the "meet" were spelt "meat" or no. She could not make out how it was mother looked so worried—she used not to be so: at one time they were all so happy, but father was different then. She supposed it was all to do with father. Once upon a time he used to call her his "little lass," and sometimes "Sunbeam," and would jump Jacky up in the air and have fine games, whilst mother would laugh: they were grand times. Now father was always cross, and called Jacky "that brat:" the very thought of it brought the tears into her eyes. He was unkind to mother, too, and made her cry. Poor mother! She had heard her praying the other night, "God save him," and a feeling of awe crept over her, for she knew who it was mother was praying for in the darkness. Father had not come home; she hardly knew when he did come home now. What did he want always out in the darkness? She had heard the minister at the church talk about "deeds of darkness," and a wild formless dread entered her mind, which by night clad itself in dark, snaky shapes which writhed through her dreams and made her cry out with fear. She had always prayed, "God bless mother and father and little Jacky," but now she paused at "father," and prayed more earnestly, "God bless father, God save father, and make him a good man."

Oh! yes, Jacky's sister had much to occupy her mind. Then of course there was Jacky himself—an ever-present, never-failing source of thought and contemplation. He had a thousand little wants and whims which all had to be scrupulously studied. Then if by great good luck she managed to get him to sleep for an hour in the morning, she had other duties—fish to be taken round for sale to the houses where the visitors lodged, or to take a basket on the Quay and pick up the stray pieces of coal that fell about as the vessels unloaded into the coal-carts.

CHAPTER II.—ETHEL AND A DREAM.

NOW there was another member of the family, one on no account to be left out, who from Jacky's point of view, at any rate, ranked very highly; this was Jacky's doll.

Now Jacky's doll was not by any means a beauty; it belonged to a dead-and-gone generation of dolls, when solid worth and endurance were considered of more importance than complexion and mere distinctness of feature. Neither, of course, was it young; it had arrived at that happy period of existence when time and the storms of life had done their worst, and thus it could afford to regard the future with an endless smile of confidence. It had neither arms nor legs, it is true; but then, on the other hand, it had no fears of amputation or mutilation; and its nose, having been worn to a level with its cheeks, did not suffer as noses from over-prominence are apt to do.

What it had gone through before arriving at this calm, safe period in its career does not form part of our story to tell. Ever since it had belonged to Jacky, it had been the same serene creature, taking a tin-tack as calmly as a kiss, and quite untroubled by infirmities of sawdust, joints, or wax.

Ethel May was the name of this young lady, though the first name generally sufficed, excepting in times of indignation, when both names were used. Like some people in low life, and others in high life, she had frequently changed her name, but what was more remarkable, she had been known—for a brief period of her life, at any rate—to have changed her sex also. Before Jacky was born, and when his sister was quite a dot, Ethel was known and publicly recognised as Georgie. Still, on reflection, that may have been after all but the short for Georgina.

Now to continue our history. One of the chief desires of Jacky's sister, one of the grand objects of her life, was to become sufficiently rich to buy a Christmas present for Jacky.

Once or twice when she had become possessed of a penny the conviction had flashed upon her that such a thing was possible, and with determination she had stitched the penny into her skirt—her pocket,

for more than one reason, not being trustworthy; but days and days had gone by, and not a single halfpenny had been added to it; so she had given up the project in despair, taken out the penny, and spent it in sweets for Jacky.

It was true he had Ethel; but she, having always been in the house, seemed like one of the family. What Jacky's sister fondly dreamed of was to bring home some brand-new grand toy, such as she had seen in the shops in Chichester town, all unbeknown to anyone, and to cry, "Look here, Jackie! I have brought you a real Christmas present," and then to see his eyes open wider and wider with delight. And the surprise of mother, too! That would be grand. It seemed unlikely that this would ever be anything but a dream. When she went round selling fish at the visitors' houses, and saw the splendid toys their children had, just for a moment she envied them for Jacky's sake, and devoutly wished that she had been born a visitor.

But now there were no visitors left, for it was winter, and they had all returned to London; so the occasional halfpenny which she received from them for running messages, taking letters to the post, etc., never appeared to gladden her eyes.

CHAPTER III.—THE DREAM BECOMES A PROBABILITY.

WINTER, with its cold and rain, was a bad time for Jacky's sister, as it is for many. Her mother declared it was harder than ever to make both ends meet; so they had to put up with the inconvenience of clothes that would not keep out the rain, but would absorb any amount, wrapping them round in their clammy folds long after the weather had cleared. It was in her toes that Jacky's sister always felt the cold so much, and, strangely enough, that was always the weakest part of her boots. Then, again, she was not able to go on the beach so much; and the beach was the finest playground possible, with its boats, ropes, and capstans, its shingle, and the little pools with the soldier-crabs and limpets. There was plenty of sport there, and no difficulty in keeping Jacky amused. But shut up in the house in the bad weather, he grew so fretful and hard to please; there was nothing but the doll Ethel for him to play with. That stoical creature also had a hard time of it, for she was regularly banged about, kissed, and stood upon by turns.

The statement that all the visitors had left Barsham was not quite correct; there was one gentleman who remained behind—an artist, who was generally known among the young people as "the likeness-taker." Now it happened that this gentleman was walking on the beach one afternoon when the sun was shining quite warmly for a December day, with a camp-stool tucked under his arm and a sketch-book in his hand. Turning round a corner out of the wind, he found himself in a sheltered nook; and, what was more to the purpose, face to face with a ready-made picture. This was nothing more nor less than Jacky's sister sitting on the edge of a boat, with both her arms clasped round Jacky's chubby little figure.

"Sit still, little one, and let me make a sketch of you," he said in his quick London way of speaking, and he shot out his three-legged stool and commenced drawing.

Jacky's sister sat as still as could be, and Jacky sat still; happily he was in a very thoughtful frame of mind, and did not seem inclined to move until he had worked out the problem that occupied his mind. Jacky's sister was in a state of great fear lest he should rouse himself and, regardless of art and artist, in his peremptory way demand, "Go on!"

Ethel was clasped in his arms, beneath the shawl that wrapped them round; and as the lines of thought were deepening on his brow almost to the grave solemnity of an afternoon nap, the doll kept slipping down. In vain Jacky's sister tried to stay its downward course—down, down it slipped. She was afraid that if it fell Jacky would be aroused from his reverie and spoil the gentleman's picture. The likeness-taker kept looking at them, first with his eyes wide open, then with his eyes half closed, and scratch, scratch went his pencil. How nervous she was getting!—but it was all to no purpose; down slipped Ethel, and shot out almost at the artist's feet. He looked surprised, smiled slightly, but kept on with his work. Strange to say, so far away were Jacky's thoughts that he did not notice Ethel's fall.

So the sketch was finished.

Now what do you think the gentleman gave her? Nothing less than threepence! That may not seem much to some little people but to Jacky's sister it was a large sum.

Said the artist, "Will you have it in coppers or in silver? Perhaps you'd better have it in coppers."

"Silver, if you please, sir," was the timid reply.

A tiny silver piece dropped into her hand.

It is well known that there is an intimate connection between the palm of the hand and the facial muscles; it has often been observed that when a piece of silver has been dropped into the former, an electric current has thrilled to the brain, signifying itself by an alarming extension of the muscles of the mouth.

It was so with Jacky's sister—small blame to her, for it was of Jacky she was thinking.

The dream, after all, might become something more than a dream. She saw in that little silver disc the possibility, the probability—nay, the certainty—of it; such a rapid little thinker she was.

"And now what is this?" said the artist, pointing with his camp-stool to the prostrate doll.

"That 's Ethel, please, sir."

"Ethel, is it?" said the artist, smiling and looking at it more closely. "Oh! a doll; I see. Sadly out of repair, isn't she? Here 's another threepence for you; get her a new pair of legs."

Jacky's sister took the money, but felt rather hurt at the artist's levity. As if she would insult Ethel, whom she had always remembered just as she was, by offering her a new pair of legs!

"If it is fine to-morrow afternoon," continued the artist, "will you come down here on the beach again? I should like to make another sketch of you."

Jacky's sister danced home as if Jacky had been an

air-ball instead of a solid boy. She hugged Jacky, and she hugged Ethel. Then she stitched the two threepenny-pieces into her skirt, hugged Jacky and Ethel again, and set herself seriously to think what the present should be.

CHAPTER IV.—"A HORSE! A HORSE!"

FORTUNATELY the next day was fine, and Jacky's sister had another threepenny-piece to add to her store; and still the artist wanted to make more sketches. By the end of the week there was quite a little bundle of silver pieces stitched inside her skirt, and proud she was, you may be sure, to feel it bobbing against her leg as she walked.

The week after next was Christmas week, and Jacky should have a real Christmas present. She had a full week to decide what she should buy, and to work herself up into a state of great excitement.

Of course it was to be a secret. If she could only have told mother, or have talked the matter over with Jacky, it would have been some relief; but that would have entirely robbed the affair of the dramatic effect of bringing it suddenly and unexpectedly upon them, and this phase was very dear to the heart of Jacky's sister. She pondered the project day and night, carefully weighing the relative merits of different toys. She also tried a few leading questions, skilfully disguised, to draw out Jacky on the subject of his tastes and preferences; but with no satisfactory result. He would like a real ship or a live horse; but these, of course, were out of the question. He was not old enough for a kite or a cricket-bat. A top was not large and impressive enough. For some time she entertained the idea of a colour-box (this was an inspiration due to her friendship with the artist); it was dismissed, however, on reflecting that green paint was poisonous. Finally she decided on a wooden horse. Jacky had expressed a desire for a live horse, so she argued that in all probability he would like a wooden one. Then they were so strong; and it would be so large and important-looking a present.

Yes, it was a settled thing; a wooden horse it should



"'It is my own little lass!'"—*p.* 746.

be. Then she went over and over again in her mind the splendour of the anticipated hour when, with the wooden horse in her arms, she should stand before them and present it to darling little Jacky; she could picture him throwing his plump arms round its neck with delight.

Monday would be Christmas Eve; she would ask her mother to let her go to Fishbun, for she knew there was a toy-shop there. She was afraid there would be some difficulty in managing it, for it was a long way for a little girl—two miles by the fields, and more by the road. She remembered, too, with some misgiving, that Monday was one of mother's days to go out to work.

Whilst turning over in her mind how it could be done, she was considerably relieved by hearing her mother say that as Monday was Christmas Eve, she had directions to go to her place on Saturday instead. Thus the chief difficulty being removed, a little coaxing did the rest.

Jacky's sister felt that this was to be no ordinary Christmas, so she bestirred herself to find some decoration for the room. It was wonderful what a difference a little holly and evergreen made in the place. When her mother came home she exclaimed—

"La! child, what have you been doing? I declare, if it doesn't look quite cheerful. It's quite like old times!" and the weary heart went sadly roaming off to other Christmas Eves she had known.

CHAPTER V.—OUT IN THE COLD.

IT was Christmas Eve. Behold Jacky's sister, with flushed cheeks and radiant eyes, on her way to Fishbun.

Snow had fallen in the night, and it crunched crisply under her feet as she skipped along. When there was nobody in sight she sang for very joy, and when her lips were still, her heart kept singing gleefully. Cold? she did not feel the cold to-day; all was bright and warm with one of those great joys that only childhood knows.

The shingle spire of Fishbun Church appeared in sight, and she was soon in the village street. Here, however, disappointment awaited her. The shop that was at once baker's, stationer's, confectioner's, post-office and toy-repository, could not afford such a steed as Jacky's sister's excited imagination demanded. The lady who kept the shop trotted out some sixpenny horses; but they were so small, their glue so doubtful, and their wheels so equivocal, that she turned away from them with something like contempt. Standing on the doorstep, she determined to walk the extra mile from Fishbun to Chichester, for she was sure to find what she wanted in the grand toy-shops of that wonderful town.

A mile was a mere trifle to Jacky's sister, and very soon she was intently scanning the toy-shop windows that adorn East Street. She had not as yet ventured to enter any of the shops, which were of rather imposing appearance; but she carefully surveyed all the windows, then came to the conclusion that the one she saw first—the shop opposite the cross—was the most promising.

All this, of course, took time, and the winter afternoons were very short. She had been so intent on her mission that she had not given this a thought, so she was rather surprised on entering the shop to see the gentleman in velvet cap and silver spectacles who stood behind the counter commencing to light the gas. Yes, they had gas in Chichester, and many other novelties and wonders. Jacky's sister was amused at seeing the light bob and splutter, and then finally spread out into a fan of flame.

This done, the gentleman in spectacles rubbed his hands and turned slowly round to Jacky's sister. There was a softness, a quietness, and a dignified slowness about the gentleman which seemed to the little girl to befit one who dwelt amid the treasures of art which she saw around her. This was not a toy-shop of the modern gaudy Brummagem order, but one of a sedate and almost reverend appearance. The subdued light fell upon carefully packed parcels, costly colour-boxes, tool-chests, and magic-lanterns; in fact, there was a general air of nothing-under-a-shilling which greatly impressed Jacky's sister. Here, to her great delight, she found the very horse which had of late been constantly prancing through her dreams—a firmly built, highly strung, mettlesome creature.

"Three shillings," said the gentleman. Alas! Jacky's sister had in all but two-and-sixpence. She stood treading one foot on top of the other, speechless.

Living among such a host of objects of beauty must have exercised a softening influence on the old gentleman in the velvet cap and spectacles, for he exclaimed at last—

"You shall have it for two-and-six, my dear."

He whisked a piece of tissue paper round it to keep out the cold, and in a trice Jacky's sister was outside, with her arms firmly clasped round the unresisting quadruped.

It was getting quite dusk when, with a joyful heart, she sped down East Street in the direction of the Barsham Road.

The cathedral clock struck four, and before it had finished, the clock in the cross and a dozen others, as if afraid of being behindhand, chimed in; then a straggler or two made themselves heard in the distance.

Jacky's sister had a good hour's walk before her. The snow began to fall again, and for the first time she felt the cold. The horse was a good weight, but not so heavy as Jacky, and her arms were pretty well used to him. At the very thought of Jacky she laughed aloud, and looked down proudly at the horse's glossy mane.

At length she reached Fishbun. The wind had now sprung up; the snow fell thick and fast. She felt very, very cold. She would take the field-path, that being the shorter.

How dark it had become! thick clouds blotted out the moon.

Was this the stile?

Colder still. The little blue fingers that were clasped about the horse's body were past feeling. Oh! how cold!

CHAPTER VI.—A VOICE.

RED-BEARDED, sullen Jasper Barton, what brings you out this dark wild night? Why are you not at home with your wife and little ones? You have nearly deserted your wife of late, and have left her, worn in heart, to support the family. It was not always so, Jasper.

Do you not remember the bright young creature you loved so passionately; do you not remember that to be by her side was your chiefest happiness? She is sitting lonely now by the fireside, looking into the red coals, thinking—yes, you know of what she is thinking.

And you, Jasper? Where are you drifting? Where are you going to-night? It is no use your shaking yourself, man; you cannot shake me off. I am the voice of conscience. There was a time when your footstep was light and free, because your heart was light and free; but now, where your heart used to be, there is a heavy clod.

Sullen Jasper Barton, your teeth are clenched together; you are full of bitterness: you hate those whom you deem your enemies, but you hate your friends just as much; you hate yourself, you hate the light, and you hate the darkness; you hate the sight of your wife and children, for they are a reproach to you—they shrink from you. It is no use cursing, Jasper; you know whose fault it is. It was not always so.

Why do you not go by the high-road, Jasper, this wild night? Why do you choose the unfrequented paths, and why, at the sound of a footfall, do you crouch low against the hedge? What is it you are fingering so nervously in your coat-pocket, Jasper? Bring it out, man, and let me look at it.

Why do you start? It is only the silvery chime of the cathedral bells across the snow. Six o'clock, Jasper—the children's supper-time. Did you not notice this morning how the little lass had made the room look quite gay with evergreen and holly-berries, and that little motto she had placed over the chimney-glass—"Peace on earth, and goodwill toward men"? Pretty words those; you have heard them before.

Where are you going this night, Jasper? You will not tell me; then stand aside a minute, and I will tell you. You have been living this long while on the borderlands of sin; you know it. You have broken your wife's spirit; you know it. And this night you would plunge your hands into crime that cannot be wiped out.

Howl, bitter cold wind. Drive, blinding sleet. Pull your hat lower over your brows, Jasper. Shake yourself savagely; you cannot shake me off. Wherever you go to-night, Jasper, I go with you.

CHAPTER VII.—THE DREAMS REALISED.

WITH grim set purpose Jasper Barton plods on through the snow. How boisterous the night! but the storm within is more tumultuous still. Another mile and he slackens his pace, whistling a few bars of a popular tune. An echoing note is heard in the distance; he stands still, listening; eagerly he stretches his neck to catch the tune. His teeth set more firmly, and his fingers work more nervously in his coat-pocket, as he goes on his way again—so stealthily now, his eyes peering into the darkness from under his bent brows.

What is that dark object lying yonder in the snow?

"What, has somebody else——?" he mutters with face aghast. Fearfully he goes nearer, lifts a shawl that wraps it round—it is a little girl. What is this? Her arms are firmly clasped around a large wooden horse. He lifts up the poor stiffened little figure.

"Oh!" he cries with sudden agony, "it is my little lass—dead; she 's dead."

With trembling hands he wrapped her in his thick pilot-coat. As he does so, a little voice comes from the pale lips forming themselves into a smile—

"It 's for Jacky."

Then the eyes open, and resting with a dim recognising light upon the bearded face that bends over her she softly says, trying the while to get her frozen little hands together, "God bless father, God save father, and make him a good man."

"God forgive me!" burst passionately from the lips of the rough man as the hot tears rolled down his cheeks.

The moon burst out brightly upon them, the dark sullen clouds were swept away, whilst the bells rang out rapturously from the cathedral spire.

Shine on, silver moon—light of hope—for the clouds have been driven away from one poor struggling soul.

Ring out, bells, the angels' message—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace."

* * * * * *

Jacky's sister was not much the worse for her adventure. They placed her in the old chintz-covered arm-chair, drawn close to the fire, with a steaming basin of broth in her lap. Great was her joy, for were not both her darling dreams realised? She leaned back in the chair, and gave a great sigh of satisfaction. Joy was in the heart of Jacky, who forgot his abstruse speculations in the proud pleasure of being the possessor of the grand wooden horse—such joy that his eyes refused to close till long past bedtime.

The only one that seemed unmoved was Ethel; joy and sorrow seemed alike matters of indifference to that lady, to such perfection had she arrived in the Stoic philosophy.

In the heart of the mother there was such a resurrection of joy that she was almost ready to exclaim, "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace."

In the man who sat there with bowed head and clasped hands, looking intently into the fire, there was a solemn joy, not unmixed with fear—for he shuddered to think from what he had been saved. His was the joy of awakening from a nightmare of dark, disordered passions to find that the calm pure pleasures of home were still his—that faithful hearts had not ceased to love.

The fire crackled merrily, the holly-leaves glistened, and each little red berry twinkled like a star, and the motto hung above the little group gathered on the hearth—"Peace on earth, and goodwill toward men."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

AUGUST 18TH.—SAUL REJECTED BY THE LORD.

To read—1 *Sam. xv.* 10—31. *Golden Text*—*ver.* 23.

SAUL'S SIN (10—21.) Saul's reign has begun well. He has conquered his enemies and established the kingdom firmly. Now God gives him a special work to do—to destroy the Amalekites. What had they done? They—

(*a*) *Lay in wait* for Israelites at Rephidim on their journey to Canaan, thus attacking them without cause. (Ex. xvii. 8.)

(*b*) *Smote* the weak and feeble, thus showing cowardice.

God had declared He would punish them continually. (Ex. xvii. 16.)

God never forgot, though 400 years had passed.

What was Saul told to do?

(*a*) Smite all the people utterly.

(*b*) Destroy all the cattle.

What did Saul do?

(*a*) Smote the people but saved the king.

(*b*) Destroyed the worthless cattle but kept the best.

God told Samuel all about it. What did he do?

(*a*) Felt great grief for Saul's disobedience.

(*b*) Prayed earnestly for Saul's pardon.

What did Saul do?

(*a*) Set up a trophy (*place*—ver. 12) of his victory.

(*b*) Made a boast to Samuel of his obedience.

But Samuel has heard the bleating of sheep and oxen. So Saul begins to make excuses.

(*a*) The people did it—not he.

(*b*) The cattle are for sacrifice, not for eating.

How does Samuel try to bring the sin home to him?

(*a*) He was of small repute—God exalted him.

(*b*) He ought to have obeyed God's command.

But Saul's heart is hard. He tries to defend his conduct, and then lays the blame on the people.

What does all this show on Saul's part?—

(*a*) *Cowardice* in laying the blame on others.

(*b*) *Hypocrisy* in pretending it was done for sacrifice.

So Samuel gives him a sharp reproof.

(*a*) Obedience is better than sacrifice.

(*b*) Outward forms of no avail without contrite heart.

II. SAUL'S PUNISHMENT. (23—31.) As he has rejected God, so God will reject him. What would this involve?—

(*a*) God's blessing forfeited in his reign.

(*b*) His reign cut short and his kingdom given to another.

How does Saul take his sentence?

(*a*) He acknowledges its justice—"I have sinned."

(*b*) He desires Samuel to stay with him.

(*c*) He seeks to be still honoured before the people.

This shows sorrow for the effect of sin, not for the sin itself.

Therefore was not true repentance.

Still Samuel would give him what help he could. So he turned back and held a service with him. But never again came to see him. (Ver. 35.)

III. LESSONS. 1. God requires strict obedience.

2. Each must bear his own sin.

3. Worship without obedience is in vain.

4. The fear of man bringeth a snare.

AUGUST 25TH.—THE ANOINTING OF DAVID.

To read—1 *Sam. xvi.* 1—13. *Golden Text*—*ver.* 7.

I. THE SACRIFICE. (1—5.) Our last lesson showed us something about God.

His remembrance of past sin—in the Amalekites.

His abhorrence of hypocrisy in Saul.

To-day shall see how He knows all hearts.

Samuel is sent on an errand to Bethlehem.

Unlike Saul, he obeys implicitly.

What is he to take and what to do?

(*a*) A horn of oil, ready for anointing the new king.

(*b*) A heifer, ready for sacrifice.

How was he received at Bethlehem?

The elders trembled, for Samuel was the judge. Perhaps were conscious of sin in the village.

What does Samuel tell them to do?

They must "sanctify" themselves—*i.e.*, prepare for solemn worship.

Thus at Sinai Israelites prepared for two days. (Ex. xix. 10.)

This preparation consisted of—

(*a*) *Washing* bodies and clothes with water—external cleanliness.

(*b*) *Prayer* for right heart and spirit—internal cleanliness.

Thus would come "holy and clean" to God's service and feast.

II. THE ANOINTING. (6—13.) Now follows the sacrifice.

The lamb is slain and solemnly offered before God.

The feast on the sacrifice follows.

Samuel and the elders eat together in peace.

Jesse and his sons are all assembled.

What sort of a man would be wanted for a king?

Tall, brave, dignified, to command army and win respect.

But what does God look at? Heart and character.

So seven sons of Jesse were rejected in turn.

At last David is sent for from the sheepfolds. (Ps. lxxviii. 70.) What sort of a man was he?

(*a*) *Fair*, *i.e.*, of pleasant appearance.

(*b*) *Young*—only about eighteen years old.

(*c*) *Despised* as only a shepherd boy, not a soldier.

Yet beloved of God, who could see all hearts. He feared God. Was afterwards proved to be brave, humble, and forgiving.

Now Samuel anoints him before his brethren.

The oil is poured over his head—outward sign.

God's Spirit fills his heart—inward grace.

III. LESSONS. 1. The duty of preparation for worship. (See Eccles. v. 1.)

2. God looks at the heart, and not mere outward appearance.

3. God giveth grace to the lowly.

SEPTEMBER 1.—DAVID AND GOLIATH.

To read—1 *Sam. xvii.* 32—51. *Golden Text*—*Rom. viii.* 31.

I. THE MIGHTY GIANT. (32—33.) Philistines, in south-west of Palestine, old enemies of Israelites—been conquered by Samson (Judges xv. 15), now come up against Saul.

The two armies encamped on hills opposite each other. Each day for forty days Goliath challenges a man to single fight. But no one dared go out to meet him. Why not?

(*a*) His height was ten feet.

(*b*) His coat of mail weighed 5,000 shekels (nearly one hundredweight.)

(*c*) His spear's head weighed twelve pounds.

(*d*) He was a veteran warrior.

(*e*) He had conquered all who opposed him.

II. THE YOUNG SHEPHERD. (34—39.) David, on a visit to the camp, offers to fight.

He speaks bravely to Saul as to what he will do. Saul dissuades him. Why?

(*a*) He is only a youth—of little strength.

(*b*) He is quite untrained in war.

What does David answer? Why does he not fear?

(*a*) He has full faith in God's power to help him.

(*b*) He has had experience against the lion and bear.

(*c*) He is engaging in a righteous cause.

Saul wants him to go armed. Why will he not?

Because he has no experience of armour.

Because he was strong in the Lord of Hosts.

III. THE FIGHT. (40—51.) David does not neglect the use of means. He goes to the little brook in the valley—chooses five hard pebbles, puts them in his provision bag, and goes boldly to meet the Philistine. What a contrast between Goliath and David!

(*a*) The tall, strong giant. The short, slim youth.

(*b*) Fully-armed warrior. Unarmed shepherd.

(*c*) Armour-bearer to help. Alone.

(*d*) Spears and swords. A sling and a stone.

(*e*) Curses of false gods. Trust in the living God.

No need to ask the result—story so well known. David takes good aim—the stone pierces through joints of giant's armour, stuns him so that he falls. David takes giant's sword—cuts off his head—the victory complete—the enemy flees away.

IV. LESSONS. All this a picture of our fight against sin and Satan.

The giant a type of Satan. How?

(*a*) *In his strength*—has overcome multitudes, Eve by greediness, Judas by covetousness, St. Peter by fear.

(*b*) *In his weapons*—uses things of this world to conquer men. (1 John ii. 16.)

David is a type of Christ and His people. How?

(*a*) *In their faith.* They trust in God. Faith is their shield. (Eph. vi. 16.)

(*b*) *In their weapons.* Not carnal but spiritual. God's Word is their sword.

Thus Christ answered all temptations from the Bible. (St. Matt. iv. 4, 7, 13.)

(*c*) *In their victory.* Satan being conquered by Christ, his angels have no real power. In Him we can prevail—stronger than Satan and sin (Golden Text)—we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

SEPTEMBER 8TH.—DAVID AND JONATHAN.

To read—1 *Sam. xx.* 1—13. *Golden Text*—*Prov. xviii.* 24.

I. THE CONSULTATION. David's victory over the giant produced great results.

(*a*) The Israelites were in peace from their enemies.

(*b*) Saul sent for David and kept him at his court. (xviii. 2.)

(*c*) Jonathan, Saul's son, loved him dearly.

(*d*) Michal, Saul's daughter, married him.

The effect of this important to David as future king.

(*a*) He won the confidence and respect of the people.

(*b*) He learned the ways of the court.

(*c*) He became deeply attached to the royal family. But evil days followed. The women praised him in their songs more than Saul. (xviii. 7.) The effect upon Saul was—

(*a*) *Envy*, because of the glory ascribed to David.

(*b*) *Hatred* of one who had done him no wrong.

(*c*) *Malice*—trying several times to kill him. (xix. 10.)

David flees away and consults Samuel (xix. 18)—and now goes to Jonathan.

The friends have a consultation.

David states his case—what has he done to cause Saul's anger?

Jonathan assures him that he will know all designed by Saul against him and will tell him. Forewarned is forearmed.

David thinks Saul will hide his plans from Jonathan, and considers himself in immediate danger. (Ver. 3.)

A plan is arranged for ascertaining Saul's present feelings.

David is due at court at festival of new moon. (Num. x. 10.)

He will hide away in the country for three days.

Jonathan must say that he has gone to Bethlehem.

Then they will know the king's feelings according to what he says.

Jonathan will tell the result to David.

Notice about this friendship between David and Jonathan—

(*a*) *It was very strong*—stronger even than brother's love. (Golden Text.)

(*b*) *It was based on religion*—a covenant of the Lord. (Ver. 8.)

(*c*) *It was disinterested.* Jonathan has all to lose and nothing to gain by it.

(*d*) *It was lasting.* Only ceased at Jonathan's death.

II. THE COVENANT. (11—13.) The two friends go into the fields, and Jonathan swears a solemn oath. Notice about this oath: it was—

(*a*) *A religious oath*, calling God to witness.

(*b*) *An oath for peace*, to save David's life.
(*c*) *An oath for separation.* Jonathan parted with his friend for *his* good.

All this shows a beautiful spirit in Jonathan. He was indeed a Friend worth having. Was also a type of Jesus Christ. Christ is our Friend, for—
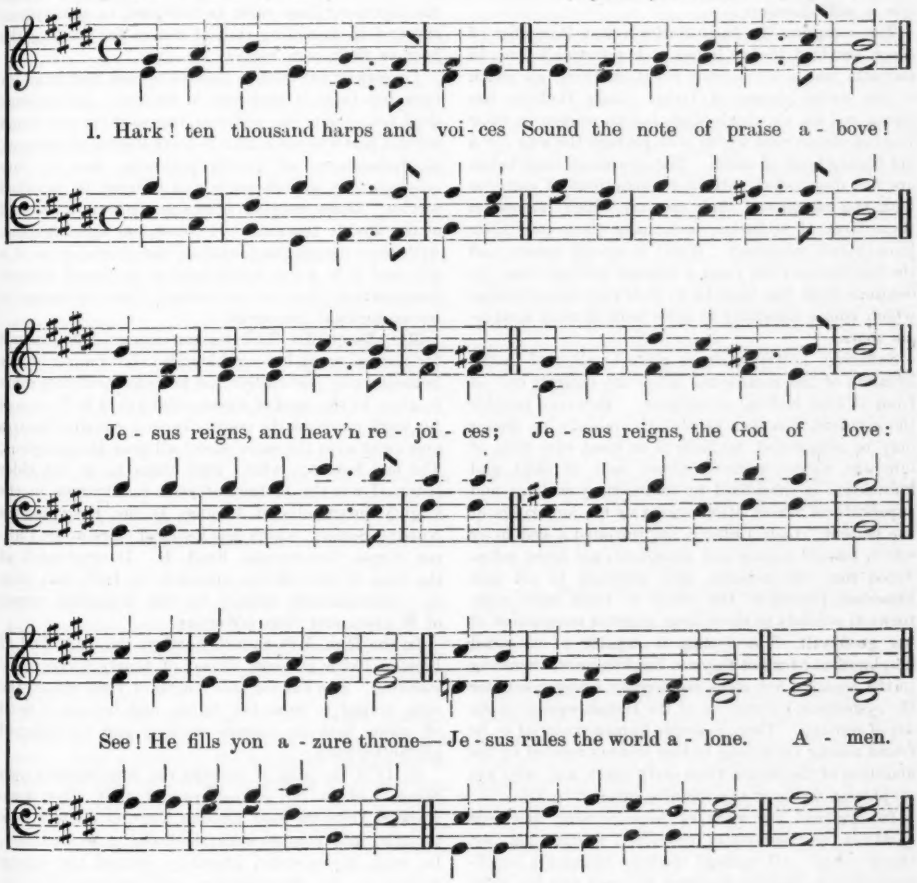
(*a*) He is always near those who seek Him. (Psalm xxxiv. 15.)
(*b*) He is a Friend in adversity. (Psalm xxiii. 4.)
(*c*) He gave His life to save us. (Rom. v. 10.)

Shall we not love this dear Friend? (St. John xxi. 15.)

"Hark! Ten Thousand Harps and Voices."

Words by THOMAS KELLY, 1804.

Music by C. H. LLOYD, M.A., B.Mus.
(*Organist of Christ Church, Oxford.*)



2. King of Glory, reign for ever!
Thine an everlasting crown;
Nothing from Thy love shall sever
Those whom Thou hast made Thine own:
Happy objects of Thy grace,
Destined to behold Thy face.

3. Saviour, hasten Thine appearing;
Bring, O bring the glorious day,
When, the awful summons hearing,
Heaven and earth shall pass away!
Then with golden harps we'll sing,
"Glory, glory to our King!"

HOME NURSING.

THE subject of nursing is one which has attracted so much attention of late years, that it may almost appear to be worn to a thread. Yet a few observations may not be out of place on nursing considered as a bond of union between class and class, or between those who are actively influenced by the impulses of the Christian life, and those in whom that life is still dormant.

The reception by Lady Dufferin last December of seven hundred Indian ladies at her farewell *levée* in Calcutta was a noteworthy event, marking an epoch in the social history of India. Lady Dufferin has discovered the tie which binds Indian women to their English sisters, and which will prepare the way for a yet higher bond of union. For at present these ladies are not dissatisfied with the restrictions of caste, or with the customs of their country which impose on them lives of seclusion, and make them pass their lives in dull monotony. Habit is second nature, and the inertness arising from a tropical climate frees its denizens from that impulse to be always up and doing which comes naturally to those born in more temperate zones.

Suffering, however, comes alike to all, and in the isolation of the zenana the ladies are entirely cut off from skilled medical attendance. However terrible the accident, however painful the malady, no doctor may be summoned, no help is at hand save that of ignorant native women, whose lack of skill and knowledge is subsidised by traditionary customs and superstitions which often aggravate the sufferings of the patient. Lady Dufferin has initiated a system by which trained nurses and attendants are being introduced into the zenanas, and, contrary to all past historical precedent, the ladies of India have come forward publicly to show their grateful recognition of her good-will. The system is capable of extended development; for not only are English nurses working in the zenanas, but steps are already being taken for the systematic instruction of the Indian women in the art of nursing. There is ample human material to be found among the young Indian widows rescued by the abolition of the Suttee from early death, and who are at present without any definite interest in life.

In England the work of home-nursing has been carefully and efficiently developed during the last thirty years. All medical charities exercise a beneficent effect in linking together the rich and the poor, the cultured and the ignorant. They help the poor to submit cheerfully to their somewhat dreary surroundings and their sordid homes. In the East End of London, where the working classes are massed together in such overwhelming proportions, the great hospital in the Whitechapel Road is spoken of as "Our Hospital." The working man counts over the number of times its hospitable doors have been opened to him and his, and as he comes away from the Maternity Hospital at Shadwell, where he has seen his wife nursed as though she were a lady, he has acquired a new perception of the possible refinement of life and of the meaning of Christian Charity.

No greater disaster could possibly befall medical knowledge, or the society which benefits by medical knowledge, than any falling off of the support given by a generous public to hospitals. Yet, as a means for drawing out the higher sympathies of human nature, the foremost place must be assigned to associations engaged in providing trained nurses for nursing the poor in their own homes.

The cup of suffering is handed to each and to all in turn, but there is medicine in the cup. It ministers good not only to the sufferers, but to those who stand around, and who are bidden to learn lessons of patience, of forbearance, of kindly judgment, and of love quickened by apprehension and fostered by personal service. Home nursing comes as the very handmaid of the Divine teaching. It comes, too, in connection with these associations, with all the graciousness of a gift, and it is a gift which may be bestowed without compunction, for no one would feign sickness to secure medical treatment.

Mrs. Ranyard's Bible-women nurses have earned for themselves an honourable name; but among purely home-nursing institutions the precedence in date must be given to the band of nurses established in Liverpool for work amongst the poor. Various nursing centres now exist with the same object all over the kingdom. The one, however, which may claim to be the elder sister, if not the mother, of such institutions in the mighty metropolis of London, is the East London Nursing Society, which has its head office at 49, Philpot Street, Commercial Road, E. It originated at the time of the cholera epidemic in 1866, and owes its establishment mainly to the honoured names of Wigram and Stuart-Wortley.

In the Hon. Mrs. Stuart-Wortley, the East End of London has a personal friend of nearly forty years' standing. She has for this length of time visited the sick, helped to raise the fallen, and become a bond of union between sincere workers and enlightened philanthropists.

In 1872 the idea of nursing the poor in their own homes had so far gained ground, that when some workers from the East London Nursing Society were brought into contact with the Duke of Westminster, he, with his splendid liberality, started the society known as the Metropolitan and National Nursing Society. Its nurses are cultured women of good social position, who, living in a central home, work from thence among the sick. The training of these nurses is made as perfect as possible; no expense is spared in fitting them for their arduous posts. They mostly undertake critical cases which require scientific skill.

The cause of home nursing received last year the highest possible mark of approval from her gracious Majesty, when she consented to bestow the surplus of the Jubilee Fund, offered her by the women of England, on some well-considered scheme which should benefit all parts of the United Kingdom.

The East London Nursing Society possesses an organisation which has stood the test of experience as being best suited to the neighbourhood in which it works. It embraces within the area of its operations twenty-four densely populated parishes; it would gladly double or treble its work, for the needs are pressing in a quarter where 2,000,000 of the working classes are congregated together. Its nurses are homely women, who are only raised by that "knowledge which is power" above the class whom they serve. Their attendance is entirely gratuitous; they are forbidden to receive anything from the poor; their own wants are provided for by a moderate yet ample salary, with the addition of a suitable uniform and furnished apartments. They attend the sick of all creeds and persuasions, without any theological favour or proselytism. The system is so far parochial, that the managers of the society recognise that subdivision into districts which is the best security for charitable agencies not overlapping each other.

The resident clergyman is considered to be the representative of order and method in local administration, and it is a rule of the society that no nurse should be placed in a district where the clergyman is not desirous to have her. As a pledge of this desire, it requires that he should provide the furnished lodgings. The East End nurses live amongst the poor to whom they minister; they are always accessible and ready to give their services night or day to the sick and suffering. They usually devote eight hours daily to their work, but they may be sent for to apply a poultice, to bind up a broken limb, or to convey a patient to the nearest hospital. The committee are most careful to select women who are not only trained in medical knowledge, but who are women of Christian character, who will carry out their work with the sympathy and tenderness which has its root in love for their fellow-creatures, and who, without being professional evangelisers, will try to lead on their patients to higher things.

Going one day last summer to a public meeting devoted to questions of Christianising the masses, I heard a bishop speak of the summons he had had to visit a sick man in the neighbourhood of the London Docks who particularly desired to see him. "I went," he said, "through the narrow streets, up a very narrow staircase, and thought to find a room corresponding with such an access. I found instead a room as cheerful as that in which my own sick son is being nursed. The sheets were spotlessly clean; white covers were on the drawers and table. A vase of flowers scented the room, which was pervaded by a general tone of refinement." "These," I thought, as I heard the story, "are the traces of the good nurse who has worked in that district for fifteen consecutive years."

But though an isolated nurse may do much good, yet without some system of careful professional superintendence and intelligent co-operation it would be difficult to secure real efficiency, or to protect the nurses from temptations to idleness and partiality. Hence the band of twenty-four nurses is grouped under three lady-matrons, whose duties are to visit every fresh case reported to them, to regulate the work of the nurses, to assist in critical cases, and to keep a register of work accomplished.

The benefit of a resident nurse must not be overlooked in regard to the little children. Subject as they are to many hazardous ills from the rough streets and busy homes, the nurse is frequently called in for burns and scalds and cuts, to say nothing of bronchitis and zymotic diseases. During an outbreak of whooping-cough one of the district nurses administered every evening to some fifty children a simple mixture of ipecacuanha and sugar. Not one of the cases proved fatal, while there were many deaths in neighbouring parishes from the same malady.

The question may possibly arise, "What do the doctors think of this? Are not these nurses taking the work out of their hands?" Simple as the question appears, an answer to it involves a survey of all women's work. It is marvellous what ills human nature will endure with a kind of sullen resignation. Think of the prevalence of ophthalmia among the lower classes in Egypt; think of the thousands who fell victims to the plague during the Middle Ages; and of the mountains of human misery which have grown up from a disbelief in cleanliness.

We venture to affirm that it is only in the present century, since the capacity of women for work and for culture has been recognised, that any marked social progress has been made. Not that, even so, we have much to boast of. There are whole fields of human labour where light has not penetrated; there are grave and serious evils in our midst, which have accumulated in the past, and which will severely tax our efforts in the future. There are not too many, but too few capable workers in the field of humanity. Let men and women work harmoniously side by side, for—

> "The woman's cause is man's;
> They rise or sink
> Together—dwarfed or God-like."

As a matter of fact, the intelligent East End doctor looks on the district nurse as a valuable auxiliary to his work. He is called in to a case which appears hopeless, and it would be hopeless but for the constant watching the nurse can give. Or he has a patient who must go into hospital for an operation: the nurse, with the help of the assistant lady attached for that purpose to every parish, builds up the strength of the patient with suitable nourishment before he or she lies down upon the bed of suffering.

With the dissemination of sanitary knowledge grows up a further advantage—a moral one. The reckless disregard of the laws of health, and selfish carelessness about the danger of infection, are replaced by self-restraint, prudence, and forethought, and a sense that members of a community have obligations to each other. But a survey of the good arising from home

nursing would be incomplete without reference to a still higher gain—namely, the help thus afforded to the minister of the Gospel in his spiritual labours. No one who has not worked among the densely packed masses of a large town, can estimate the advantage of having that ground broken up by tender care for the physical wants. The way is prepared for the entrance of the good seed of a higher life. It is a work which, to use the words of the late Bishop of Sodor and Man, "sympathises, civilises, and evangelises." Such will doubtless be the effects wherever it is carried on, whether in India or in England. It bears Hope on its banner, and Faith and Charity follow in its train.

ADELAIDE ROSS.

A QUAKER MISSION IN MADAGASCAR.

BY A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.



A CHILDREN'S CLASS.



NATIVE MISSIONARIES.

IN June, 1867, Mr. Joseph S. Sewell arrived in the capital of Madagascar, accompanied by an American "Friend," named Street, and his wife, and thus commenced the Quaker Mission to Madagascar, which has had growth and development since then. For years previously Mr. Sewell had been interested in Madagascar; his relationship to the Rev. W. Ellis may in part explain this. In the course of time, Mr. and Mrs. Street left the island, but other Friends joined in the mission; Miss Gilpin in 1869, Mr. Henry E. Clark and Mr. W. Johnson in 1871, Mr. W. Wilson and Mr. H. F. Standing, and others later. Some have returned, for a time or permanently, but there are still fourteen adult members of the Friends' Foreign Mission in Madagascar; and in the score of years that these members of the Society of Friends have been working in Madagascar, their organisation has grown, their work has extended, and they have had their part in the change which has come over the central provinces of this great island and its people.

After their arrival in Madagascar, Mr. Sewell and his colleague "consulted with the missionaries of the London Missionary Society as to the sphere of work in which they could most profit the mission generally," and for a time they directed their efforts to education, teaching classes of young men, overseeing schools already formed, and giving instructions to the teachers, and thus a group of teachers was collected by Mr. Sewell, which became the nucleus of the school for men and boys at Ambohijatovo. When the late Queen "adopted Christianity," the care of one of the churches in the capital began to be so often laid upon Mr. Sewell that he came to be considered the missionary in charge of it. In 1872 a printing office was opened; whilst with the increase in the number of missionaries, and the division into districts, one of very great dimensions has been assigned to the care and the oversight of the Friendly Missionaries. The nature and extent of the work may be better understood, if from conversation with one of the missionaries who has returned home, and

from other official sources, the following facts be stated.

"Our work in Madagascar," said my missionary friend, "is a district of Imerina, south-west of the capital, containing two thousand square miles. In it we have under our oversight some one hundred and thirty-nine congregations, with thirty-five thousand adherents, who attend a place of worship more or less regularly. A resident missionary is stationed in two central stations in the district, and the rest of the missionaries reside in Antananarivo. The educational work of the missionaries is enlarging. There are about fourteen thousand scholars in the schools of the district, besides two high schools at the capital, one for boys, the other for girls. In these schools science classes interest some of the more advanced scholars.

"Do we build up churches? We endeavour to do so. This has been the great aim of all the missionaries since the first Christian queen came to the throne. The missionaries try to act both as evangelists and teachers, and help the natives to mould Church we direct our converts, and its members largely govern themselves in religious matters. The Churches of Imerina have their periodical meetings, and they unquestionably exercise a great influence for good.

"The social results of the missions generally in Madagascar?—Christianity has in many ways improved the social condition of the people, especially so in relation to polygamy, divorce, and immorality generally. It has not abolished slavery, it is true: there are thousands of slaves in the island; and all missionaries and other foreigners employ slaves, but they make their bargain with the slave, and do not recognise the "owner" at all. It is quite true that in Madagascar Christians hold slaves. We do not apologise for the slavery amongst the Malagasy; we dislike it; but the missionaries have no power to turn the slaveholders out of the Church. Christianity has had good social results in improving the ways and life of the people, the style of living, the



PREACHING IN THE MARKET-PLACE.

in the right way the National Malagasy Church, which, it should be understood, is not a State Church. The order of the services is something approaching that of the Congregational. A hymn-book is used—the Malagasy hymn-book—which is commonly used throughout the island. To that training of children, and it must ultimately abolish the slavery.

"Is it true that the sale of intoxicating drinks increases in Madagascar?—Yes; especially on the coast, where a deal of rum is imported. In Imerina there are strict prohibitory laws; but these are often



A DISPENSARY.

evaded. There is more rum-drinking visible in some parts, and Creole traders are opening drink-shops; and the contact with Europeans is in some instances hurtful, and leads to the growth of the traffic in intoxicants, and necessarily to the increase in drunkenness."

Thus far, then, the story of the Madagascar mission of the Friends' Foreign Mission Association is told. For more than a score of years its agents have been at work in that island usefully. They did not go out to seek converts to Quakerism—they have made none; and they have not pressed the teaching of the distinctive points in their belief. Their mission is to preach the Gospel, to teach the ignorant, and to help the nation to build itself up, with a hope that it may remain a free, self-governed people. They are giving a higher education in the capital; they are teaching Bible-classes, keeping up dispensaries, supporting nurses, battling with old superstitions in school, home, and sick-room; and on some of them there is "laid the care of all the churches" in a wide region. It has been a difficult task for these agents, for it is certain that hitherto the Society has had little to do with what may be called sustained missionary work in distant lands.

The Friends' Foreign Mission Association has extended the area of its operations since the mission to Madagascar was begun. It has now nearly thirty missionaries (male and female) in Madagascar, India, and China, whilst an allied organisation has its missionaries in Syria also. What its future may be, remains to be seen, for there are difficulties in addition to those before most missions. The area whence the subscriptions are drawn is limited, for the European members of the Society of Friends may be readily put as under twenty thousand, and it may be taken as a fact that the wealth of the Society does not increase. The traditions of the Society are not much in favour of a prolonged stay of ministers in a place; and there is the well-known view of the body as to the payment of ministers. These are the internal difficulties, which need not be dilated on. There are others in the class of the work; in the fact that the Society has a long and consistent testimony against slavery, war, and drink, to bear; and in the fact, also, that in Madagascar they were not the first in the field, and so have had to work side by side with the missionaries of the London Missionary Society, whose mission was commenced in 1820. But, on the other hand, this is believed to have been a blessing—the missionaries of the two Societies having worked harmoniously together.

"CHILDREN OF LIGHT."

BY THE REV. J. SUMMERHAYES, M.A., VICAR OF ST. JOHN'S, EALING DEAN.

NOTHING is more hateful to the majority of persons than the being in, and the being compelled to remain in, darkness. Those born blind, in whom the wise and loving Creator increases the quickness of other senses, especially the senses of hearing and touch, may know little of the discomfort and distress caused to others by being kept in the dark; but seeing people, when through some accident they are shut up in a dark place, are possessed at once by a feeling of insecurity and helplessness. Every step is taken by them with a certain amount of hesitation and trembling; in their fear they stand still and irresolute, or they shuffle along slowly, with many a stumble and many a halt; and this not because they are cowards, or more than ordinarily timorous, but because in the dark they cannot tell at all where they are, or what is near them; for, as the Lord Jesus is recorded in the 35th verse of the twelfth chapter of St. John to have said, "He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." And this feeling of doubt is most exquisitely

painful, and most depressing; the stoutest-hearted and the very bravest of men are not insensible of this; nay, the more bold they are in the light, when they can see the danger, however great it is, that lies before them, the more anxious they, for the most part, are in the vague, uncertain, unknowable dark. The hero who in the day of battle will walk straight up to the cannon's mouth, will in the dark grope timidly about him, and move, if he move at all, a few inches at a time, hesitating lest perchance his next step should lead him into some pitfall. This, which experience proves to be true of physical darkness, is equally true of spiritual darkness: they who are spiritually in the dark manifest the same anxiety and irresolution, and by many tokens show they feel and are tormented by the same sense of insecurity and helplessness. Spiritual darkness is, indeed, far more painful and distressing to the human heart and mind than physical darkness.

And all those are throughout their days spiritually "in the dark," enveloped in murkiest darkness, and are consequently for ever in their heart of hearts troubled by a distressing sense of doubt and insecurity, who are unbelievers, who are ignorant of God's revelation of Himself in His Word, who do not rejoice in the light of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

All these are in the dark, sad at heart, and oppressed by the gloom of hopelessness. That this is so, note what was written by one of the wisest and best of the philosophers of ancient times. There is profound pathos in the despairing wail of Cicero, the famous Roman orator and statesman. He wrote: "It would have been best for a man never to have been born, and the next best boon that could be bestowed on him would be an early death." Observe, also, how Cicero's wail has been repeated in recent times. Not long ago one of the foremost of latter-day non-Christian philosophers wrote: "All that we know or can know is what we ourselves see, the present in which we live; as for the future, that which shall be or may be after death, we know nothing, we cannot know anything about it; it lies before us an utter void, an impenetrable darkness."

Still more recently it was reported in one of the public papers that an eminent politician, but, alas! an unbeliever, counselled those who would act on his advice "not to look beyond the present, to cherish no hope for the future, but just to labour on, thinking of nothing, desiring nothing, beyond what is now within reach on the earth." So have many in bygone days, and so do many now, dwell in darkness, ever in the shadow of death, cheered and strengthened by no hope which reaches further than the grave; and this condition has always been, as the written words of such men abundantly prove, a dark, dull, joyless state of corroding uncertainty, of distressful insecurity. It may be observed by those who watch closely the lives of such men, that (and this is the more evident, the more upright and benevolent they are) a certain strange, pathetic sadness clings to them and hangs about them; they pass on through life with painful steps and slow, like men shrouded in mist, as, hoping for nothing and fearing everything, "they walk in darkness, and know not whither they go."

But, thanks be to God, this is not our condition, if we are sincere, honest-hearted Christians, who believe that "the Desire of all nations" has come, and, coming, "has brought life and immortality to light" by His Gospel; for we are, so Jesus would teach us, as He taught His disciples of old, "Children of Light." *Our environment is not darkness, but light;* and in this Gospel light we live and rejoice. It may be that, like the butterflies which sport in the sunshine, and never give a thought as to that which constitutes their delight, and without which they could not live, so we, too many of us, do not think sufficiently of the light which surrounds us, and whereof we are glad. It will be profitable then for us to consider for a brief space with due seriousness—(1) Why we are called Children of Light, and (2) What is required of us because we are Children of Light.

The Lord Jesus gives this title to His disciples chiefly *because they are by the knowledge of His truth lifted up and brought out of the darkness of ignorance, i.e.,* spiritual ignorance. Now, it is, alas! only too possible for a man to attain to the very highest pitch of knowledge of things earthly, and to become a world-renowned scholar, poet, historian, philosopher, or scientist, and yet, because he lacks the spiritual faculty for receiving and comprehending spiritual things, because he is without faith and the fear of God and the love of Christ, therefore to be in the profoundest darkness, in most complete ignorance of God and godliness, of his own soul's present needs, and of its certain future existence and probable future development. Concerning these spiritual things the wise man of the earth may be, and often is, nothing better than a very fool. Proud of his clear, far-reaching sight, he is, in respect of these things, blinder than a bat. The grandest intellects of olden times, the illustrious men who in every kind of knowledge, except what is now termed science, certainly equalled, if they did not surpass, intellectually the ablest and most learned of the present age: these all were in darkness, and lived out their lives in the blackness of night, because they knew not God. They felt it, and owned it, and lamented it. And some of the cleverest men of our own time, some even of our own nation, are just as much in spiritual darkness, blind and ignorant about everything which concerns their immortal souls. Their immense accumulation of knowledge of things earthly does not rescue them from the night of hopelessness or lead them into light, or make them Children of Light. The *only* knowledge which accomplishes this is the knowledge of God, the God of the Bible, whose being, character, will, and rule are revealed to us in the inspired Scriptures, whom we are taught by Holy Writ to revere as our Father, to love as our Redeemer, and to obey as our Guide. None obtain this knowledge of God who do not obtain it through

the reading and hearing of the inspired Word: and those obtain the fullest knowledge who by regular, diligent, prayerful study of the Bible so get to know and trust Him who sent His Son into the world for this very purpose—to manifestly declare and evidently show unto men what He, God, is—that the darkness which beclouded their minds is dispelled and driven away, and they are filled with light. The diligent students of the Bible are made Children of Light because they learn more and more to know God and His Son Jesus Christ, who is the "True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." From Jesus there is perpetually flowing forth upon His disciples and the students of His Word a stream of celestial light, glorious and gladsome, and this enters in and abides in the heart of every true believer, and changes his whole character, his thoughts, his hopes, his fears, his aims, his desires, turning darkness into light.

It is chiefly in this sense, as having the knowledge of Divine truth imparted to them through and by Jesus, that Christians are Children of Light. Jesus is their "Sun of Righteousness," who, having "risen with healing in His wings," has poured light in rich abundance upon those who but for Him would still be "sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death."

It will be good for us once again and for ever to establish this sure conviction in our minds: that notwithstanding our boasted civilisation, and the rapid progress of education, and the marvellous increase in scientific knowledge, we, the men of to-day, even as the ancient heathens, were we without Christ, without the key to knowledge which His life and teaching afford, should remain in entire ignorance of spiritual truth; we should still be in darkness—in darkness as profound and sad as in the day when the sun is eclipsed.

We then are Children of Light, first and chiefly because we have been lifted up and brought out of the darkness of spiritual ignorance, because by the Scriptures we have been taught to know God and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Again, we are Children of Light, not only because by the knowledge of Divine truth we have been brought *out of the darkness of ignorance*, but further also we are brought *into the light of hope*.

There is no darkness in the future before us, any more than there is now around us; the light proceeding from Jesus not only instructs and gladdens us in the present, but the same glorious light illumines all the future; even death and the grave are robbed of their gloom, and are made bright with hope by the light which streams forth from the Cross on Calvary, and from the open tomb in Joseph of Arimathæa's garden.

We Christians are Children of Light because we believe—yea, we know—that as He, the Son of God, by dying triumphed over death, and shaking Himself free from the trammels of the grave rose again on the first Easter Day, so shall we and all who are in Christ not die eternally, not "lie in cold obstruction and rot," and become a mere handful of dust, and that be the end of us. We shall not be perpetual victims of death, or be for ever "prisoners of the grave," for at the second advent of Christ the same voice which bade Lazarus come forth from his grave, and the dead man heard and obeyed, shall be heard by all that are in their graves, bidding them rise and come forth; and to this bidding instant and universal obedience shall be rendered, and all who have "fallen asleep in Jesus," having been in their lifetime here Children of Light, shall rise and come forth into the full light of that eternal day which mortal eyes could not for a moment endure, but which Christ's redeemed, being changed, shall "together with Christ" rejoice in evermore.

This is the knowledge and hope, or rather, part of the knowledge and hope, which we Christians have, and wherefore we are called by Jesus Children of Light. Let us, understanding the reasons why Jesus so called us, claim and appropriate, rejoice in, yea, and glory in, the title which our Lord Himself has conferred on us—whoever we are and wherever we go, let us carry everywhere with us the thought that we are Children of Light. Jesus has said it; this is the name He chose for us. Let us never forget the title by which Jesus has ennobled every one of us—a title higher than any earthly title, than earl or duke or prince or king. All Christians are Children of Light, and have received this their patent of nobility from Christ Himself.

And, further, let us think often, yea every day of our lives, what is required and what may fairly be expected of us just because we are Children of Light and the Children of the Day, because we are not of the Night or of Darkness. Let us think how, because we dwell amidst, and are surrounded by and belong to the light, therefore we must be *pure and holy*.

This is the lesson which the Apostle Paul drew hence, as we read in Romans xiii. 12, 13: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light; let us walk honestly (*i.e.*, honourably, purely, and cleanly), as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness." There is, and there always will be, never-ceasing opposition, continual conflict, between Light and Filth: the two cannot tolerate one another, cannot dwell together, or be near neighbours. It is so in the world of nature—in the material and physical world; it is so also in the moral and spiritual world. If we are, and would remain, Children of Light, our lives must be clean, our deeds righteous, our thoughts pure, our hearts holy. We should be utterly miserable if it were possible, and we were to continue Children of Light, and at the same time wilfully continue in sin. Even as we could not go forth into the bright sunshine with soiled and dirty clothes, and not feel ashamed, uncomfortable, and wretched, so for our happiness and peace of mind, if we would walk spiritually in the sunshine, we must endeavour to cleanse ourselves from moral defilement.

Children of Light must, first and foremost, be holy. Next, they must be *kind and loving:* they that put *on* the armour of light must, as the Apostle teaches, put *off* strife and envying. Quarrels, disputes, jealousy, and wrath may be suitable clothing for the sons of darkness, who "come not to the light because their deeds are evil," but they are not fitting garments for the Children of Light. How unsuitable is anger, or strife, or envy in any disciple of Jesus, is made clear at once if the disciple be brought up close and made to stand face to face or side by side with his Master, and be compared with the meek and gentle and altogether lovable Jesus. Reflect, how can a hot-tempered, quarrelsome man, or a peevish, jealous woman, ever be like that Jesus whom we ought all to try to resemble, and into whose likeness we shall undoubtedly grow more and more if we be truly Children of Light? Let us, then, now and for all our days henceforth, "put off all strife and envying," and let us put on proper Christian attire: humility, gentleness, tender-heartedness, charity.

Again, Children of Light must be *active*—always hard at work, doing their duty thoroughly, fighting boldly against the enemies of Christ and of men. A sleepy sentinel, a drowsy soldier, a slumberous workman, a sluggish labourer, is no good at all, is worse than useless. Such men, if no severer punishment befell them, would be discharged as worthless from the service, drummed in disgrace out of the army. And so must Children of Light prove themselves good soldiers, faithful labourers, by being awake, not asleep—actively at work, not playing nor idling.

And, lastly, Children of Light ought to be—and there is every reason why they should be; it is wrong in them, and they should be ashamed if they are not—*happy*, restful, contented, cheerful, bright, always rejoicing in hope. Too many there are, whom it would not be altogether charitable or right to exclude from the company of the Children of Light, who go about always as it were in mourning, in sombre attire, and with long, downcast faces, who are not as happy, not as peaceful and contented, not as bright and hopeful as they might be, and ought to be. Why is this so? why is the religion of Christ thus disparaged and lowered in the world's esteem by the grim and melancholy and too often sour-looking faces of many Christians? Most probably this is the reason, and it is important we should bear it in mind:—Multitudes of professing Christians *are not as bright and happy as they should be, because they are not as holy, as loving, as active*, as by prayer and study of the Word, and diligent endeavour, the Holy Spirit helping them, they might become. Happiness is surely beyond question a ray of Christian Light; but too frequently it is, for the reason above stated, the last ray that falls upon and abides in the believer's heart and life. We too many of us wish it were otherwise; we want to be happy without being holy; whereas, first we must try and pray to be holy and useful, then after this we shall without fail receive the gift of happiness.

Let, then, those who would in every respect be Children of Light, who would be made bright and hopeful by their knowledge of and faith in God their Father, and Christ their Saviour, strive to be, look to Jesus to make them, pray for the Spirit to enable them to be, more and more pure, and good, and kind, and helpful to others. And then, as surely as the sun, having risen, sends its light everywhere into earth's darkest places, so surely Christ will make them glad.

He who has imparted the sanctifying grace will certainly also instil peace and joy into the believing soul. Know, nor ever forget it, that *there ought to be no gloom*, even as *there should be no evil*, in the life or heart of any Child of Light.

THE WORK OF LITTLE SUNSHINE.

A STORY FOR OLD AND YOUNG.

AH! do, Hilda. Let me run and have a drink. I am so thirsty. Look, there is Rose Jenkins coming to draw some water."

"Very well, Mabel; I suppose you may, if you do not feel very hot. But not so fast, dear. Wait for me. You know how nervous mother feels about that well."

"Oh, I will be very careful. But why is Aunty so nervous? I am not going to tumble into it, you may be sure," said Mabel, laughing.

"Did I not tell you that a little girl once did fall into that well, and lost her life?"

"Oh, Hilda, you never told me. How did it happen?"

"Well, here's Rose; perhaps she will tell you. She knows all about it."

"Yes," said three other little voices, "Rose will tell us. She has often said she never tires talking of little Sunshine. But let us come along, before she is gone."

The party of speakers were the three youngest daughters of the Vicar of Silverton, and with their little cousin, Mabel Weston, they were returning to the vicarage after a long walk through the fields. The day was hot, and the children were tired, climbing in pursuit of wild flowers. A drink of the spring water from Rose's pitcher, and the prospect of a story, made them hurry to the place.

"Rose, will you please give my little cousin a drink?" said the eldest girl, as they came up.

"Indeed I will, Miss Hilda. But won't you all come in, and rest a little? You seem tired."

"Oh, no, thank you," said Mabel, as she seated herself by the edge of the well. "It is so cool here, and you will let me drink out of your pitcher. You know we can't get drinks that way in London."

"And, Rose," said wee Winnie, "do please tell Mabel the story about little Sunshine. She wants so to hear it."

"I will indeed, Miss Winnie, though it makes me sad to tell it."

The children seated themselves round the well as Rose began:—

Though it is now twenty years since it happened, I can remember as well as if it were yesterday. Everyone called her "Sunshine," she was so bright and cheery, though her real name was Violet. Her father called her by that name because she was born in the spring, when the violets are in bloom. I can't remember when her parents died, but I often heard mother say they both died so young that she was only two years old at the time.

As you know, Miss Hilda, her father was the son of old Mr. Warner, of the Beeches; and he and his wife, being old, wished their son and daughter-in-law on their marriage still to live with them. He had been married only about three years, when he one day went out riding on a young horse, which was not well trained. No one ever knew how it occurred, but he was found half an hour after lying, almost dead, on the road not far from the Beeches. He never recovered consciousness, and died in a few hours. The shock was so great to his poor delicate wife, that in a little more than a month she followed him. Little Sunshine was all that was left to cheer poor Mr. and Mrs. Warner in their terrible grief, and she was everything to them.

She was such a pretty, fairy-like child, with lovely golden hair that fell in clusters of curls around her brow, and she had such pretty bright blue eyes—though sometimes a thoughtful, far-away look came into them, which made one feel she was too wise for her years. When anyone asked her name, she would say in such a coaxing little way—

"I 's everybody's pet."

There was nothing she loved better than to get on her grandfather's knee, and ask him to tell her about the Saviour, and the beautiful home where her father and mother had gone. Then she would say, "I do love Jesus so much! Wouldn't you like to go see Him, g'anfader?"

She was very often down with us. You see, the Beeches was so close, and I was just about her age: her grandmother allowed her to run down as often as she liked, to have a game with me. How well I remember that one morning when she came I was in disgrace, having done something to vex mother. The first thing she did was to come and put her soft arms round me, saying, "O Rose, I 's so sorry you're naughty! I know it was the devil made you; and Jesus is so sorry too. Won't you come and ask Him to forgive you, and to keep the devil away? I don't likes the devil to be coming!"

I did not feel sorry, nor did I want to go; so I said, "O no, I don't want to ask Jesus to forgive me; I am not so bad!"

When she heard this she burst into tears, and said, "O Rose, you don't know how sorry Jesus is when you talk like that!"

Wilful as I was, it was more than I could bear to see her crying; so I said, "Very well, you may ask Him to forgive me, if you like."

"I 's so glad!" said she. Then, taking my hand, she brought me to the summer-house in the garden, that no one might see us. I have never forgotten her prayer. It was—

"Please, dear Jesus, make Rose very sorry for letting the devil make her naughty, and do not let him come again; but make her love You, dear Jesus."

Dear Miss Mabel, I could keep on for hours telling you such little stories about her; but I must go on to tell how it happened that we all lost our pet. No, I will not say "lost"! We shall meet her by-and-bye in heaven. She was, as mother said, "just too precious to be left here"; but short as the time was that she was with us, it was not too short for her to speak for the Saviour whom she loved so much.

She was just five years and a few months old this very time twenty years ago. How she did love to go down with her grandfather to the harvest-field, where the reapers were, and to go about chatting with the women who were binding! What stories she told them in her own little way about Joseph's sheaf standing up. "Wasn't it wonderful"! and about Ruth gleaning in "Boze's" field for poor "Namey." She wondered if there were any poor women here, saying, "'Deed, they ought to leave some corn on the field for them." Next she would tell them that Jesus walked through corn-fields, and perhaps they were like these.

My dear little ladies, how I wish you could have seen her as I remember her, especially on that day. She came to the cottage for me, and we both went together to the fields. She began, as usual, prattling to the workers, and when she disappeared none of us missed her. Each thought she was with someone else. Hearing the women say they were thirsty, she told them the story that her grandfather had often read out of his Story-Book—as she called the Bible—about Jesus being tired and thirsty, and sitting down by a well, where He met a woman and asked her to give Him a drink. He told her a wonderful thing, how that He could give her "living water," and if she drank it she would be never thirsty again! "I suppose," said she, "that the well where He got the living water must be far off; but g'andfader says He will come down from heaven some day, and if I sees Him I'll ask Him

for some of the living water, and will get some for you." And so she chatted on, and, as I said, slipped away from the field without any of us missing her. We knew afterwards it was what she had been talking about made her think of this well, for after leaving the field she came here. The accident never could have happened had not someone left the cover off the well's mouth.

I ought to tell you that, for the convenience of the harvesters, a large bucket was hung to a chain, fastened to the side of the well. But how she lifted the bucket, no one could imagine. She was letting it down into the well just as my brother appeared at the cottage door. He rushed forward to stop her, but was too late. The bucket had dragged her over. He caught hold of the chain, and found that the hook at the end of it had caught in her little frock. When he pulled her out she seemed to be dead, but was only stunned. He carried her to mother, and, after sending for her grandfather, he himself ran for the doctor as quickly as he could. Poor old Mr. and Mrs. Warner! What a state of grief they were in, thinking that perhaps their darling would never speak to them again!

When the doctor arrived, he found that, although she was unconscious, no bones were broken, but he said he was afraid her spine was injured.

I will say just here that, excepting Mr. and Mrs. Warner, my brother John loved her most of any of us; nor was it to be wondered at, for she was truly God's messenger for good to him. I often heard mother say how, when he was a lad of about fourteen, he was her chief anxiety, through his getting into company with some bad boys, who made him as naughty as themselves. After some time she noticed a great change in him, and he gave up his former companions. He afterwards told mother it was all through darling Sunshine. Many a time, he said, she would ask him, when they were alone in the fields, to come to some quiet spot, and would make him sit down. Then she would get upon his knee, and ask him, "Didn't he love Jesus, and wouldn't he like to go up to Him in the sky?" So, just in her own simple, winning way, did she lead dear John to do right.

Imagine, then, the shock it was to him when he thought his little angel would never speak to him again. She lay insensible for three days, and John watched her continually, never leaving her bedside. On the third day, as he and her grandmother sat in the room, she opened her eyes, and looked from one to the other, and muttered something they could not understand. She closed them again, and they thought that perhaps she was dying; but she shortly regained consciousness, and looked round and asked where she was. From that hour she seemed to grow stronger. Still the doctor told us he was afraid the injury to her spine would prevent her ever walking again. In about a fortnight she was able to be carried gently to the Beeches, where all through that lovely autumn she lay on a sofa near the window, watching the withered leaves falling to the ground day by day.

In those days she told them how it all happened. "After I left the field," said she, "I just thought of the lovely well at Mrs. Jenkins', and that if I went to it dear Jesus might be there; but He weren't; so I thought if I tried to get some water He might see me, and come down from the sky, and ask me for a drink. I wanted to ask Him for some living water for the poor women who were so thirsty, but I s'pose He couldn't come. Den, you see, the bucket was so heavy—dat was how I fell in. I don't think I 's going to get well," she went on, "for when Jesus couldn't come down He wants me to go up to Him."

Another day, seeing her grandmother crying, she said, "Don't cry, dear gran; I 's going to Jesus. I feel so glad, for den my back won't hurt me any more; though I tries not to mind the pain, for Jesus suffered pain for me, and He needn't have done it unless He liked to. But, dear gran, I 's not glad to leave you. I 's so sorry you and dear g'andfader is not coming too. You will be so lonely when I 's gone; but if you could get Uncle Dick's little girl, my cousin Maysie, dat you often said you would like to see, and who was just my age, to come live with you—— I wonder, if I asked Jesus, would He send her? If He did, I 's sure g'andfader would let her stay; and perhaps He might send Uncle Dick too, den you would not be lonely."

I should say her Uncle Dick was the only living child of Mr. Warner. He had, some years before, married against the wishes of his father, who was so annoyed he said he would have nothing more to do with him. But after the death of Sunshine's parents, Mrs. Warner longed for her son, and many a time she pleaded with his father to forgive him. She knew where he lived in Manchester, and that he had three little children, and was very poor.

A few days after this talk her grandfather, coming into the room where she lay, said—

"How is my pet to-day? Better, I hope."

"No, g'andfader; I 'll not be better till I goes to Jesus, and I thinks dat will be very soon. When you were coming into the room I was just asking Him to send little cousin Maysie here before I dies. I wants so much to see her. I thinks He will; and you will let her stay, dear g'andfader, and be your little Sunshine, instead of me."

Her poor grandfather could not have denied her anything just then. He wrote a letter at once to his son, asking him to send his little girl, and even said if he wished to bring her himself he might, which of course he did; and the darling was very glad.

"Wasn't it so kind of dear Jesus," she said, "to send them?"

She only lived two days longer.

The night she died, as they all stood round the bed, she said—

"G'andfader, I wants you to let Uncle Dick stay

with you as well as Maysie when I is gone. Won't you just say you will?"

He could not resist the request of the dying child, and he shook his son's hand, and said he freely forgave him everything.

When she saw that she said, "I's so happy now!"

A few hours afterwards she passed away so peacefully, they all thought at first she had fallen asleep.

* * * * * *

"That is the story of the well, Miss Mabel. But there was much more than that to tell."

"Thank you so much, Rose," said Mabel, with tears in her eyes. "It is a lovely story, and I shall never forget it. But you did not tell me what became of old Mr. and Mrs. Warner, or if their son came to live with them; and where is your brother John?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Warner are both with their darling. They died about three years ago. Many a time Mr. Warner said he could praise the Lord for having taken their little darling to Himself, for had it not been for her death, he would never have been reconciled to Mr. Richard, who brought all his family to live at the Beeches, and became the comfort of his father's old age. My brother John has been married some years, and has now three little daughters of his own. The eldest is just your size, Miss Mabel, and her name is Sunshine."

"Mabel dear," said Hilda, "I think we must be going now; it is getting late."

Having thanked Rose again, the children were retiring, when Mabel ran back to whisper something—

"Dear Rose, I want to try to live for Jesus too, like dear little Sunshine." LILY MCCURRY.

LIVING PEACEABLY.

BY THE REV. HENRY ALLON, D.D.

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."—ROM. xii. 18.



NTENSITY and misgiving are here combined in a very suggestive way. The most absolute demand is made of the inner Christian soul of the man, but there is a reasonable doubt whether all that he can do may not in some instances fail. Peace is conditioned upon two parties. The moral wrong and unreasonableness of the one party may render nugatory the utmost endeavours of the other. In such case no blame can attach to him who vainly seeks peace, only to him who makes it impossible. It is not a teaching of "peace at any price." The implication is the direct opposite of this. He who seeks to preserve peace at the cost of truth and right is just as guilty as he who is bent on discord and wrong. Sometimes controversy, resistance, is the most sacred duty of man. "I am not come to bring peace, but a sword," is the note of the first moral process of Christianity. Wherever it finds wrong it is to assail it—untruth of thought by controversy, wrong of life by practical resistance and disallowance.

Peace is conditioned upon right: it is not a compromise with wrong. No reproach is more superficial and unreal than the reproach sometimes brought against Christian men, and especially against ministers of religion, when they by speech and deed assail some social iniquity—like slavery, or the corn laws, or unjust war: preach against it, lecture against it, take practical action against it—that they are agitators, that they are firebrands of social life. Ought they not, as men of peace, to abstain from all social strifes, and to enjoin peaceable living upon all men? It would be a good time for wrong-doers, if this were the duty of Christian men. The direct opposite is made imperative. The Divine wisdom is "first pure, then peaceable;" and until the purity be established there can be no peaceableness.

A man may contend for right in a wrong spirit. He who has wrong to oppose, needs to be specially watchful over his own spirit; lest personal passion, and sectarian strife, and social selfishness, shelter themselves under the shield of God's righteousness.

The injunction that a man should "as much as lieth in him" be peaceable is never more imperative than when he is under the necessity of doing battle for the right; that he may carefully exclude every selfish end and feeling, and contend earnestly only for the faith of God. Men may, in this way, earn God's great benison on peacemakers; for there is no such sure and thorough process of peace-making as resisting and destroying wrong.

The thing prohibited is any needless cause of strife—any quarrel springing from the passion, the unreason, the selfishness, the thoughtlessness of the Christian man himself. The history of God's greatest servants is a history of their social strifes: Moses in Egypt, David under Saul, Elijah under Ahab, the prophets under idolatrous Israel, our Lord with the Pharisees and chief priests, Paul with the Judaisers, Luther with the Pope. The obligation is not to live at peace, but to strive to the utmost to do so. A man's life may be full of great contentions, and yet he may be pre-eminently a man of peace. The obligation is that the fault shall not be ours if we fail. If wrong be inwrought in a man, if the moral sense



"FAREWELL!"

See p. 764.

be feeble, if lust, avarice, selfishness be strong in him, no gentleness, or sweetness, or manifest disinterestedness on our part can beguile him into an amiable sacrifice of his desires. We must wage with him the stern, world-wide battle of God, and spiritual life, and conscience, against wrong.

When men are "dead in trespasses and sins," we may not, to avoid excitement, resistance, and resentment, leave them undisturbed in their torpor.

When social wrong is organised in nations, or in laws, or in powerful sections of the community, you cannot, often, redress the wrong by gentle speech and skilful charm. The strong man will not permit you to enter his house and bind him, unless you overpower him by a greater strength. You may have to speak words as strong, and hot, and scathing, as those which our Lord spake to the Pharisees. Would the Pope have been coaxed by Luther into needful reforms? Has any social or ecclesiastical iniquity, in England or anywhere else, ever been redressed by the charm of honeyed words? Base, selfish natures need holy anger, righteous denunciation, resistless force, to make them desist at all. Such processes cannot in the nature of things go on peaceably. To wrong-doers God Himself has terrible words to speak; and so must all who are godlike. All national progress—progress, that is, of great multitudes of men—must be by conflict, debate, righteous force. A man must fight if he would not condone wrong, or be drawn into it. When the devil comes to a man to tempt him, and to coerce him to wrong, he may not begin to wheedle and parley with him; the only possible thing is to "resist him," to say sternly, "Get thee behind me, Satan." And the devil is not merely an isolated spiritual personage. He incarnates himself in tyrannous governments, unscrupulous law-makers, selfish communities of men, doubtful commercial enterprises; "whom resist, steadfast in the faith."

So, when wrong is inflicted upon ourselves, as in individuals, it is our imperative duty to resist and punish the wrong. Sometimes it may be, morally, a better thing for the wrong-doer, for him who suffers to be magnanimous, forgiving: it may melt and win the transgressor. In such cases we ought to be magnanimous, if our individual wrong is the only suffering; but if magnanimity does not rectify wrong or reform the wrong-doer, if he persist in his wrong, and presume upon our forbearance, then the imperative duty is to resist and to punish. I have no right to sacrifice righteousness to a weak sentiment. I have no right, by my example, to lessen the sacredness of law, the social feeling of righteousness. I am bound not to suffer wrong unless I am sure that my suffering will lessen wrong, and lead to righteousness. A man's selfish convenience may urge him to let the matter pass, a perverted idea of peacefulness may influence him, but his conscience ought to constrain him for the common weal.

But is there not our Lord's great saying, "If any man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also?" Yes, and a great and precious inculcation of Christian magnanimity it is. But we learn how to interpret these great round apophthegms by our Lord's own practical comment upon this one, when smitten at the high priest's tribunal. So far from "turning the other cheek," He remonstrated: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me?" They inculcate a spirit, they do not prescribe a ritual.

Peaceableness does not, therefore, imply quiescence, or inactivity, or unrighteous concession. It is a word that needs to be rescued from use as a cant term. We may not cry, "'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace." The inculcation is of a peaceable temper, an honest, earnest, striving, "as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men." Nothing that can possibly secure peace is to be wanting in ourselves. We are not to provoke resentment, not to throw stones, not to give any man just cause of offence. We are so to attemper our spirits, so to order our intercourse, so to carry ourselves, as that we shall inspire all that is best in men, resist the devil that is in them, solicit the angel that is in them, help all good growths; and even when we are opposing evil most strenuously, even when we are speaking the sternest truth to a man, we are to "speak the truth in love." This ruling of one's own self so as to produce peace, is much more in life than we often think.

1. It begins with the spirit of a man. He may not be arrogant, dogmatic, self-conceited in his goodness. A man of stern, hard virtue, who flings commandments and principles at a wrong-doer as if they were brickbats, who stands on a lofty pedestal of proud virtue—"Stand off, I am holier than thou"—who, in his self-complacent goodness, preaches and denounces, is not very likely to soften a wrong-doer, to induce him to try to do right. He rouses all that is antagonistic in him. Of course he cannot deny that his censor is right, and that he is wrong; but he hates the right that he is forced to acknowledge. It has no pity, no gentleness; it makes no allowance; it forgets the injunction, "Consider thyself, lest thou also be tempted." It is a mistake to think that the most shrinking sensitiveness to right is compromised by pity of wrong. Holiness is never so pure as when it is seeking to redeem the sinful; a Jesus can lift up the woman that was a sinner. Do not make evil resentful, combative, self-extenuating; soften it, make it ashamed of itself. Nothing will do this like purity clothed in gentleness, "overcoming evil with good."

A man is responsible for his method, as well as for his aim; and method is sometimes as much as aim. A "good man for whom some would even dare to die" is a great deal more "than a righteous man." He is a righteous man, with a spirit and method of pity, gentleness, self-sacrifice. No man may say, "I have done right, and must leave all results to God."

He is responsible for a great deal more than right; the "things that are lovely and of good report" are as imperative and important as "the things that are true and just." It takes a great deal more grace to be pitiful and gentle, than it does to be holy. Love in a parent counts for as much in the formation of a child's character as virtue; nay, charity takes the chief place.

Stern lessons, fierce sermons, hard lectures, "dealing faithfully" with your offending friend, are not altogether the best means of winning his soul. Stern worship, stern household laws, are not counsels of perfection. A hard, righteous spirit may drive a wrong-doer to defiance and the devil sooner than anything else.

2. Then the manner in which our spirit expresses itself has much to do with peaceableness. What a power of irritation there is in speech—in offensive, or provoking, or sneering language! How full of irritations the common intercourse of men! What poison there is in calculated words! What provocation in tones, in covert sneers, in intuitive contradictions, in irritable and irritating allusions! How little religion controls us! What arrows—subtle, keen, and barbed—are shot across family dinner-tables! What carping, and petulance, and provocation! How far from feeling the obligation and the endeavour to "help one another's joy!" What emulations and strifes in our combats of words If it be not war, it is little more than an armed neutrality; simply because we have not felt the importance of bringing religion to bear upon common speech and feeling, we have permitted ourselves to drift, to lose our sweetness and obligingness, the delicacy of courtesy, and solicitude for each other's joy. The tongue should be a minister of grace, the "law of kindness upon our lips;" not the instrument of random, vain, selfish, sharp, querulous words, that wound in every sentence.

Some men act as constant irritants; their words, their tone, their very manner stir up all that is worst in you; their very air is a provocation—the scorn of a proud man, the sneer of an ill-natured man, the thoughtlessness of a selfish man. A man is bound to be gentle and courteous, even in manner.

Selfishness is the root and inspiration of most of our social irritations—the unconscious seeking, in little things, to make others subserve our own interest and gratification. Instead of ministering to others, we are always seeking to be ministered to—considered in all arrangements, in all conversations. We neglect others, or try to use them; and so we make peace a difficult thing. Selfishness can never work peace; only self-forgetfulness, only ministering to others, the endeavour to please them, to awaken within them feelings of gratitude, admiration, love. It is not easy to live peaceably with a selfish man—with a man who pays no regard to other people's interests or gratifications. But if men would make it to be felt that they were trying to serve each other, and to make each other happy, peace would come of necessity. Is there anything more irritating than the constant striving to be clever, to say sharp things, and for the sake of the sharpness not sparing the wound—jesting, teasing, sarcasm? It is only a pin! yes, but it pricks; and it offends more than it wounds. As much wit and humour as possible should be thrown into the conversation of life. Humour is the laughter of the spirit; it is one of God's rare gifts; to be used for alleviating the burdens of life, and for enlightening its darkness; not for giving pain, and engendering bitter resentment. No man is entitled to jest at another man's expense.

Contradictoriness, again, is a weed of social life that has rapid and pernicious growth. Some people seem to have an instinct for contradiction; they always want to argue with you; their first impulse is to question whatever is said; they assent even in a protesting manner; they are always provoking disputation.

Vanity is a grave hindrance to peace—a man always thinking about self, scheming to get self recognised, to put self in the highest place; always "thanking God that he is not as other men are," but a good deal troubled if other men do not see it. Men avaricious of distinction, scheming to secure it, setting snares for recognition. Oh, the littleness, the discomfort, the contemptibleness of all this! Better a man too proud to care, than a vain man tormented by the care. Of course you want to punish the vain fool, to pluck the feathers from the peacock, quietly to mortify him; if you can, it may do him good. But how inimical to peace every feeling on both sides! There is scarcely any cure for a thoroughly vain man; you may correct pride, you scarcely can correct vanity. A vain man has a radically disordered vision. It doesn't seem a sin, hence it passes into the domain of goodness, and a man is vain of his religious life and privileges. He is blind to every criticism, correction, or ridicule. There is, I think, no moral remedy for vanity. But again, how it militates against peace!

And pride—self-sufficient scorn of others, which in some forms of it is a kind of virtue. But in its cold, arrogant, unsocial, unsympathetic forms; in its unconscious natural aloofness, it is utterly inimical to peaceableness. And censoriousness, and tale-bearing, and love of scandal—the instinct for always seeing faults, weaknesses, defects: how terribly predominant this is! In no sphere is it the first province of criticism to find fault. There should be an instinct for finding out what is good; and if afterwards it must be qualified by disapprobation, why the disapprobation will be wholesome, and kindly received by prepared sympathies. He is not a strong man, nor a generous man, who delights to expose his brother's weaknesses. So frets, petty selfishness, sarcasm, moroseness, pugnaciousness, morbid sensitiveness, coldness, all are habits and moods that make peaceableness very difficult.

These are serious offences against the amity of life; and yet how little we realise them! How seldom in our prayers we are troubled about them! We confess sins in general, and sins in grosser forms: but not often these. The father of a family does not often acknowledge that he is cross, imperious, impatient; the mother that she is a scold, a nagger, an irritant. Life is attempered by these little things; great virtues cannot produce peaceableness, only these minute amenities.

Clearly the duty of a man is so to attemper his spirit, as that his habit and conversation shall minister to social satisfaction and joy; so that he shall please others, and be a "helper of their joy." Graces of character are duties. Love is an instinct; it divines what will best minister, and ministers it.

It is a queer affection that is always contradictious, cold, provoking, resentful. Cheerfulness is a duty, sympathy is a duty, generous construction is a duty, tender forbearance is a duty, hopefulness is a duty, gentleness is a duty, easiness to be entreated, a manifest readiness to help others and to make them happy; doing things, giving, helping, "not of constraint," but with eager satisfaction. Discretion is a duty; not meddling, letting things alone, holding your tongue about other people's matters. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy"—a rich cluster of gracious qualities, which if realised would ensure peaceableness.

Would it not be as well if we sometimes turned from our large ideas of the Kingdom of God, in general, to these minuter domestic and personal things which are to realise it?—if, in our morning prayers, we were more solicitous about the dispositions, and habits, and ministries of the day? if we thought of "the things that are lovely and of good report," as well as of "the things that are true, and honest, and just?"

A man who attains to this ministry of the "things that make for peace" will do more for the Kingdom of Christ than he could do by heroic services. He will move, in this discordant, selfish world, an angel of light, and peace, and blessedness. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Blessed are they that make you feel their generosity and unselfishness, their geniality, their solicitous ministry. Blessed is every man who carries with him the realisation of the "peace on earth" which heralded the Redeemer's advent, and the peace "not as the world giveth" which was His legacy.

"FAREWELL!"

THE mellow sunshine wraps the moor
In radiance soft and warm,
And falls on many a cottage floor,
And floods the open farm.

Peace! peace! Let love and life awhile
Rejoice in Heaven's boon;
Let earth reflect its lavish smile,
And rest in life's fair noon.

But village chimes ring soft and low
A tender parting knell;
And twain must part, and tears must flow—
"Farewell, my love, farewell."

The seaman bends to kiss his child,
Who deep in slumber lies·
In after-hours, when seas are wild
That sight will fill his eyes.

This summer peace, this cottage calm,
This sunshine through the door,
Will fall upon his heart as balm,
And bless him evermore.

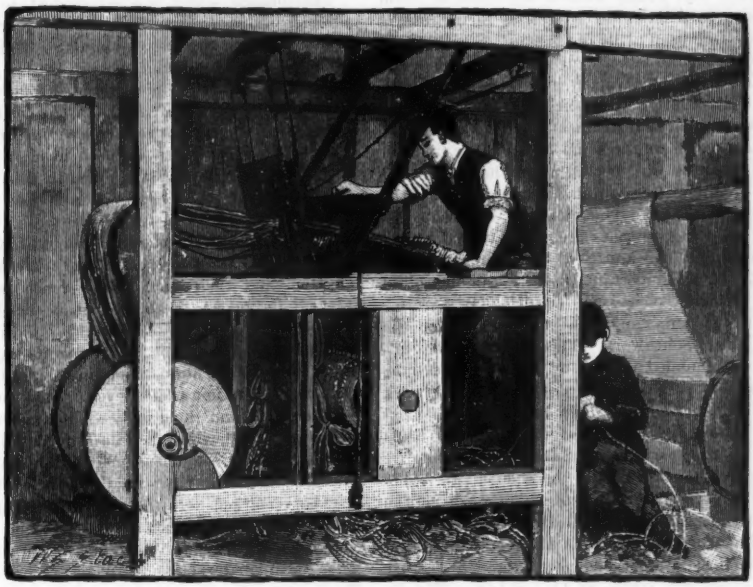
A bit of southernwood, a rose,
He holds within his grasp—
A sprig of briar to enclose
Within his Bible's clasp.

Their breath shall waft him, on the deep,
To that fair cottage door.
Brave mariner, thy God shall keep
Thy cottage on the moor!

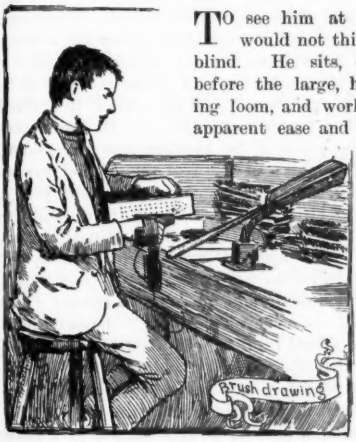
CLARA THWAITES.

A GLIMPSE OF SOME SIGHTLESS FOLK.

BY F. M. HOLMES.



MAT WEAVING.



TO see him at work you would not think he was blind. He sits, or stands, before the large, heavy-looking loom, and works it with apparent ease and skill. He can find the shuttle which ever and anon darts backward and forward, then he presses cross-threads firmly in their place with what we may call a large lever, and so by degrees the mat or rug is woven.

Even colours are filled in with accuracy. The different-hued threads are hung in certain positions on the loom, and the sightless operator can find the various colours—each in its own position or order—and incorporate them into the fabric. Working thus by the sense of touch, and upon certain well-defined mechanical rules, he is able to some extent to conquer his loss of sight, and become, within certain limits, an efficient craftsman.

The apartment in which he is at work is long, and looms are placed on either side. Further on, you may see cocoa-nut fibre matting being made; and not far off, again, the smell of pitch will warn you of your proximity to a certain room where may be seen a blind broom-maker fastening the bunches of stiff bristles, or "hairs," into the broom-head with the boiling pitch.

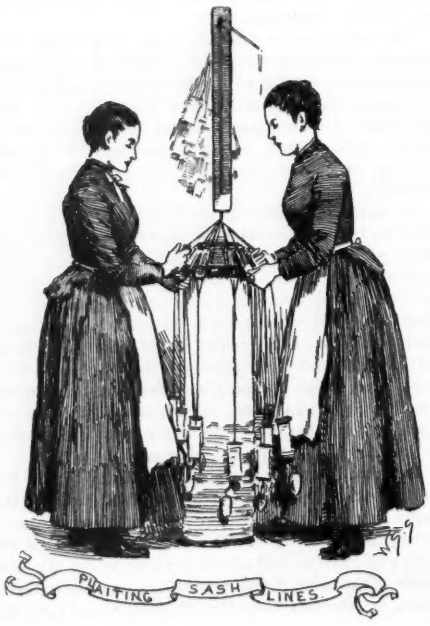
In another department brush-drawing is going on: that is, brushes are made by drawing the hairs into their position with wire; while—perhaps as marvellous as any when it is considered that the workers are all blind—wood-chopping is also carried on! And it is seldom that those engaged in this apparently dangerous employment for the blind hurt themselves. They seem to chop up the pieces of wood with a precision, accuracy, and freedom from injury which might make one, indeed, say: "They do not seem to be sightless." In yet other departments, basket-making and chair-caning may be seen.

But there is other training than this. Enter the pretty little chapel and listen to the soft tones of the organ; or go into the concert-hall and hear the sweet music discoursed there. The musical instruments are kept going pretty well all the day long by one after another of the blind people practising; and the concerts given at intervals show that the violin and horn are

not forgotten in the tuition. Only a limited number, however, are taught instrumental music, those being selected who show talent sufficient to encourage the hope that they may become organists by-and-bye.

And girls and young women—for some of them are stricken with blindness as well as their brothers—are they forgotten? By no means. Some of the musical instrumentalists are girls, and in some of the rooms girls and young women may be seen knitting, netting, chair-caning, basket-making, brush-making, or, with a very simple instrument, plaiting sash-lines! How seldom, when we throw up our window to catch the fresh morning air, or close it in the shades and damp of evening, do we think that very possibly the patient fingers of a blind maiden plaited those cords on which the window-sashes are pulled up and down! Yet the making of this apparently insignificant article appears to be an important industry among blind girls and women.

These things are taught at the School for the Indigent Blind, Southwark. This most excellent institution was founded in 1799 by a few good people, who have now passed to their rest. But this work of theirs remains, and has been maintained and extended. When first it was founded, green fields stretched on that part of the Surrey side of mighty London which now surrounds the school. It fronts the meeting-place of some of the main roads of the southern quarter, at what is called St. George's Circus. The neighbourhood around has changed; the Blind School remains. But it has now a branch further out, at Wandsworth, where, at Linden Lodge, Wandsworth Common, fifty little blind children of the poor are taught to read and write on the Braille,



Alston, and Moon systems; they also receive Kindergarten training, and instruction in the rudiments of music; they are drilled, trained in household work, and encouraged in industrious and self-reliant habits.

This branch school was established to divide the juniors, of ages from seven to twelve years, from the others, and that the institution at St. George's should be more of an industrial school. At the latter place there are about 150 pupils, and also some twenty-five older persons, who are paid for their work, and earn wages varying up to twenty-five shillings weekly. The latter sum is the highest average earned by basket-makers, the lowest average in this department being 8s. 10½d. The chair-caner is the lowest, the average earnings being 4s. 4d. per week.

All the pupils are taught and trained, fed and clothed, free from all cost. They are admitted by election, and their term of residence is about six years. The object of the school is tersely put in a prospectus, "to help poor blind children towards getting their own living." It is, as its name implies, "for the indigent blind," and pupils are admissible up to twenty, but not under seven. It is supported by subscriptions and donations, with interest and dividends on capital, while the sale of goods made pays the wages of the blind journeymen, etc., and goes a long way to purchasing materials for the work. It may also be remarked here that rewards and percentages are paid to pupils as encouragements; and on leaving the school, those who have been industrious, and have conducted themselves well, are presented with implements for their trades, and are also rewarded otherwise.

The causes of their blindness are various. Some are blind from birth, some from accidents, while small-pox and measles have their victims. Some seem gifted with, or acquire, wonderful powers of memory. There died recently an old pupil, named Daniel Brown, who was sixty years of age, of whom the Rev. B. G. Johns, M.A., the late chaplain, writes in "Blind People: their Works and Ways":—"He can repeat not only the whole of the hundred and fifty Psalms, and a large number of metrical psalms and hymns, as well as a considerable amount of modern poetry, including Goldsmith's 'Deserted Village,' but, incredible as it may seem, the whole of Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' with marginal notes and a biography." "This knowledge, we may add," says the last report, mentioning his death and quoting the extract, "was kept up till the time of his death." Daniel Brown entered the school in 1843, and, after being a pupil, was engaged in the mat shop, and also in the chapel as clerk up to a few days before his death.

It is interesting that the great poem of blind old Milton should have been so well learned by a blind compatriot so many years after it was composed; while it shows that handicraft, even if poor, is not a barrier to mental culture.

The day's doings are arranged very methodically. From Lady Day to Michaelmas the pupils rise at six o'clock in the morning, and have three-quarters of an hour's industrial work before breakfast. This is omitted from Michaelmas to Lady Day, as the hour of rising is then seven instead of six. Breakfast is served



at a quarter before eight. Then, at half-past eight, morning prayer is offered in the chapel, and industrial work or school takes place from nine until half-past twelve. The girls, however, have a brief recreation at eleven. Dinner is served at one, and from two until six industrial work or school proceeds again for boys or youths, while the girls close three-quarters of an hour earlier. Supper is served for the former at seven and for the latter at six, while from half-past seven until half-past eight schoolmasters and workmistresses read from books, which are selected by the chaplain and secretary, the Rev. R. P. Stickland, M.A. Evening prayer is held in the chapel at nine, and the pupils retire shortly before ten. All the pupils have been divided into six sections by the chaplain, and to one of these religious instruction is given by him daily.

There is a gymnasium fitted up on the premises, where exercise is gone through regularly, one of the resident trained masters supervising. Swings, climbing-posts, giant's stride, etc., are in the grounds, where the inmates can play; and the girls are also drilled. They play much like other children, and when seen enjoying games, they do not seem to be sightless.

Like other children, too, they exhibit great differences in their aptitude for learning. Some are much quicker than others. In the Report already referred to there are some boys put down as having "no ability," two in each of the basket-making and brush-making departments; but there is a cheerful note affixed, to the effect that "two or three may learn something in time." No girls are put down as having "no ability"; but the total of those engaged in the two branches of work named is small—sixteen only; while in the boys' workshops the number given is fifty-eight. The principal employment of the girls seems to be knitting and netting, the total number engaged therein being set down at fifty-seven. Seventeen are marked as being engaged in chair-caning, which is the same number as among the boys. Girls are not employed at weaving at the heavy looms. So it comes to this—that out of some two hundred indigent blind folks only four are marked as having no ability, and of those some hope is entertained.

The space occupied at St. George's is of fair size. In the front building, which is of a curious, almost castellated appearance, are offices and sale-room, and near by is an entrance suitable for vehicles. The other buildings are ranged in something like a roughly circular form around the grounds. Here are the chapel and the concert-room, the "shops"—some of which are partly below ground—and the schools. The dormitories above are long and airy. As soon as all the pupils have reached the dormitories, the bell rings for five minutes' silence for private prayer, after which they are allowed to talk quietly till once more the bell rings, and all is then quiet till the slumberers are awakened by the sonorous tones of the large bell in the morning. Rooms or cubicles for masters are in the dormitory, so that its inmates can be overlooked throughout.

At the school at Wandsworth there is a large garden, and some of the children have little plots of their own, and these they tend with interest. Assistants always supervise the children in the dormitories and in the garden, where they may be seen merrily at play. In the recreation-ground, also, are see-saws and swings, and a shed for drill.

Connected with the institution are thirteen annuities of £4 10s. each, which are given to blind persons in different parts of the kingdom. These annuities are from two bequests to the school of £1,000 each. A noteworthy circumstance is that H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, having given a donation of three hundred guineas, is entitled to always have one pupil in the school; and the executor of Miss J. Pigott, or his legal



representative, has the privilege of always having a pupil in the establishment on what is called the Pigott Gift, the lady named having bequeathed £2,000 to the school. A life subscription is ten guineas, and an annual is one guinea, each entitling the subscriber to one vote for each vacancy. But there is another and very useful method of helping the institution—that is, by purchasing goods made at the establishment. In the trade department a great variety will be found, and orders executed. Government contracts are sometimes undertaken, and duly carried out. But it is to private purchasers that the managers must necessarily trust for the greater part of the income to be derived from this source.

The endeavour is made to produce good work and to assist the inmates to become self-reliant, happy, and efficient. The institution appears an embodiment of that kindly and healthy Christian spirit which helps people to help themselves. It is not in the power of mortals to work miracles, and say to the blind, "Receive thy sight;" but by the patient pursuance of the right principles they may be helped in a measure to remedy their great loss, and such seems to be the case here.

THE SLAUGHTERS IN ITALY.

A NEW BOOK OF MARTYRS.—V.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., LL.D., ETC. ETC.

IN the old "Book of Martyrs," by John Foxe, the chief members of "the noble army" whom he commemorated in connection with Italy are the Waldenses. He had a very pitiful but glorious tale to tell of their sufferings and testimony in early times, and if he had had the gift of prophecy, and could have described the fearful persecutions that culminated in their expulsion from the Valleys, and their tragic and terrible march over the Alps in the winter of 1686, he would have had a still more memorable story to tell. It might be suitable to rehearse that story now, especially in view of the commemoration of the "Réntrée Glorieuse"—the marvellous return of the exiles in 1689—which is to take place in the coming autumn. But the present writer has already done this in THE QUIVER, in one of a series of papers entitled, "Two Hundred Years Ago." (See QUIVER, July, 1885.)

Besides dwelling on the persecutions of the Vaudois in their Valleys, Foxe touches briefly on the awful fate of that singularly flourishing and beautiful colony which they founded in Calabria, in the kingdom of Naples, a hundred and fifty years before the Reformation. It was in the year 1370 that, finding themselves straitened in the Valleys, they sent some of their number into Italy to look out for a convenient settlement. An unpeopled district was found in Calabria, which was soon occupied by an industrious and religious peasantry. The lords of the soil welcomed their arrival, and soon found their rents increased, and their land more valuable, while even the clergy rejoiced in a considerable addition to their tithes. Some efforts were made to disturb them, but the character of the people was so good, and their rents and tithes were paid so regularly, that for two centuries they met with little opposition. But when the accursed Inquisition began its work in Italy, it seemed as if the very fiends of hell had been let loose upon them. Their numbers had increased to about four thousand. Two monks, accompanied by some soldiers, were sent from the Holy Office to convert them. The poor people, in alarm, fled to the woods. The soldiers got orders to shoot them down. The Vaudois, after offering in vain to leave the country, being attacked by an armed force, fought for their lives as their fathers had done in the Valleys, and scattered their enemies. Hereupon it was reported that they were all in rebellion, and a large force was sent to crush them. The scenes of cruelty and barbarity that were enacted are incredible. On June 11th, 1560, eighty-eight men were butchered like so many sheep. The executioner brought them out of the house where they were confined, one by one, tied a bloody napkin round their heads, made them kneel down, and with his knife cut their throats. The process was repeated till the whole eighty-eight were slain. Their bodies were then quartered, and fixed up in various places. A Roman Catholic describing the scene says it was so awful that no person who witnessed the execution of one could stand to behold a second. It mitigates the horror to be told that most of them, especially the old men, met death joyfully, comforting one another with the thought that they would soon be angels, though some of the younger showed signs of fear. Women were seized in the same way, stripped and put to the torture, sixty or a hundred at a time. The treatment of the women was often too shameful to be described. Sixteen hundred of the people were condemned to death. What remained were easily disposed of; the men were sent to the Spanish galleys, the women and children were sold for slaves, and, with the exception of a few who renounced their faith, the whole colony was exterminated. It was one of the bloodiest and most infernal chapters in the hideous history of the Inquisition.

But we ought not to forget that many noble

testimonies unto death were given in other parts of Italy by natives of its various kingdoms and provinces. The present generation of readers is hardly aware of the remarkable and most interesting hold that was taken by the Reformation on many of the most renowned cities of the peninsula. But for the bloody Inquisition, the Reformation in Italy might have been



"At midnight, the prisoner was removed from his cell."—*p.* 770.

as successful and permanent as in almost any other country. Everyone has of course heard of Savonarola, the prophet-monk and preacher of Florence, who scourged the Church for her vices so heartily, and championed the cause of liberty so zealously, that he was burnt in front of St. Mark's, nearly twenty years before Luther nailed his theses to the church of Wittenberg. But Savonarola was mainly a reformer of morals, and a friend of liberty; he was hardly to be classed with "the Reformers." Hardly less famous was Renée, daughter of Louis XII. of France, and wife of Hercules II., Duke of Ferrara, herself a zealous Protestant, and ever desirous to make her capital a refuge for oppressed Protestants in other lands. More or less vaguely, perhaps, our readers know something of Olympia Morata, Antonio Palerio, Bernardino Ochino, and other distinguished Italian Protestants. Of these, however, we are not going to write now: our business is with the martyrs; but for those who desire to know what an interesting dawn the Reformation had in Bologna, in Milan, in Lucca, in Venice, in Naples, and in Rome itself, we recommend a very fascinating narrative—McCrie's "History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy in the Sixteenth Century."

In no Italian city had the Reformation a more hopeful beginning than in the Queen of the Adriatic—sea-girt Venice. Several members of the Senate were favourable to it, and there was at one time some reason to hope that that body itself would declare on its behalf. But in 1546 the Pope urged the Senate to

put down a movement which would breed dissension and hurt the spirit of commerce, and they were weak enough to comply. After years of bitter but not deadly persecution, the punishment of death began to be inflicted in 1560. The mode of putting an end to heretics was peculiar. At midnight, the prisoner was removed from his cell, put on board a gondola, and rowed out to sea between the Two Castles, where another gondola was in readiness. A plank was placed between the two boats, on which the prisoner, bound in chains, and with a heavy weight attached to his feet, was placed; the gondolas were then pulled away from each other, and the heretic was engulphed in the deep. Testimonies for the truth from "the plank" were not wanting. Julio Guirlando, a man of forty, the first to suffer this death, bade the captain of the gondola farewell, and sank into the deep, calling on the name of Jesus. Antonio Ricetto died, like Stephen, praying for his murderers, and commending his spirit to the Lord Jesus. Baldo Lupetino endured an imprisonment for twenty years, because the Doge and the Senate would not give him up; he continued all that time to bear a faithful testimony for the truth, but at last he shared the fate of his brethren, and found a watery grave. Those who have seen the old dungeons of Venice know how miserable must have been the life spent in them. Many perished of loathsome diseases contracted in them; among these was Jeromino Galatea, who had maintained his constancy during a rigorous captivity of ten years.

Sometimes Protestants escaped death by self-banishment, and the same consequences resulted to commerce and industry as were afterwards realised in France by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. At Lucca, where there had been a most prosperous church, this was particularly the case. In 1556, some of the best families went to France or Switzerland. Geneva derived from this expatriation some of its most eminent citizens—the Micheli, Turretini, Diodati, and many more.

It is not easy to convey an idea of the desolation, spiritual and temporal, which the proceedings of the Inquisition caused. The more earnest and devoted any congregation was, the more did it incur the wrath and fury of the Inquisitors. We may fancy how it would be if we think of some of the most prosperous of our own beloved churches at the present day, dispersed, banished, apparently exterminated by fire and sword. Yet even these dreadful proceedings did not root out Protestantism. Not a few continued in secret attached to the Reformed doctrines; but they had not that tenacity of life which their brethren in Bohemia showed: in a few generations, conformity to Rome reigned everywhere.

It is natural to ask, What took place in Rome itself? The answer is, A great deal. The Protestant movement was decided and vigorous. This is seen from the severity of the persecution, and the multitude of imprisonments and executions. In 1568, a gentleman residing on the borders of Italy gave the following account of the state of Rome:—"Some are every day burnt, hanged, or beheaded; all the prisons and places of confinement are filled, and they are obliged to build new ones. That large city cannot furnish gaols for the number of pious persons who are continually apprehended. A distinguished person, named Carnesecchi, formerly ambassador to the Duke of Tuscany, has been committed to the flames. Two persons of still greater distinction, Baron Bernardo di Angole, and Count de Petigliano, a genuine and brave Roman, are in prison. After long resistance, they were at last induced to recant, on a promise that they should be set at liberty. But what was the consequence? The one was condemned to pay a fine of eighty thousand crowns, and to suffer perpetual imprisonment, and the other to pay one thousand crowns, and to be confined for life in the convent of the Jesuits. Thus have they, by a dishonourable defection, purchased a life worse than death."

No doubt there were many defections. To be burnt alive was a horrible prospect, from which flesh and blood might well shrink; to be tortured by the Inquisition was worse, and to be confined in the hideous pestilential dens called prisons was hardly better. And yet there were many noble men at Rome, and in other cities of Italy, who braved the worst their persecutors could do to them. And some who had once purchased their freedom with a recantation were so tortured in their consciences that they boldly took up their old testimony after all, and died bravely in its defence.
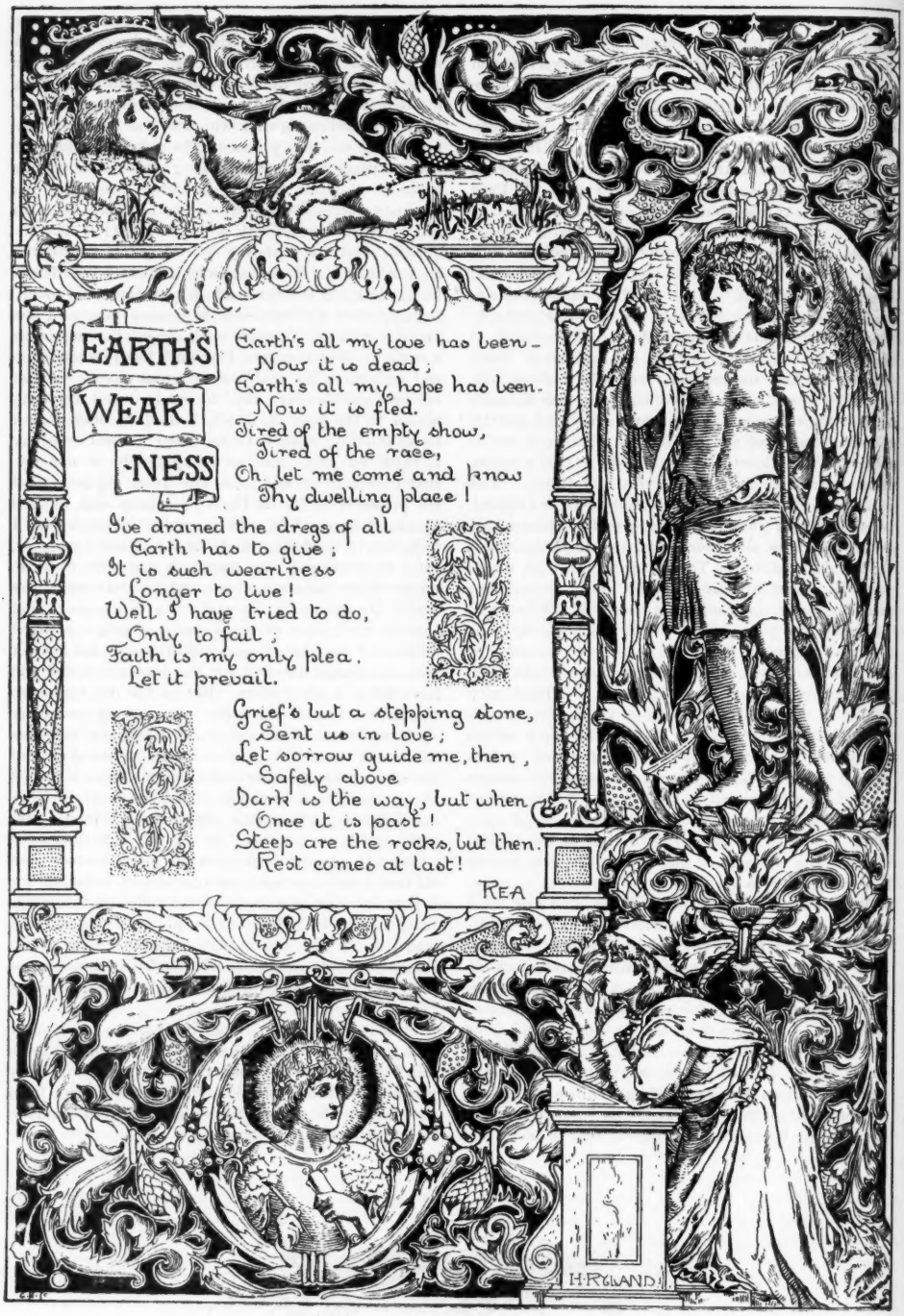
Among these was Faventino Fanisso, who had come to the knowledge of the Gospel by reading the Bible, and was full of zeal to tell the good news on every side. After recanting, which he did under the solicitations of his friends, he fell into fearful despondency. He felt as if God shunned him—would not give him His hand; and his horror of conscience at his having forsaken Christ in favour of his family was overwhelming. The poor man went about, a picture of melancholy and despair, till, under a better impulse, he solemnly resolved to redouble his diligence and fidelity in time to come. He travelled through the papal province of Romagna, instructing all that he could meet with in the truth, and forming little evangelical committees who spread to others what they had learned themselves. Ere long the Pope had him arrested and thrown into prison. His family again besought him to think of them, but he was inexorable—he had sinned in that way once, but would never so sin again. During his imprisonment of two years, he did a wonderful work for his Master. When not allowed to receive visits from his friends, he set himself to instruct his fellow-prisoners, among whom were some political prisoners of high rank, with whom his holy and loving earnestness had such influence that some of them were converted, and declared they had never known such liberty as he had brought them in their dungeon. Sentenced to solitary imprisonment, he continued to get the means of writing comforting letters to his friends, and also religious papers, some of which were published after his death. When Julius III. came to the papal chair, a conclusive order was sent to put him to death. The gaoler, going to tell him that that evening he must go to the common prison, because he was now under sentence of death, was surprised to receive an embrace, and a burst of thanks for telling him

that he was so soon to be in the presence of his Lord. When led out for execution his frame of mind was quite triumphant. He raised his voice with such ardour and vehemence to Heaven that some were converted, and those who had come to comfort him, received consolation from his lips. He was then strangled, and his body committed to the flames.

Another devoted martyr was John Mollio, a learned professor of Bologna, likewise a victim of Pope Julius III. At a solemn sitting of the Inquisition at Rome, a group of prisoners appeared, bearing lighted torches in their hands. Cowed and terrified, all of them recanted, with the exception of Mollio and Tisserano of Perugia. When Mollio's accusation was read, he asked leave to speak, and in clear and convincing arguments defended the great doctrines of the Bible in which he had been led to believe. Then turning on the six cardinals and the bishops who sat beside them, he inveighed with singular boldness against their shameful lives, their greed and cruelty, the vices that had turned the Church into a den of robbers, their thirst for the blood of God's saints, their disgraceful claim to be vicars of Christ. And as they grinned and gnashed their teeth, "I appeal, he said, "from your proceedings, and I summon you, O cruel tyrants and murderers, to the judgment of the last day, before the Throne of Jesus Christ, whom you will never appease by your grand titles, your pompous robes, or your ill-gotten gold. What will He care for your threats, your devices, or your tortures? It is to Him you must give account of all your past lives. In witness whereof, take back this torch which you made me carry!" Then, with a look of indignation, he flung from him on the ground with all his might the lighted torch which he carried in his hands. His infuriated judges ordered him and his companion Tisserano to instant death. They were led to the Campo del Fior, first strangled and then burned. Mollio's last words gave praise to God for having drawn him to the blessed light of His Gospel, and now given him the honour to bear witness to its truth.

We must content ourselves with noticing one other member of the noble Italian band of martyrs—Ludovico Paschali, a native of Cuni, in Piedmont, who had been appointed pastor of the Waldensian flock in Calabria. He had laboured but a short time there when he was apprehended, confined eight months at Cosenza, and conducted thence to Naples, and from Naples to Rome. A Spanish gaoler, determined to get all his money, treated him with great cruelty on the way. He put on him a pair of handcuffs so tight that they cut into his flesh, and kept him from sleep. For eight nights he and his companion had to lie on the hard ground, without any covering; and at Naples they were thrust into a filthy cell, damp and fetid with putrid and offensive matter. When his brother came to see him at Rome he was a pitiable sight, with his bare head, and his hands and arms lacerated by the tight hard cords with which he was bound. "My brother!" said the prisoner, "do you not know that not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Father? Comfort yourself in Christ Jesus, for the present troubles are not worthy to be compared with the glory that remaineth to be revealed!" The inquisitor who was standing by rudely interrupted the conversation. "Have done with that talk!" Before he left him, his brother made a prolonged and touching appeal to the inquisitor to remove him to a less horrible prison. To every such appeal the inquisitor was deaf. But in spite of Paschali's horrible condition and sufferings, his soul was in great peace. "I feel my joy increase every day," he wrote, "as I approach nearer to the hour in which I shall be offered as a sweet-smelling savour to the Lord Jesus Christ, my faithful Saviour; yea, so inexpressible is my joy, that I seem to myself to be free from captivity, and am prepared to die for Christ, not only once, but ten thousand times if it were possible. Nevertheless, I persevere in imploring the Divine assistance by prayer, for I am convinced that man is a miserable creature when left to himself and not upheld and directed by God." To his brother he said, "I give thanks to God that in the midst of my severe and long-continued affliction I have found some kind friends; and I thank you, my dearest brother, for the tender interest you have taken in my welfare. But as for me, I must go the narrow way of the Cross, and seal my testimony with my blood. I do not dread death, and still less the loss of my earthly goods; for I am sure of eternal life and a celestial inheritance, and my heart is united to my Lord and Saviour." And when his brother urged him to yield a little and save his life and property—"Oh, my brother," he replied, "the danger in which you are involved gives me more distress than all that I suffer, or have the prospect of suffering, for I perceive that your mind is so addicted to earthly things as to be indifferent to heaven." It was not long ere, in the court adjoining the Castle of St. Angelo, he was strangled and burnt, in presence of the Pope and a party of cardinals, who assembled to witness the sight.

Thus it was that in Rome itself there were many that passed through great tribulation on their way to join the white-robed company that are continually before the Throne of God. Happy transition! from the cross to the crown, from the torture of fiends to the peace and joy of heaven.


EARTH'S
WEARI
·NESS
Earth's all my love has been -
Now it is dead ;
Earth's all my hope has been.
Now it is fled.
Tired of the empty show,
Tired of the race,
Oh let me come and know
Thy dwelling place !
I've drained the dregs of all
Earth has to give ;
It is such weariness
Longer to live !
Well I have tried to do,
Only to fail ;
Faith is my only plea.
Let it prevail.
Grief's but a stepping stone,
Sent us in love ;
Let sorrow guide me, then ,
Safely above
Dark is the way, but when
Once it is past !
Steep are the rocks, but then
Rest comes at last!
REA
H.R.GLAND

THE LOVE-DREAM OF GATTY FENNING.

BY SARAH DOUDNEY, AUTHOR OF "MISS WILLOWBURN'S OFFER," ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

A TEA-TABLE TALK.



"YES," said Gibbon Fenning, "it is very natural that Gatty should be fond of the Mainsboroughs. But I wish she would be fond in moderation. I am not blind, Vardye, and I can see that they are the only people in her world. White House is her paradise—a fool's paradise, I'm afraid."

"Young girls are liable to infatuation," the curate remarked. "If she could be taken out of her narrow sphere, and brought into contact with other men and women——"

"Ah, that's what I wish," Mr. Fenning broke in. "But I can't find it in my heart to banish the child from the home she loves so well. She ought to go away, but if I were to propose such a thing we should have a distressing scene. And so we go on, month after month, and I know only too well that I am not doing what is best for the dear girl. It would be a heavy grief to me to lose her, even for a short time, but I would not think of myself. My sole anxiety is for her."

Bennet looked at him attentively. The quiet, grave man of everyday life had suddenly broken through his reserve, and was revealing the deep feelings that lay hidden under his usual calm.

"I agree with you," he said, after a pause. "Gatty ought to see more of the world. But I understand your difficulty."

"It is a difficulty which increases daily," the farmer answered. "I disapprove of this Mainsborough infatuation, and would put an end to it if I could. Warren Mainsborough is not a bad fellow as young men go, but he doesn't seem to have any character at all. He hasn't inherited his father's vices, but he is an idler and a lounger. Gatty has made a hero out of very poor materials."

"Girls of her age can manufacture heroes out of nothing," said Bennet, with a smile. "But I think you are hardly doing Warren justice; he has some good in him. And I am sure he would be astonished if he were made aware of Gatty's hero-worship."

"Then you don't think he is aware of it?" Mr. Fenning asked eagerly.

"No; he looks on Gatty as his mother's pet. I have never seen any sign of flirtation. He treats her simply as a girl-friend."

Gibbon Fenning was silent, and sat resting his arm on the table with a troubled expression in his face. The warm wind crept in through the open windows, stirring some delicate sprays of fern and honeysuckle in one of Gatty's vases. Her work-basket stood on a small table in a corner with a pile of yellow-covered story-books beside it. They were perfectly harmless books, and most of them had been lent to her by Warren. A little glove lay on the topmost volume; everything in the room spoke of Gatty.

"I know I can trust you, Vardye," said the farmer at last. "Your mother and I were boy and girl together. I wish she were living now, dear soul!"

"That is an old wish of mine," the curate answered. "I miss her every day of my life; yet I am content to be a loser when I think of all that she has gained. She would have been a true friend to Gatty."

"Ay, I am sure of that. And the girl needs a woman's friendship—I mean the friendship of a wise and loving woman, not of a disappointed worldling. Mrs. Mainsborough's liking for my niece is merely a shallow fancy. She looks down upon the Fennings, but if she knew all, perhaps——"

Again the farmer paused, and sat staring at Gatty's flowers with his brows knitted.

Bennet Vardye was puzzled. Never before had he seen this placid man so moved. He waited quietly for Mr. Fenning to speak again, and wondered what revelation he was about to make. It was impossible that there could be any mystery about Gatty; everyone knew the simple story of her life from its beginning; and yet it seemed as if something had been hidden.

"I daresay you have never heard of Harry Palmer," said Gibbon Fenning, suddenly breaking the pause at last. He leaned back in his chair, and spoke in his usual pleasant voice.

"I think I have heard the name," Bennet replied. "Was he not an old friend of my mother's?"

"An old suitor, Bennet. Your mother's lovers were as plentiful as blackberries. We all lost our hearts to her when we were young, and I think Harry was as much in earnest as any of us. Well, he took it into his head to go to Australia, and he has prospered there."

"Has he?" said Vardye, wondering what Palmer's prosperity could have to do with Gatty.

"Yes; he wasn't doing well here, and he asked me to lend him a little money to start him abroad. I had always liked Harry, and was glad to help him. About six years ago, he wrote and asked whether he might buy some shares for me in a certain mine. I didn't believe very much in his mine, but his heart was so set upon the matter, that I consented. And, to make a long story short, Harry and the mine have made a rich man of me."

The curate was startled. He had simply looked

upon his friend as a well-to-do farmer, who had less cause to complain of agriculture than most of his class. But he had never thought that this quiet, unpretending man was the possessor of a fortune which would, of course, be one day left to his niece.

"Gatty will be an heiress," Mr. Fenning went on. "She will have seven thousand a year; but she does not suspect it in the least. Nobody in these parts has any idea of the kind. People have forgotten all about Harry Palmer, and in this valley of the Meon they have only the vaguest notions about Australia. Perhaps I have done Gatty an injustice in keeping her in ignorance of the future that is in store for her; but at first I could scarcely believe in my own good fortune. It seemed like fairy gold."

"I can quite understand that," said Bennet.

"And then I began to notice Gatty's increasing attachment to the Mainsboroughs. You are friendly with young Mainsborough, Vardye, and you think better of him than I do. To me he seems a mere idler, trifling away his life. And there is the blood of a gambler in his veins; I would not trust my girl's happiness to his keeping."

"You are a little hard on him," Bennet said gently. "But, as I said before, I am sure he has not any idea of flirting with Gatty."

"Well, I believe you. But if he knew that Gatty was an heiress he would change his tactics. The Mainsboroughs want money more than anything else, and they would take the child if they could get a fortune with her. I won't have it, Vardye—she shan't be married just because she can supply their needs!"

"Mrs. Mainsborough might bring about the match," remarked the curate, after a pause. "She is very anxious that her son shall marry wealth. As to Warren, my belief is that he is fancy-free, and will therefore let himself be guided by his mother. He has a heart, but it has never yet been awakened."

Gibbon Fenning frowned again, and stared absently at the leaves that quivered against the blue sky. It was Gatty's childish hand that had helped to twine those creepers round the rustic pillars of the verandah.

"If I told my niece about her fortune she would babble everything to the folks at White House," he said, in an angry tone. "They know her very thoughts. I never saw anything so ridiculous—or so painful—as this devotion of hers to two commonplace persons who don't care two straws about her."

"She has seen so few people." Bennet sighed as he spoke. "To her every goose is a swan. There is only one thing to be done—you must send her away."

"That is easier said than accomplished. I have been a fool, Vardye; a weak, indulgent fool. Why didn't I make up my mind to part with her while she was still a child? Why didn't I give up the old farm, and go to London with my charge? Seventeen to-day; a woman in spite of all her innocence and ignorance! Ah, it is too late to uproot her now!"

"We do not always know when it is too late," the curate answered. "Other influences may be at work to detach her from this place. You must stand still at present. Perhaps she may come to you of her own free will and ask to be removed. Sooner or later she must go."

"If the Mainsboroughs were to leave White House——" Mr. Fenning began.

"She may yet want to fly from the Mainsboroughs," said Bennet gravely. "One cannot tell how soon she may feel the magnet reversed. Have patience; but when the time comes do not hold her back. Let her go, even if your own life is desolate without her."

"Ay, it would be desolate," the farmer murmured. "But, after all, I must expect to part with her one of these days. She is fast growing into a beauty, and when a girl has beauty as well as gold, there will be danglers enough at her heels. She needs training, Vardye; wise, careful training that shall teach her to set a due value on herself. It vexes me sorely to see her humbling herself when she ought to hold up her head!"

"Have you no friends who would take her into their hands?" asked Bennet, after a moment's thought. "Was there not an aunt of yours who was exceedingly beautiful and who married well? I have surely heard of her from my mother."

"You mean Mrs. Willowburn. Gatty was named after her at my desire. I was very fond of my Aunt Gatty, but we almost lost sight of her after her marriage. She died some years ago, leaving an only daughter. I have often been sorry that I did not seek my cousin, Miss Willowburn, and try to interest her in Gatty."

"Cannot you do so now?"

"I am afraid not. Miss Willowburn has married a great London doctor, and I hardly like to approach her nowadays. Unfortunately I never saw her when she was single, but I heard that she was a very good woman."

"What is her husband's name?" inquired Bennet, eagerly.

"Vansittart—Sir Lawrence Vansittart. He was knighted not long ago. A wonderful man, they say."

"A wonderful man indeed," the curate exclaimed; "and one of the best of men. He goes about doing good. Why, Mr. Fenning, if Lady Vansittart would take notice of Gatty you might be at rest about her future! The great doctor's wife is known by her charities and unpretentious deeds of usefulness. I saw her once—a sweet, calm woman. Her face left a deep impression on me."

"I wish she could see my Gatty," said the farmer, looking brightened. "Perhaps she might take a fancy to the child. Gatty is marvellously like Aunt Gatty. I see the resemblance growing every day."

"Will you entrust this matter to me?" Bennet spoke after a brief silence, and there was a deep earnestness in his manner. "When I worked at the East End I came across several persons who knew the Vansittarts well. You could find plenty of women in a good position who would be glad enough to train up an heiress. But, if I judge Lady Vansittart rightly, I think she would rather take charge of a poor girl than a rich one. One must enlist her sympathies on Gatty's side."

"I will leave the affair in your hands," Gibbon

Fenning answered gratefully. "At present I fear there is nothing to be done. Any hint of a change would drive Gatty frantic, and almost turn her against me. The girl is full of strong feelings which she has never learnt to control. Until she has gained the power of self-mastery, Vardye, we cannot help her much. But I blame myself bitterly for spoiling her all these years."

"Don't be too severe on yourself," Bennet pleaded; "any man would have been unwisely indulgent in your place. She was left under your roof, a little friendless orphan, and no one can be surprised that you were over-tender. And Gatty is still a child, although she is seventeen to-day. But do not be afraid; there is the making of a noble woman in her."

CHAPTER VII.

A FOOL'S PARADISE.

"I HAVE had a perfect birthday," said Gatty's voice at the door.

Warren had sauntered home with her through the dusk, and had wished her good-night at the porch. She came in to find the windows open, and the cool air filling the half-dark room.

Her uncle sat at the table within a small circle of lamp-light, and as he lifted his face from his book, he looked worn and grave.

"A perfect birthday," she repeated, coming nearer to him with a large bouquet of scarlet geranium and heliotrope in her hand. He drew back, as if the heavy perfume of the flowers sickened him.

"Don't you like heliotrope?" she asked wonderingly. "Why, I can never get enough of it. They have quantities at White House, but there is none in our garden."

"The scent is too strong," he said wearily.

"Warren is fond of it," the girl went on, without noticing the tired voice. "See what a great handful he has gathered! He never does things by halves. We have been deliciously idle all day—sitting under the cedars in the morning, and dawdling away the afternoon in the arbour. Mrs. Mainsborough had one of her headaches, but she was as kind and sweet as ever. The gardens are lovely in this weather, full of shady nooks and bits of fairyland. I wish you would go and see the grounds, uncle!"

"My dear, they are very ordinary grounds. I have seen far finer places elsewhere," he answered, with suppressed impatience.

"Well, I never wish to see anything finer," Gatty said, burying her face in the bouquet. "White House is beautiful enough for me. I cannot think why people can't be contented with their surroundings. *I* am quite satisfied."

"I almost wish you were a little dissatisfied, Gatty."

Mr. Fenning had not meant to utter his thoughts, but the words escaped him. As soon as they were spoken, he knew that they had done more harm than good. He could not see Gatty's face as she stood in the shadow but he was aware of the quick movement that betokened her resentment.

"You must be hard to please, uncle, if you find fault with my happiness," she replied.

In the next instant she was gone, leaving the perfume of heliotrope lingering behind.

The farmer sighed heavily, and then rising from his seat he walked out into the cool air of the summer night. His eyes could not penetrate this soft, scented darkness that enfolded all the familiar things in its mystery, and still less could he see through those thick shadows which had gathered over Gatty's young life. He was conscious of that vague foreboding of trouble which even the most trustful spirits sometimes know. Where the girl saw only a glorious mist of sunshine, he beheld a deepening gloom.

"Darkness and light are alike unto Thee," he murmured in the stillness. Memories of old sorrows mingled with old blessings drifted into his mind, and the doubts vanished with the thought of eternal Love. As yet, Gatty had never known suffering in any form; every wish had been granted; every hour had been filled with joy. And Gibbon Fenning remembered that the unloveliest lives on earth are the lives that brim over with desires fulfilled. Ay, and the unhappiest also, for if there are those who, "having nothing, yet possess all things," are there not many who possess all things, and yet have nothing?

Meanwhile, Gatty, in her room up-stairs, was pouring out her feelings into Mercy's willing ears. The day had been perfect—quite perfect; but her uncle was in one of his dismal moods, and wanted to spoil everything. She supposed he was growing jealous of her attachment to the Mainsboroughs, and was not that most unreasonable?

"Don't say such things, Miss Gatty dear," said Mercy in a tone of loving reproof. "The master's too good to be jealous; but he gets over-anxious, maybe."

"And why should he be anxious, pray?" Gatty tossed her pretty head. "Does he expect me to live without friendship—or love?"

"No, surely," Mercy answered with a smile. "But p'raps he thinks you're a bit too young for sweethearting."

"I have not said one word about a sweetheart, Mercy," remarked Gatty with dignity. "But one has one's likings at seventeen. And I am quite certain that I know my own mind."

"And that somebody else knows *his* mind, eh, missy?" Mercy was putting away her young mistress's hat into an ancient wardrobe, and she turned her head with a sly glance full of meaning as she spoke.

"Yes." The answer came involuntarily, and with a smile that was just visible in the candle-light. "Yes; there is no doubt."

Mercy had nursed Gatty as a little motherless child, and the two were in the habit of speaking freely to each other. There was a radiant look on Gatty's face to-night, and her faithful maid observed it, and drew her own conclusions.

If Mercy had heard rumours of the pride of the Mainsboroughs, she paid no heed to them. In her eyes, no one was quite good enough for this nursling of hers, who had grown up so strong and beautiful.

But Mr. Mainsborough was the finest gentleman in those parts, and he belonged to the Valley, and Miss Gatty might do worse than take him. Mercy was a simple soul, and accepted all her young mistress's convictions in good faith. The girl believed that she was loved; Mercy believed in *her*, and could not for a moment suppose that she might be mistaken.

For a few seconds there was silence; and the two women stood and looked at each other across the old-fashioned bed. Mercy was smoothing the coverlet, which was already as smooth as it could be; but her hands must needs be seeking some housewifely occupation even when her mind was busy with other matters.

"Ah, Miss Gatty, what has he been saying to you to-day?" she broke out at last. "Mercy can keep a secret. Not that there's any reason to make a secret of an honest love!"

"He is quite open," said Gatty proudly. "He has been saying—oh, a thousand delightful things! But my uncle does not like him, Mercy. If I talk about Warren, Uncle Gibbon bristles all over like a hedgehog."

"You must make excuses for master, my dear. He can't believe in your having grown up yet. In a little while he will get used to your being a woman, and he'll take the courting quite kindly. Maybe Mr. Mainsborough 'll think it best to wait a bit before he asks master for you."

"Yes, perhaps he will wait." Gatty spoke thoughtfully. "And indeed, Mercy, I'm very happy as I am. The days seem to be getting sweeter and brighter as time goes on. My life is just like a flower's life or a bird's."

"Dear heart!" exclaimed Mercy, patting the pillows, and giving a final pull to the dimity bed-curtains. And that night the faithful creature prayed that Miss Gatty's happiness might last for ever. For Mercy had not gained that higher knowledge which teaches us that a bird's or a flower's life does not satisfy the cravings of a soul.

When she was left alone, Gatty too said her prayers, and then forgot to pray in thinking of her own delight. She fell asleep at last, drifting into a glorious dreamland with a sprig of heliotrope clasped in her hand.

About a mile away, that same night, a conversation was going on which would have interested the good people at Barrow Farm.

The scene was that long, pleasant room in White House which Gatty liked so well. Mrs. Mainsborough, in her favourite corner, leant back in her easy-chair with a look of satisfaction and repose.

"I think my note will do very well," she said, as her son finished reading the copy of a letter which she had sent off. "It will not be long before she comes, Warren. She won't want to waste the last of the summer in a dull place."

"She can't well find a duller place than this," said Warren, laughing, and folding up the note.

"You will keep off dulness," replied his mother confidently. "She is a nice girl; you always got on with her. Certainly the path is made wonderfully smooth for your feet."

"Better luck than I could expect," he admitted, frankly. "Yes, Angela *is* nice. A little insipid; but easy to live with, I daresay."

"Very easy; Louisa has always praised her temper. I hope it will be a short courtship. A long engagement is a wearisome nuisance; you must not be a 'laggard in love,' Warren."

He rose, stretched himself, and repressed a yawn.

"I am a thorough laggard in everything," he said, with a touch of earnestness in his tone. "I never come across a real working man, like Vardye for example, without feeling tremendously ashamed of myself."

"Oh, it is all very well for curates to work; one expects it of them," Mrs. Mainsborough answered. "And, of course, a man in Mr. Vardye's position was obliged to do something to earn his living."

"A man in any position ought to do something to earn his living," remarked Warren, with more animation than usual. "As for me, *my* way of supporting myself is to marry a girl who can support *me*. It sounds nice, doesn't it?"

"It doesn't sound at all nice if you put it in that fashion. In fact, I don't like to hear such things. Your Aunt Louisa and I have been doing our best for you."

"My dear mother, I know you have always been doing your best for me; but I haven't done my best for myself. However, I'm quite ready to admit that I'm a lucky man. Angela is very nice, and I shall do my utmost to let her see that I think so. Don't look gloomy; I assure you I mean to plunge over head and ears into love."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GUEST AT WHITE HOUSE.

ANGELA WARBURTON came to White House when August was drawing to a close; but it was not until the very day of her arrival that Gatty heard anything about the Mainsboroughs' guest.

Warren had walked over to the farm with a book that he had promised to lend Gatty. He brought, not only the book, but one of those bunches of heliotrope and geranium that she prized so much.

"This is not so large a bouquet as usual," he said, pretending to regard his gift with dissatisfaction. "But that isn't my fault. When my mother saw me cutting flowers, she came and laid violent hands on me. She is expecting a young lady from the north to-day, and she wants to decorate the table, I suppose."

"Well, she was quite right; you are too lavish with flowers," replied Gatty, colouring with delight. "The young lady ought to have her share. Will she stay a long time?"

"A month or two, perhaps," he answered indifferently. "My aunt is sending her to us for change of air."

"Ah! she will soon get strong among our hills," cried Gatty confidently. "But won't Mrs. Mainsborough find it rather troublesome to take charge of an invalid?"

"She is hardly an invalid; a little delicate, that's all," said Warren, stepping out into the porch. The



"'A perfect birthday,' she repeated, coming nearer to him."—*p.* 775.

light shadows of leaves flickered over his fair Saxon face, and Gatty thought that he looked as handsome and brave as one of the knights of olden time. Yet he was not remarkably handsome, and had never done a brave deed in all his life; but a girl's fancy can make a hero out of very common materials.

He went his way, not without a backward smile at the gate, and she turned her steps to the old parlour, and began putting things in order in a useless fashion. There was not work enough for her hands to do in the farm-house, and there was far too much leisure for dreaming. Even Mercy sometimes thought that it might have been well if her young mistress had kept up her studies. But Gatty's heart was so full of vast hopes, that the sight of "school-books" was distasteful.

Four days passed by; then came Saturday, and Gatty felt that she could not stay away any longer from White House. Besides, she had read Warren's book, and had persuaded herself that it was time to return it to its owner.

Moreover, she had a languid curiosity to see the young lady from the north. In spite of Warren's assurance that she was only "a little delicate," Gatty persisted in picturing her as a sickly creature, hardly able to walk without a crutch, and wondered how Mrs. Mainsborough could endure such a guest. She would be plain, of course; all sick people were plain, and her face would wear a fretful expression. In short, it was clearly Gatty's duty to go to White House and afford her friends the solace of her presence under such trying circumstances.

"I am going to the Mainsboroughs' this afternoon, uncle," she said; "and I suppose I shall not be home at tea-time."

Mr. Fenning looked at her steadily for a moment.

"They have a young lady staying with them," he remarked after a slight pause.

"Yes, a poor feeble person from the north," Gatty answered in a pitying tone.

"She is Miss Warburton, Lord Silverthorpe's ward," said Mr. Fenning quietly. "Bennet Vardye spoke of her to me this morning."

"How does he know anything about her?"

"He chanced to call at White House the day after her arrival; but he saw her for a few minutes only as she was going out with young Mainsborough."

"Oh, I thought she wasn't strong enough to take walks," said Gatty, opening her eyes.

"Vardye did not say that she seemed ill. Mrs. Mainsborough told him that she was an heiress."

"An heiress, is she? Well, she must be very delicate, for Warren said that his aunt was sending her here for change of air."

Gibbon Fenning said no more, and the girl ran off up-stairs with a half-formed fear in her heart.

But it was such a very vague and unsubstantial fear, that as soon as she had put on her hat and gloves it was gone.

It was now the first of September, and the fragrance of ripening fruit came from the orchard at the back of the farm. A calm, dreamy day, rich with all the warmth and perfume of a summer that was slowly growing old. Gatty could remember it years afterwards as the very last day of unshadowed girlhood. The oval fruit of the sweet-brier was gradually perfecting under the genial sun; sober asters appeared in the garden beds, and the Virginia creeper had taken a tinge of crimson here and there. All was peace in the fields; great waggons laden with second hay-crops went creaking heavily through the lanes; the quiet Valley was full of sunshiny rest.

She traversed the field-path with light steps, and then came to a pause on the rustic bridge, leaning thoughtfully on the hand-rail. How fast the brown water ran and rippled under the overhanging boughs! There was something deep and solemn in the voice of the little river to-day; it had no joyous song to sing to her listening ears. And yet Gatty lingered on the bridge, and liked the Meon's music well.

Mrs. Mainsborough was not sitting in her usual nook in the long drawing-room. Gatty found her under the portico with a tea-table before her, looking so bright and contented that she appeared to have renewed her youth. The grave old house seemed to echo with the sound of laughter and gay voices; and yet there were only two young persons hovering round Mrs. Mainsborough's table—Warren, and the lady from the north.

The moment that Gatty's eyes rested on the "lady from the north," she had a glimpse of a new world—a world in which she had no part.

Everything about Angela Warburton was dainty and refined; she was entirely of the world, worldly, and seemed to create a society atmosphere around her. You knew at once that her little feet had trodden the path of fashion ever since they began to walk. When Gatty was introduced, she smiled the faint, pretty smile which she had been taught to accord to strangers; and Gibbon Fenning's niece felt herself put down and sat upon in a way which she had never before experienced in her life.

Gatty's cheeks were burning with a poppy hue, and Angela, cool and composed, drank her tea, and shot swift glances at the visitor now and then. Miss Warburton was small and fragile, and her gown was of so faint a blue that it might have been made out of a piece of sky. Her eyes were of a deeper colour than her dress, yet they were cold eyes, and her face was too pale and thin for beauty. But she had a beautiful little aquiline nose—the nose of a princess—and her mouth, although not red enough, was cut delicately. Moreover, the small head was crowned with hair of yellow gold that glistened when stray sunbeams came sliding between the pillars of the portico.

Gatty, too, drank her tea; but it had no flavour, and her heart was swelling with a new and bitter feeling. Mrs. Mainsborough was kind, and wanted her to eat biscuits and pound-cake; Warren was attentive, and handed plates of dainties with his usual grace. But Miss Warburton was there, and she took the sweetness out of everything. Every civil little word uttered in her trained voice, and with her refined accent, was like an arrow that went straight to Gatty's breast. Never before had the belle of the Valley known what it was to be dissatisfied with herself.

That pale blue gown, trimmed simply with delicate lace, made her feel ashamed of her own smart attire. She envied Miss Warburton passionately—envied the cool self-possession and graceful ease of the woman of the world. Gatty was too shrewd to be unconscious of her own shortcomings, now that such an admirable specimen of high-class young-ladyhood was suddenly presented to her.

She noticed, too, with the quickness of jealousy, that Warren's manner to Angela was marked by a certain tender deference that was quite new. To the country girl he had talked with brotherly freedom and kindliness, and she had mistaken the frank friendship for something deeper. But when he addressed Miss Warburton there was a softening of the voice, an indescribable air of homage thrown over every look and tone. And Gatty felt, with intense bitterness, that *she* had never won anything from him like this delicately expressed worship.

She suffered tortures sitting under the flowery portico, and foolishly prolonged her own misery. Instead of getting up and going home after drinking a cup of tea, she remained as if glued to the cane chair. And at last her scarlet cheeks and brilliant eyes began to make Mrs. Mainsborough uncomfortable. Her behaviour, too, was strange; she jerked out her words with a visible effort, and made queer answers to the courteous little questions asked by her hostess.

Would she never go? Was she going to have a fever? How much longer would she sit there, glaring at Miss Warburton and Warren as if they were her mortal enemies? Nobody had said or done anything to offend the child, thought poor Mrs. Mainsborough

uneasily. But certainly her want of training was painfully evident to-day; her uncle ought to send her to a good boarding-school.

After waiting till her cup of wretchedness was filled to the brim, Gatty rose with a start that nearly upset the little tea-table.

"Good-bye," she said stiffly to Mrs. Mainsborough and her son, and took leave of their guest with a funny little bow which amused that young lady mightily. Although the amusement was perfectly veiled by good breeding, Gatty saw it, or fancied she saw it, and retreated in a flame of mortification and rage.

"What can be the matter with her?" said Mrs. Mainsborough, long after she was out of earshot. "She is going to be ill, I think. What a pity there is no one to look after her!"

"She is a handsome girl," remarked Angela, indulgently.

"To-day she certainly doesn't look her best," said Warren, who had been struck by her undignified exit. "The mother has taken her up and been kind, but a girl of that age wants a good deal of teaching.—Let me cut some Marshal Niel roses for you. They are just the flowers for you to wear."

Angela gave one of her faint sweet smiles in token of assent.

Looking back afterwards on that miserable evening, Gatty could never remember how she reached the old bridge. Hot, and tingling from head to foot with a burning consciousness of having made herself ridiculous, she leant again on the rough hand-rail, and looked down into the fast-flowing tide.

It seemed to her that a whole lifetime had gone by since she had stood on these old planks and watched the flow of the river. Something was gone, something had been carried away from her existence; it was her sure belief in herself that she missed, and it would never return, even in a happier state of being.

Later on she learnt that the only way to be sure of one's self is to know that God has the care of one's self. The certainty of being in His hands is the best cure for all uncertainty. If He holds us fast, it does not matter if the whole world lets us go. He saw in us something that was worth dying for, let others undervalue us as they will.

It was now between six and seven o'clock, and the warm earth was beginning to be cooled by the breath of evening. A faint wind crept sighing through the trees, and rustled the reeds and long grasses; and Gatty took off her hat, that it might blow upon her flushed face. Then she rested her arms on the rail again, holding the hat by the wide brim.

By-and-bye the fingers unconsciously loosed their grasp, and the gaudy hat, with its bunch of artificial poppies and grass, went drifting down the Meon. Gatty looked after it and laughed, and then suddenly burst into tears. She had been quite proud of that hat when she had first put it on, and she hated the sight of it now. It was a coarse, common thing. She wished that the swift river would take all the rest of her finery, and all her foolish hopes and vain dreams, and carry them far away out of sight.

Standing there alone on the bridge, she was a sorry figure of passionate and unreasonable distress. There was nothing dignified in her misery; many people would have failed even to find the faintest touch of pathos in it; no sensible person could have been blind to the ignorance and vanity which had brought her to this state. Only those who have themselves experienced the lavishness of Divine compassion would have had pity on the poor wild girl in her hour of pain.

At last she roused herself, and went hurrying home through the slowly fading light. Uncle Gibbon, standing in the broad porch, saw her coming, hatless, and with a pale, tragic face that might well have given rise to serious fears. He was troubled, and his heart ached for the self-willed child, but he had not been without a foreshadowing of the blow that would fall upon her. His talk with the curate had prepared him.

"Have you lost your hat, my dear?" he asked, as she came up the path to the door.

"Yes," she said curtly, "it fell into the river."

He moved aside to let her pass without saying another word. She was in no mood to accept any soothing speeches, and he felt instinctively that she would not confide in him. So he let her go her way unhindered up-stairs to her own room, and heard the sound of her door closing sharply. All his love, all his thoughtful tenderness could not avail her now. She must fight this battle alone.

After a time Mercy went gently up to the bed, where she lay in the grey twilight. The faithful woman seemed to understand her trouble without being told anything, and laid her kind fingers on the girl's hot forehead, smoothing her tangled hair away. The touch did Gatty good, and made her speak.

"Oh, I am so wretched!" she sobbed; her voice coming in muffled tones out of the pillow and a crumpled handkerchief.

Mercy coaxed her until she sat up and opened her heart in the dim old room. And when her trouble was put into words it seemed to diminish in size, as troubles often do. Her handmaiden administered homely comfort. She could not believe in this newly discovered rival, and almost convinced Gatty that there was nothing to fear from Miss Warburton.

"And as to her good looks, Miss Gatty, you think a deal too much of 'em," she said, with an air of firm conviction. "It isn't everybody that fancies yellow hair; there's some that can't abide the sight of it. Why, there was a rhyme that my grandmother used to sing:—

> "'White face and hair of gold,
> False lips and bosom cold;
> Brown eyes and nut-brown hair,
> Warm heart and honour fair.'

And if you don't find the truth in old rhymes, why, where will you look for it, say I?"

"I wish," said Gatty dreamingly, "that I knew the old rhyme about Thor and Woden: the rhyme that must be said at midnight on Old Winchester Hill—you remember, Mercy?"

"No, miss, I don't remember that rhyme," Mercy answered. "My grandmother knew it, maybe; but I never heard her say a bit of it. 'Tis only fit for heathens, and we be good Christians, I hope."

"I believe Mrs. Piddock knows," Gatty murmured.

"Mrs. Piddock is an old heathen, miss, more shame for her!" rejoined Mercy, with righteous indignation. "The less you see of her the better, to my thinking."

Gibbon Fenning was still troubled and anxious, but the peace of the day overflowed his spirit, and calmed his fears. The hills, rising in soft curves against the great pure sky, seemed to preach mutely of strength and rest. The sweet air, full of the scent of woods and orchards, swept over him as gently as an angel's wing.



"'Queens are deposed sometimes,' she said."—*p.* 782.

CHAPTER IX.

MORE DOUBTS AND FEARS.

THE Mainsboroughs and their guest were not at church on Sunday morning. Their absence was a relief to Mr. Fenning and his niece; and Gatty was kinder and softer to her uncle as they walked homeward. Life was worth living on a Sunday like this; it was a day that brought one close to God, and made Heaven's purposes clear to the darkened understanding.

As to Gatty, nothing was clear to her at that time. She lived in a wild confusion of doubts and passionate desires. The only part of her that was awake was restless and craving; the other part was as yet untouched, and lay waiting to be roused to action.

Bennet Vardye, who had done so much good work among the dwellers in the Valley, had failed to reach Gatty. She had lived enfolded in the mist of her glorious dreams, and voices and lights came to her faintly through this spiritual haze. Those who had seemed at first to be far more difficult of access had responded to his call; and no one knew how he watched and prayed for some responsive sign from Gatty Fenning.

In the lane that led to Barrow Farm, Gatty and her uncle came suddenly on Mrs. Piddock, tramping sturdily along and carrying a bundle. She responded to their greetings with grave civility, and hastened on, with her face turned towards the hills.

"What a strange woman she is!" said Gatty, who had always felt a peculiar interest in her. "I wonder whether she can *really* tell fortunes, uncle?"

'Surely, my dear, you need not ask such a question." Gibbon Fenning spoke gently, but in a grieved tone. He did not like to feel that Gatty was tainted with the superstition of the peasants round her. It was another reason for getting her away from the neighbourhood.

"Do you think Wild Ben has ever reappeared here?" asked Gatty, after a pause. "Mercy says that people fancy they have seen him."

"No," the farmer answered decidedly. "Bold as he was, I do not believe that Ben Piddock will venture into this part of the world any more."

Mr. Fenning had good reason for his words. A twelvemonth had gone by since Ben, the widow's only son, had been mixed up in a tavern quarrel. The young man was suspected of many a sly theft which had never been brought home to him. He was an idler and a ne'er-do-well, who loved better to sleep under a hedge than lie with a roof over him, and would make any shift rather than do honest work. Hot words passed between him and Gibbon Fenning's shepherd, a man well stricken in years and much liked in the parish. And Wild Ben had suddenly rushed upon the old man with a knife, and stabbed him deeply.

The other men, drinking in the tap-room, made an attempt to secure Ben Piddock at once; but he broke away from them all, flinging them from him right and left with desperate strength, and vanished into the darkness of the night.

There was an eager pursuit which lasted for some time, but Ben was never taken. Watt, the shepherd, lay for many days between life and death, and never entirely recovered from the effects of the wound. Wild Ben was almost a murderer, and at first it seemed likely that the wrath of the Valley people would be visited on his mother. But this was an injustice that Mr. Fenning would not allow. Mrs. Piddock was a quiet and peaceable person who had tried to restrain her boy's wild passions, and had failed. When the search for him was hot, she answered all questions straightforwardly enough, and succeeded in convincing everyone that she did not know what had become of him.

Yet, although she had never done anything to deserve ill-will, the country folk disliked her heartily. They detested her partly because she was Wild Ben's mother, and partly on account of her strange, solitary life and gipsy face. But the Fennings took her part steadfastly, and so the keen edge of popular prejudice was gradually worn away. After all, people could not help admitting that the woman had never been known to give a rough answer, even when harshly questioned; and she asked no favours and crossed no one's way.

The Sunday that had begun so peacefully did not end in perfect calm. Gatty strolled out alone in the afternoon, and went aimlessly across the field-path that led to the little river.

She had got quite close to the bridge before she saw that two persons were standing on it and looking down into the water. Warren Mainsborough and Angela Warburton, side by side, made a graceful pair as they stood there in the lights and shadows of the quiet place. Gatty only stayed long enough to notice that Angela wore roses and heliotrope in the bodice of her white cashmere gown, and that her straw hat was simply trimmed with ribbon and a little lace. And then all the wild jealousy came back upon her heart like a bitter wave, and she turned and fled.

They never knew that she had been near them. Love-making in this calm sunny weather, and with a fair and dainty girl by his side, was easy work for Warren. He had too much tact to hurry her or himself. He did not mean to make a proposal just yet; the beginning of courtship was so easy and pleasant that he wanted to linger over it for a while; and Angela was well content with her companion and her surroundings, and enjoyed these quiet hours as much as a girl of her stamp could be said to enjoy anything.

On Monday Gatty got up early in the morning, on purpose to take all the bows off a white gown and make it as plain and simple as possible. Then she drove to Petersfield, and bought a straw hat to replace the unfortunate poppy-decked thing that had floated away on the Meon. But the feeling of dissatisfaction was not to be easily dispelled, and Miss Warburton was always in her thoughts. When she looked in the glass, Angela's image appeared beside her own, and her glowing cheeks and country-made dress seemed coarse and common beside the dainty refinement of her rival.

She stayed away from White House, but it was impossible to avoid meetings in the lanes. Warren was always cordial and kind; once or twice he asked why she did not come to see his mother. Angela drove her frantic by bestowing upon her an affable smile. She felt sure that the smile was only a mask to hide contempt.

"Your young friend looks quite savagely at me," remarked Angela, after one of these meetings. "It is a pity; her face is at its best in repose."

"She ought to go to school, poor child," Warren replied.

"But she is rather big for school, isn't she? Really, she would be quite pretty if she did not scowl and glare. Don't you think so?"

"Well, yes," he said slowly. "It is curious that she has only taken lately to this scowling and glaring. I believe she is in a bad temper with the whole world.

Her uncle wants to send her away and get her trained properly, and she hates the idea."

"The training should have begun earlier," Angela rejoined, with a wise little shake of the head. "She is too much a woman to submit to being moulded."

"Oh, no, she is not a woman!" Warren laughed at the notion. "She is nothing but a tall child, seventeen last birthday. Her uncle is a farmer, a worthy man who doesn't know anything about girls, and, of course, he has let her run wild and spoilt her. I thought that my mother's influence had done a little good, but poor Gatty does not seem to be improving."

Miss Warburton was convinced that she understood "poor Gatty" better than he did. Familiar intercourse with the girl had blinded his sight, and the signs of bitter jealousy, which a stranger's eyes saw plainly, were quite lost upon him. Yet, although he was pleasantly occupied with his own affairs, Warren was not too much absorbed to bestow many a kind thought on Gatty, and to be sorry for the change in her temper.

When he met her again he chanced to be alone. It was still early in the morning, and she was walking quickly along the lane that led to the hills.

In happier days she would have been singing some old tune to herself; but now she walked silently, and he was struck with the gloomy beauty of her face. The rich bloom had paled a little, and her eyebrows and lashes seemed darker, intensifying that pathetic look of trouble in the brown eyes. He sprang lightly over a stile and stood before her.

The colour rushed to her cheeks, and she stopped short.

"I did not know you were near," she said, drawing a quick breath.

"Did I startle you?" he asked. "Why, Gatty, you are beginning to develop nerves; you were not wont to start at anything. I was crossing the field and saw you in the distance, and I couldn't do less—could I?—than make haste to pay my respects to the Rose of the Valley."

It was a name that Mrs. Mainsborough had given her a year ago; but it did not give her any pleasure to hear it now. She sighed, then partially recovered her composure, and looked up at him for a moment.

"Roses have gone out of fashion, Warren; people care only for lilies nowadays."

"You are talking treason. As long as the world lasts the rose will be the queen of flowers.'

"Queens are deposed sometimes," she said, with a slight tremor in her voice.

He did not understand the meaning of her speech; but something in her face touched him, and moved him to win her back to the old free intercourse.

"You have deserted us lately, Gatty," he said, in a tone of affectionate reproach. "Won't you come and dine with us one of these evenings, before the summer is quite gone?"

She pulled a bit of bracken from the roadside, and looked at him again. What could she say to him? He was so gentle and kind to-day, that she could not believe he cared for Angela. A ray of hope was stealing back into her heart, and she smiled for the first time that morning.

"I am not good company," she answered at last. "The town mouse always laughs at the country mouse, you know."

"Why do you talk in fables?" he asked. "No one ever laughs at you in our house. Has not my mother been your friend for years? And do I count for nothing?"

She was silent for a moment. Then she glanced up with sudden brightness.

"I'll come to White House if you really do want me," she said; "but—but I can't get on with strangers. I am just at my worst when I want to be at my best. And I have thought you changed somehow, since——"

"The change is in yourself, poor child. Something has been worrying you, Gatty. Can't you persuade your uncle to let you have a companion at the farm? I am afraid you miss your studies more than you are aware of, and you need companionship."

"No, I don't." She spoke with a frown. "I can study very well alone, and I don't like strangers."

"Well, do not take up morbid fancies about old friends," he said soothingly. "And come to see us soon, Gatty. I shall tell my mother to fix a day."

He went his way with a parting smile, and she hurried on with glowing cheeks.

(To be continued.)

"BLESSED ARE THE MEEK."

THE years shall bring but added grace and beauty
Unto thy ways.
While in the paths of Heaven-appointed duty
Are spent thy days.
One breath from Nazareth shall stir thy spirit
To do thy part,—
The benediction that the meek inherit
Be thine, brave heart!

MORTLAKE AND ITS MEMORIES.



THE VILLAGE GREEN.

FEW spots around London have a more interesting past than the village of Mortlake. Its present place in English life will be best understood by one who is familiar with the aspect of the river on the day of the Boat-race. Father Thames groans under the burden of steam-launches, tugs, barges, and craft innumerable; the streets are crowded with vehicles; and every foot of standing-room near the water is precious. This is the one great event of the year at Mortlake.

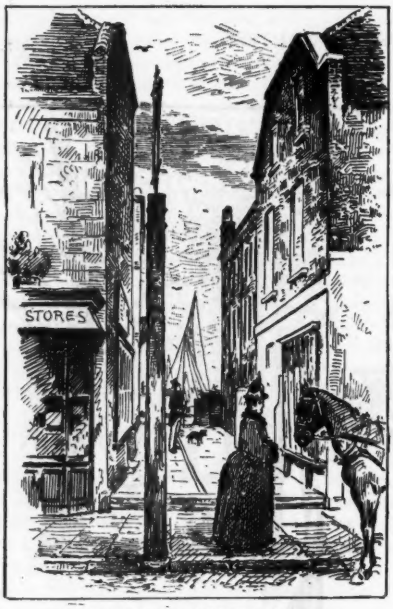
THE MANOR-HOUSE OF THE ARCHBISHOPS.

The visitor whom we wish to introduce to some pages of its past history, had better choose another day for his stroll. As he steps out of the station to walk towards the river the village green is on his left. From its further end opens out the High Street, with its old shops and houses. Between the road and the river, with its buildings running up to the green, there is a large brewery. Here for five hundred years stood the chapel and manor-house of the See of Canterbury. How much farther back the connection stretches, we cannot tell. Earl Harold, who fell at Battle, had a fishery here. Domesday Book shows that the estates belonging to the Archbishop were worth thirty-eight pounds a year, which represents £2,280 in modern currency. There were sixteen bondmen on the land, two mills worth one hundred shillings, and woods which fed fifty-five hogs for the lord's share in "pannage time." Wimbledon, Barnes, and Putney were included in the manor, which held about eight thousand acres. Seventeen houses in London brought in a revenue of fifty-two pence, four in Southwark yielded twenty-seven pence, whilst Putney paid a toll of twenty shillings. Such were the revenues of Mortlake. The place probably derived its name (*Mortuus Lacus*, the Dead Lake) from some piece of water left by the river.

LANFRANC AND ANSELM.

So tempting a bait was Mortlake that when the Norman invaders poured over from the Continent the rapacious Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, seized this dainty morsel for himself. He was not long permitted to enjoy it. Lanfranc, who was appointed Archbishop in 1070, did not hesitate to grapple even with so doughty a foeman as the king's half-brother. Before an assembly of nobles and prelates convened at Pinenden Heath in 1071 he successfully vindicated his rights.

But another name is associated with the old manor-house at Mortlake which is more dear to memory even than Lanfranc's. Anselm also was an Italian. The "poet-dreamer" was cast in a different mould from his friend, whose successor he became both at Bec and at Canterbury. Yet Anselm wielded everywhere the sceptre of gentleness. The Conqueror—so harsh and terrible to others that they trembled in his presence



PASSAGE, WITH TAPESTRY FACTORY.

—became another man, gracious and easy of speech, with Anselm.

Gentle though he was, Anselm's course as Archbishop proved that he had a stronger will than even William Rufus. When his friends were banished, and he himself driven from court by that king's displeasure, he spent his time at his three manors—Harrow, Hayes, and Mortlake. It was after keeping the Whitsuntide of 1095 at Mortlake that Anselm was summoned to appear before the king at Windsor. There William, finding him inflexible, freely restored Anselm to his favour. Four years later we find that Anselm spent another Whitsuntide at Mortlake, where he held an ordination in the chapel of his manor-house. His was a stormy Archbishopric, but Mortlake has no prouder name than that of the saintly scholar, the "St. Augustine of the twelfth century."

LATER ARCHBISHOPS AND KINGS.

Two of Anselm's successors—Archbishops Peckham and Reynolds—died there, in 1292 and 1327. Simon Mepham, who was excommunicated by Pope John XXI. in the early part of Edward III.'s reign, came into retreat at Mortlake. Nicholas Bubewith was here consecrated Bishop of London in 1406 by Archbishop Arundel, assisted by the Bishops of Winchester and Worcester. The whole place, as these facts show, is rich in ecclesiastical traditions.

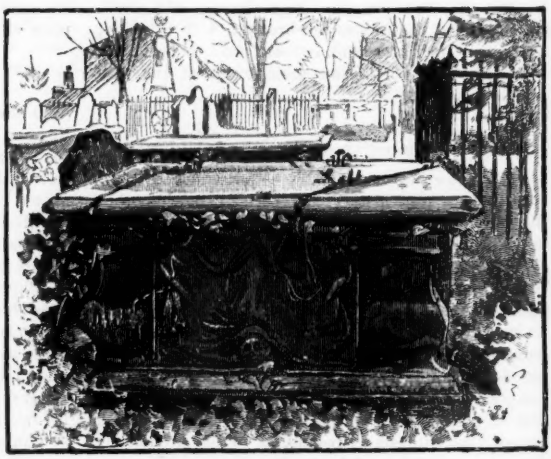
The kings of England were occasional visitors at the manor-house. King John spent a couple of days there in March, 1206; Edward II. was there in 1316; Edward III. in 1352. Henry IV. and his successor, the victor of Agincourt, were also familiar with the place. Cranmer snapped the links between Canterbury and Mortlake by conveying this manor and Wimbledon to Henry VIII. in exchange for other lands. The neighbouring parish of Barnes, which was given by King Athelstan to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, still belongs to that body, but Mortlake fell from its dignity. At first, however, the exchange increased the honours of the village. The old chapel attached to the manor-house seems to have been pulled down by the king's orders, and the present Church of St. Mary took its place. An inscription may still be seen over the window above the doorway of the church-tower, which is thought to prove that the building was a royal gift to the parish:—

Vivat
R. H 8,
1543.

Its square embattled tower has three lower storeys of flint and stone in chequer-work, strengthened by massive buttresses at the angles. The upper part is of brick, with stone dressings. A modern lantern cupola and vane finish it off above. Its font supplies the last remaining link to archiepiscopal times. Bouchier, who held the See from 1454 to 1486, is said to have been the donor. It is ornamented with rich Gothic tracery, and bears the arms of the Archbishop and of the See of Canterbury.

DEE THE ASTROLOGER.

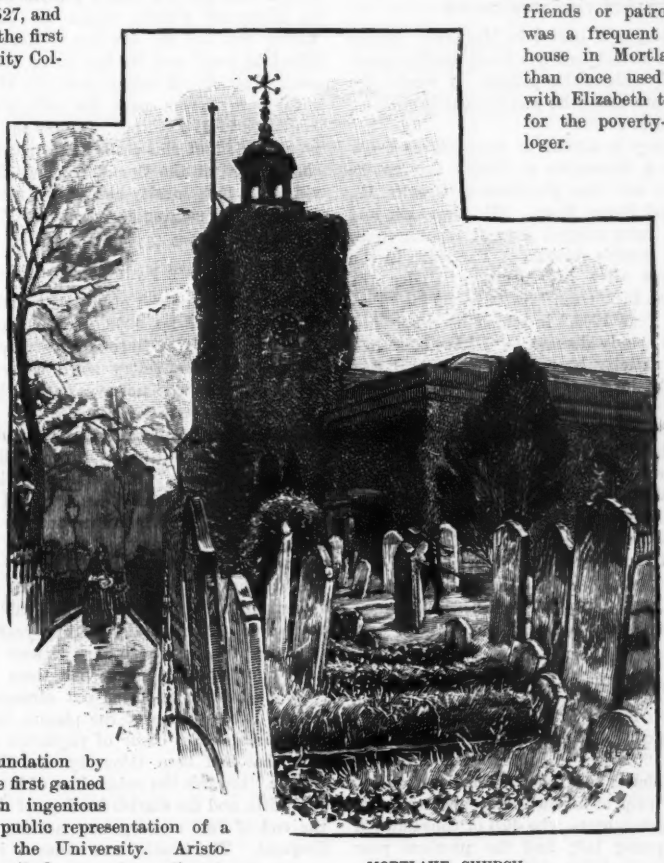
Mortlake was the residence of the greatest English astrologer of the sixteenth century. On the east side



JOHN PARTRIDGE'S GRAVE.

of Queen's Head Court, in the High Street, is a brick building bearing a tablet which states that the famous Mortlake tapestry manufacture was carried on there in the reigns of James I. and Charles I. This was the site of Dee's laboratory. His house stood on the opposite side of the passage.

John Dee was born in London in 1527, and became one of the first Fellows of Trinity College on its foundation by Henry VIII. He first gained notoriety by an ingenious device in the public representation of a Greek play at the University. Aristophanes had described a man mounting to the gods on the back of a beetle. Dee therefore, to the amazement of all who were present, prepared a mechanical contrivance by which a man was hoisted to the top of Trinity Hall.



MORTLAKE CHURCH.

Amid the terrors of Queen Mary's reign he was charged with favouring the cause of her sister Elizabeth, and had a narrow escape.

ELIZABETH AND HER COURTIERS.

On the accession of Elizabeth, Dee's star seemed in the ascendent. The Queen several times visited him at Mortlake, where the astrologer showed her the properties of a wonderful mirror.

Dee was once summoned in hot haste to Richmond Palace, where Elizabeth was then staying. An image of wax had been found with a great pin stuck into the breast in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and only Dee could avert the evil results which some of the Privy Councillors feared. Such incidents vividly illustrate the superstitions of the times.

The Earl of Leicester, Sir Philip Sidney and his parents, Mr. Secretary Walsingham, Raleigh, the Lord Keeper, Earl Derby, were his friends or patrons. Leicester was a frequent visitor at his house in Mortlake, and more than once used his influence with Elizabeth to procure help for the poverty-stricken astrologer.

Dee was the friend and counsellor to all the great navigators of his time. Though no sailor, Dee's book on the Art of Navigation won him a high reputation as an authority on naval matters. He desired to see a Royal Navy fitted out for the defence of the English coasts. Sir Humphrey Gilbert, young Hawkins, Cavendish the gentleman sailor, Raleigh, and Hakluyt were all among his visitors or acquaintances. The story of their voyages and adventures must often have been poured into his sympathising ear at Mortlake.

Dee died there in 1608 at the age of eighty-one. He seems to have been buried in the chancel of the church, where a flat marble stone without inscription was pointed out as "Dr. Dee's stone."

With all his dabbling in the occult sciences, Dee was a scholar and a gentleman, for whose misfortunes and mistakes we feel no small regret. So learned and ingenious a man deserved a better fate than life-long poverty.

PARTRIDGE THE ASTROLOGER.

Another astrologer is buried in Mortlake. On the south side of the churchyard is a black marble monument supported with white pillars. It marks the grave of John Partridge, who was born at East Sheen in 1644, and died in 1715.

Partridge's story is almost as tempting as Dee's. Brought up as a shoemaker at Covent Garden, he became a doctor, and was physician to Charles II., William III., and Queen Mary. His almanack and his astrological tracts enjoyed a great reputation in his own times. Swift's ridicule of Partridge in the *Tatler* still keeps alive his memory. Under the pseudonym "Isaac Bickerstaff" Swift issued his "Prediction for the Year 1708," in which he prophesied poor Partridge's speedy decease:—"I have consulted the star of his nativity by my own rules, and find he will infallibly die upon the 29th of March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever. Therefore I advise him to consider of it, and settle his affairs in time." Then followed a "letter to a person of quality," giving an account of Partridge's death at the very hour. It was all in vain that the astrologer protested, and published his almanack for 1709. Swift answered his reasons, accused him of giving a gentleman the lie, and showed that the appearance of the almanack was no proof that Partridge was alive, for other almanacks were still published though the men whose names they bore were dead.

SIR PHILIP FRANCIS.

The vault of Sir Philip Francis in the churchyard awakes many memories of the controversy about the authorship of the "Letters of Junius." He also lived at East Sheen, which is now the fashionable suburb of Mortlake. Sir Philip, at his own earnest request, rests beside one of his daughters, who died of consumption in 1804. This young lady had the previous year tenderly nursed one of her sisters who died of the same complaint at Nice. The stone still tells her touching story:—"Her sufferings were great, but she preserved to her last moments that fortitude of mind and tenderness of heart which had ever been the most remarkable of her many virtues." Another daughter is buried in a vault under the vestry.

THE CHURCH BELLS.

Before we leave Mortlake we may cull a few particulars from the parish registers. Mr. J. E. Anderson's interesting local history, printed for private circulation, is our authority. On Shrove Tuesday, or Pancake Day, the sixth bell of the peal is rung from half-past eleven to half-past twelve, to prepare the villagers for their feast. This is the only "pancake-bell" now left in Surrey. It grew out of the pre-Reformation custom of ringing the bell on the last day before Lent, in order that the parishioners might come to be shriven. The "matins bell" at eight o'clock on Sunday mornings, and the "mass bell" at nine, are also Popish survivals.

In days when the Thames was the silent highway to and from London, Queen Elizabeth delighted much in Richmond Palace, which she called "a warm winter box for my old age." Her good people of Mortlake could not let her go by without a merry peal. The church stands near the river, and as the royal barge swept past, the bells always gave her Majesty a loyal greeting. In 1580 the churchwardens note the cost of this peal: "Itm payd to Ringers for rinninginge at the Quenes remove from Richemon vjd." In 1598 loyalty had grown more economical: "Paid 3d. for ringing as Queen came from London in January."

THE PARISH REGISTERS.

The interest of the old minute-books, which date from September 1st, 1578, may warrant a few quotations. Glimpses of bygone days may be caught on every page. The vestry acted as *censor morum* in Mortlake, and was not content with words. One shilling and twopence is paid "for a frame and a whip that hangs in the church for drunkards." A "pennance sheete" cost fifteen shillings in 1637. The "two Hales" have an unenviable notoriety from the fine of a shilling imposed on them "by Dockter Reeves for their profanation of the Saboth in playinge at nine pines."

The plague of 1665 was very fatal to the parish. The deaths that year were 197, the usual average being only 27. In September and October alone there were 122 funerals. Thirty years before, there is an entry which bears witness to the panic caused by the frequent visitations of pestilence: "Paid a warder to keepe out strangers at church in the chiefest time of the plague, 3s." About the same time entries occur of payments made to a poor man that had been taken by the Turks, and to a woman "towards the redeeminge of her husband from captivitie, and the slavish bondage of the Turks." At the end of last century war notices are somewhat frequent. The beadle was ordered in April, 1795, to cry through the parish that twenty pounds each would be paid for two seamen whom the authorities of Mortlake were required to find for the navy. The following year three men had to be found for the army; but though the crier offered fifteen pounds each in the parish, and at Brentford fair, he was not so successful. A Lieutenant John Ruggles provided them at double the amount offered. In 1798 £370 9s. was raised by the parish for defence of the country against France.

In August, 1774, the churchwardens were ordered to pay fourpence for every dozen sparrow-heads brought to them. Eight years later a plague of insects came upon the parish. "Whereas it appears," so runs the minute, "that the present alarming bags of insects which now are hanging on the hedges and trees, if not immediately destroyed, may be productive of the plague or some other pestilential

disorders, this vestry wishing to promote so truly laudable and humane a plan as the other parishes have done for gathering and burning them, and the churchwardens have declared their willingness to go round this parish and collect contributions, and thereby offer rewards for their gathering in the said bags of insects, and having them publicly burnt, this vestry do accept their humane offer." No one seems to have dreamt that the crusade against the sparrows was thus bearing fruit. So late as May 25, 1820, the parish agreed to continue this allowance for destroying the birds.

Close to the railway station stands a barn-like brick building. This is the Independent Chapel. It was built in 1716 by the Rev. William Jacomb, one of the early pastors. But David Clarkson, who was appointed Vicar of Mortlake in 1655, was probably the founder of the Nonconformist church. He had been a Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, where Archbishop Tillotson was one of his pupils, and his successor in the fellowship. After his ejection in 1662, Mr. Clarkson lived for some years at Mortlake. He was made Dr. Owen's co-pastor at St. Mary Axe in 1682, and next year became sole pastor. Baxter says "he was a divine of extraordinary worth for solid judgment, healing, moderate principles, acquaintance with the Fathers, great ministerial abilities, and of a godly and upright life."

THE VANISHING OPAL.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART I.

IN the corner of what even in those times would be called an obscure court in the City of London, there dwelt an old man, by name Isaac Coloman. In appearance the old man looked what he was—a Jew. He had the characteristic features of his nation; but he had also one that was peculiar to themselves, and of the most attractive kind. Immense bushy eyebrows overshadowed Isaac's piercing eyes, a long, long beard—a very remarkable appendage in those days—flowed from the chin; and Isaac's back was so bowed and bent, that he was under the necessity of using a staff, which corrected the error in his centre of gravity caused by the bowing aforesaid.

Those eyebrows had been of use to Isaac in going through life. When he wished to veil how keenly he was watching his customer, he dropped them wonderfully low. It was the time before the application of indiarubber to many of its present homely uses, or we might have supposed that Isaac's skin in the neighbourhood of those brows was elastic, and bent them down, when occasion required, a good deal below the ordinary level. But it was in their elevation that those brows were of such good service; for it was perfectly amazing to see to what a height they ascended on his forehead, when he wished to express well-feigned amazement at the price asked, or offered, as the case might be, for some precious stone. Those eyebrows seemed almost to carry conviction with them; and he who dealt with Isaac, unless he knew him well, often felt, as those brows ascended towards the roots of the old man's hair, that he had asked too much, or offered too little, and that the figure must be amended to a considerable extent. And Isaac Coloman, the Hungarian Jew, had some good customers in that secluded corner of the dingy court. Isaac made no show—he had not even a shop-window; there was nothing lying about in his house to indicate that he was in trade of any kind.

Many circumstances combined to make old Isaac feel safe from thieves. In the first place, no one would have suspected that, in a house like his, there could be anything very valuable; in the next place, few came there, and most of those who did come were somewhat regular customers, who came in by a back way. Then, much of Isaac's business was transacted out of doors, at other people's houses, whither he went with his merchandise; but, from the nature of his trade, his transactions, though large, were comparatively few.

And even if thieves did break through to steal, they would have gone away as they came, so far as getting anything was concerned—unless, indeed, it was a volley of bullets from the blunderbuss which Isaac always kept loaded ready for any emergency; and with which he might have been almost said to sleep every night.

But even if thieves had broken in, and old Isaac had told them they were welcome to all they could find, they would have gone away as they came, for they would not have found anything; for all the Jew's merchandise and treasure was entirely out of sight. It was contained in a small iron box about a foot square, and that box was let down into a deep hole in Isaac's sleeping-room—which was what we should call a back kitchen; and even if thieves knew it was there, they could not get it out unless they had the hook with which Isaac fished it up when he

wanted it. Any line would have done, but what about the hook?

It was in this box that Isaac Coloman kept the specimen jewels in which he dealt—unset, and in some cases even uncut stones, all of them of great worth; pearls, even, but none save those which were perfect in shape and colour, and of great size.

Moreover, it was here that Isaac kept what he would not sell—that which it had been the dream and labour of his life to possess, and from which he would not part except with life itself; and Isaac would have given all his other jewels to anyone who could have told him how not to part with that stone in death, but to carry it away to Abraham's bosom, if he could get there.

Between Karchau and Eperies, in Hungary, is Czernowitza, and there, in claystone porphyry, is found the noble or *precious* opal. Its name noble, or "precious," marks it as standing alone.

Exquisitely beautiful is the Mexican opal—the fire-opal. Tiniapau and San Nicholas may be proud of being its birthplace. Like an unmixed globule of green fire—like a glow-worm's lamp, or a ball of phosphorus moistened with oil—it is indeed a gem worthy of a king, but it is not the noble, the precious opal, for all that.

Isaac Coloman had, in his iron box, several grand specimens of fire-opals, all carefully swaddled as if they had been the infants of a king; for the fire-opal, when exposed to wet or even to damp, loses all its brilliancy and colour. He had rubies of pure pigeon-blood; he had emeralds almost without flaw, and green as grass; but his treasure was a precious opal, for which he had travelled and worn himself in his youth—for which he had paid a large part of what he possessed; and which now was a part, as it were, of his very self. On others of his gems his heart was not set. They were merchandise—they were no portion of himself. They might come and go in the vicissitudes of buying and selling; but, except as representatives of money, they were naught to him. But with that precious opal he would not part. The Jew would have been as though he heard not, even if you had offered him for it the ransom of a king.

This noble—this precious opal was unset, and lay in a bed of velvet, inside a small gold casket. In size it was about twice as large as the nail on the third finger of an ordinary hand. But its preciousness was not altogether in its size, but in its lights, its fires, its flash, its gleam, its softly melting hues, its rainbow tints, the changes of colour which passed over it, as over the dolphin as it dies. Was it a human soul imprisoned in a pearl, as the legend said, and were those changing colours its changing moods? Ah! who could tell? but there it was—let each believe about it what they would.

There were many reasons why the superstitious Hungarian Jew attached so much importance to the possession of the noble stone. His grandmother had been what some amongst us might be inclined to consider "uncanny." She had had a high reputation amongst her people for wisdom, and when this child was born the old woman was on her death-bed. The child was brought to her, and she said over it in measured rhythm what, translated from her dialect, would run nearly thus:—

"Seek thee a noble opal stone
With living fires—a choicest one;
And let it be thy daily guide,
All doubts and questionings decide;
Its yellow tint will tell of gold,
Its green of that which grows not old:
Prize above all its heavenly blue,
It guides to what is just and true;
But when you see its fiery red,
There's danger near—there's cause for dread!"

These almost dying words of his grandmother's, Isaac Coloman always kept in view; and to get possession of such an opal as would be worthy of thus being his guide through life was his one desire. In



"The schoolmaster was himself a collector of precious stones."—*p.* 789.

vain did his father send him to school, in vain bind him to a trade; until he got that stone he felt that he should never get on in life, at least, as he could do—as he might do—if he got possession of this treasure.

Indeed, Isaac Coloman's schooling only quickened his desire; for his old master was himself a collector of precious stones, in a small way, and had told the youth some of the lore connected with them. "Seest thou that opal, youth? It is but a poor specimen, for my means do not allow of my purchasing a noble opal. This is but a hydrophane, milk-white and nearly opaque, yet it has some iridescence; and this is a semi or half opal, and this a common opal—the 'fire' or 'reddish' opal, and the 'noble' or 'precious' are beyond my reach—there, thou mayest have that piece of opal-jasper, which hath travelled far, all the way from the geysers in Iceland, and that of wood-opal, of which we have plenty in our own land. But it will not be for our eyes to behold the noble opal, such as Pliny tells us of in yonder books. Those of olden time knew how precious was the opal, as well as we. The Greeks called it Cupid, and in the Orphic poems it is said to imitate the complexion of a lovely youth. I too love the opal, my son, and I have marked what the ancients have said of it. Pliny, who knew most of such things in his day, says that of all precious stones the opal is the one most difficult to describe, seeing that it displays at once the precious fire of carbuncles, the purple brilliancy of the amethystos, and the sea-green of smaragdus (emerald), the whole blended together, and refulgent with a brightness which is quite incredible.

"Would, my son, that our eyes could see the opal of Nonus, which that same Pliny speaks of—that



"Coloman immediately swept all his gems into the iron drawer."—*p.* 790.

would indeed be a sight for mortal eyes! It was valued at 20,000 sesterces, that is, about 35,000 ducats of our money, and was in size as large as a hazel-nut. Nonus held this gem, as many a man did his wealth, at his peril, for it was coveted by Marc Antony, who proscribed Nonus that he might secure the gem. But Nonus fled from the country with only that single ring; he would not part with it even to save his life.

"I have heard, Isaac, the words which thy grandmother pronounced over thee, and I trust that some day thou mayest possess a speaking stone with colours which will be but so many voices; but thou seest that it must entirely excel anything thou seest here. These are specimens, if I might so speak, of the thing itself in its mere being, not in its excellency; and truly herein is a lesson for us both—for the finest opal in the world, even that thy grandmother spoke of, suppose such could be found, is but flint and water, as common things as there be in the world, and of but little value in themselves. Take six or seven parts of water and ninety-two or three parts of flint, and thou hast an opal. Nay, not thou hast an opal, but the materials of an opal; for, though thou mayest separate a gem into its parts, thou canst not bring them together again, much less make into a gem materials which had never been a gem before. I have mused upon it, my son; often mused how easy it is to destroy, how hard to create, or even to bring together again.

"For many things have we to be proud of our country; and one of them is, that the finest opals in the world are with us. In olden time that same Pliny tells us that the best opal, which they called Sangenon, came from India, and others called Tenites from Egypt; there were others, of a third quality, from Arabia, but no mention is made of our Hungary at all. Now, however, he who would have the most precious of the opals must come to us."

For many a long day did Isaac Coloman search for such a gem as he desired, but, though many precious stones came his way, he did not meet with his ideal. He heard, from time to time, of one specimen and another, and went hither and thither, but only to find that he had been misinformed, and that either through ignorance, or a desire of the marvellous, his informants had misled him. The "precious" opal, he knew, was found occasionally near Frankfort, and at the mines in the Province of Gracias, in Honduras, South America: and even as far as that did he travel in search of what he craved; but he returned as he went, empty as regards that particular possession.

At last, what Isaac Coloman so coveted came, so to speak, of its own accord in his way. One day, while looking over some precious stones, a rough and uncouth man came into the room. His appearance was such that Coloman immediately swept all the gems into his iron drawer, which fastened with a snap, leaving the table bare. The stranger, of course, saw Isaac's evident terror, and rightly interpreted it.

"Nay, friend," said the rough man, smiling, "thou needst not fear. I come more to give than to take. I have that here"—and he held up a little ball of dirty-looking rag—"that would buy all the gems thou dost possess. I have heard that thou art a lover of these"—and the stranger began to untwist the rag—"and I have come to sell, and not to buy or take. Look at that;" and he exposed to Isaac Coloman's gaze a large "precious" opal—a "noble" opal—a gem that seemed to have hidden deep within it not one rainbow but many; a gem from which one might have been pardoned if he had listened to hear softly melting into one another the seven notes of the musical scale, as the seven prismatic colours glided one into another while the stone was slowly moved.

"Where didst thou get this?" said Coloman, looking hard at the man from beneath his shaggy brows.

"It is not that I wish my answer to be rough," said Coloman's visitor, a couple of deep gashes in whose face showed that he had probably been in rough life, whencesoever he had come, "but my answer is, What is that to thee? Thou understandest!" And he fixed his eyes in turn upon the Jew.

Isaac Coloman did understand, especially as the stranger took the stone, and began to rewrap it in the rag, and added, "It will suit thee better to have it than me; but thou art not the only one, Isaac Coloman, who is in search of a stone like this. It will fetch its price, if I take it far enough."

"And what dost thou ask?" said Coloman.

"The most that thou canst give," replied the man, "short of beggaring thyself. There, it will suit me well enough to be paid in those gems, or partly in those gems thou has swept into that drawer; for I can dispose of them to one and another, here and there, when no one could pay the price of this single stone. I will take in stones and gold 5,000 ducats. I speak but one word; it would be a shame to bargain over the light of a stone like this. If I had not my own reasons for selling it, thou wouldst not have had the offer of it at all."

"I suppose thou comest from Czernowitza," said the Jew, hinting that the stone was stolen. Would not 2,000 ducats satisfy thee, one-third in gold and two-thirds in stones? There," said the Jew, touching a secret spring and reopening the drawer—"there are diamonds and sapphires, and spinels,* and amethysts, and emeralds, and chrysoberyls; there are no rubies, but the spinels will serve thy purpose as well; and if thou art going to deal with folk who have not much to spend, but who nevertheless love precious stones, there are garnets, and there is tourmaline, and onyx, and turquoise."

"And thou hast them all in one in this one stone,

* The spinel is the balas ruby, often taken for and sold as the real ruby.

if it become thine," said the stranger. "Wilt thou have my stone?"

It was plain, from the stranger's voice and his half motion to depart, that the bargaining must be short; and the matter was expedited by his saying, "Here, friend, I will change my terms, so as to take nine parts of my price in stones—the rest in gold. Stones are easier to carry than gold for a man who has a long way to go. But hark, and mark well: give good value in stones, else I may come back again—nay, I will come back again—and if I do, it will be to settle accounts once more, only in a different way. If thou givest what will prove to be of good value, thou mayest never see me more."

And Isaac Coloman did as he was bid, for his own sake as well as his visitor's. Isaac had a salutary dread of a long knife which he saw stuck in the stranger's leather belt. He thought it would be an ugly thing anywhere in the neighbourhood of the throat, especially in the dead of the night. So Coloman picked out good value in stones—small and medium-sized saleable stones.

"Wilt thou have any of these?" said the Jew, emptying out a little cup of semi-opals, chalcedonies, pale milky-blue stones, what the Germans call *waise*—*i. e.*, orphan—because in certain lights it appears to contain a slight fiery radiance, though it has not the proper beauties of the opal. "I know not whither thou art going, even as I know not who thou art, but if thou wendest thy way in Italy, and call them girasoles, and turn the stones to the solar beams, they have a radiance for which the people will pay."

"Thou hast the real stone," said the stranger; "thou canst afford to throw in two or three of them. That will do," said he, as, without ceremony, he took up as many as his thumb and two next fingers could catch up in a pinch, and added them to the stones already looked out, and, gathering them up with the counted gold, took his departure.

"May I never see thee again," said the Jew, feeling creepy in the neighbourhood of the jugular vein. "There is mystery linked with the stone that thou hast brought, and I am well content that there should be mystery linked with thee for ever—may it never be solved," said the Jew. "For aught that I know, thou mayest be Iscariot himself come back to earth, and again a thief. I believe that from the claystone porphyry of Czernowitza has this opal come."

Thus it was that this grand specimen of the "precious" opal came into the possession of Isaac Coloman; and to him it was of inestimable price. He valued it for many reasons. He could not hope to find a finer specimen anywhere, unless he could plunder some royal crown, if he could find it even there. It must be the stone of which his grandmother had spoken just before she died—to possess which meant health and wealth and happiness, and all that man could get.

But there was something more. Isaac Coloman loved money—loved wealth; but money was a perilous possession for his people. Had they not been despoiled of it throughout all ages?—had they not ever lived on the brink of a volcano, and at times worse than on the brink? had they not been overwhelmed by its eruptions? To be a Jew was to be spoiled; and if there was difficulty in getting wealth, was there not still greater difficulty in keeping it? Hence, the trade in precious stones had always found favour in Coloman's mind: he could carry great wealth in a girdle round his waist, or in his pocket, if he chose.

"Wealth!" said the Jew to himself, "it rules the world in the end. Kings are dependent on it; beauty is bought by it; your fellow-man will bow down, and cringe to you, for it; he will let you walk over him for it—aye, and men will sell the souls they profess to make so much of, for it. Ha, hah!" said Coloman; "when I take that stone out with me, and know that I have it about me, how warm it will make my heart!—how firmly I shall tread!—how powerful I shall feel! That man of Czernowitza did not know the worth of that gem, or what it could make a man feel who knew what it really was. I shall walk the whole day, and feel that I could buy with what I carry in my girdle every inch of ground I cover. I shall look at many a man who scorns me perhaps for myself, and certainly for my creed, and feel that I could buy him from the crown of his head to his foot. And when trouble arises I shall be ready to flee. They will look, perhaps, for Isaac Coloman's wealth, but they will not find it: where he is, there will it be; even a mouse-hole will be enough to hide it; and there will be no cat with smell keen enough to scent it, or with claws sharp enough to seize it. Oh! man of Czernowitza—whoever thou art—thou knowest not what service thou hast done to Isaac Coloman the Jew. If a Jew could bless a Christian, Isaac Coloman would bless thee. Thou hast warmed his blood, and brought joy and gladness into his heart; thy gem hath brought all the colours of the rainbow into Isaac Coloman's soul. Thou hast given him a bow of promise; and, amid whatever floods may come, thou hast assured him hope.

"Alas! thou child of light," continued Coloman to himself, after he had looked for a few moments gloomy and sad—"alas! that some day I must die, and leave thee behind. And in whose keeping wilt thou be then? Nay, but why cannot I take thee with me?" said Isaac Coloman, half-wildly forgetting that man brought nothing into this world, and could carry nothing out; "why should not a thing of beauty like thyself have place in Abraham's bosom? Who can look into thee, and not think that thou art more beautiful than many a one who has a soul? Thou art small—thou art of no weight. I would say to thee as said Ruth to Naomi: 'Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge.' Say thou that to me—feel thou to me that which I feel to thee; but, no—no," said the Jew,

suddenly remembering himself; "thou must stay on earth when I have left it, but I will think how to settle so that no evil befall thee. It may be that thou shalt be buried with me; but that I will think upon: enough for to-day that I have thee now. Oh! man of Czernowitza, though thou knewest not all that thou wast doing, thou hast done well to bring this stone to one who knows how to value it. May I never see thee again, nor thy knife; unless thou findest, which thou never wilt, another stone like this, and thou comest to sell it to me, feeling that I have treated thee well with the gems I have given thee to-day. Now I think me of it, thou needest not have had that pinch of opals, inferior though they be, and not of much worth even at the best—unless one gets a customer who knows nothing about stones; but thy knife is long, and I doubt not it is sharp, and thou lookedst as though it were better to make sure that thou wert contented, and would not come back—thee, and thy knife—thy *knife!* ugh, it has an ugly look, and hath taken away all stomach for my meal; but I have thee, thou precious stone! and that will pick up the appetite again. I like a knife for cutting meat withal, but I dread a knife that would not stick at cutting throats."



"The old man and his host sat together over the fire."—*p.* 793.

Great were the longings of old Isaac Coloman to have the opal cut, that he might enjoy the fulness of its light and beauty. He had discernment enough to know what that beauty would be when the gem had been treated by a lapidary of the first class. But could he trust it out of his sight? Nay, he now had what was to him like the pearl of great price, and he would take care that it did not lightly slip from his grasp.

In order that he might accomplish this, the Jew determined to leave his present abode, and go where he could get his gem cut and polished under his own eye. Moreover, he would return no more to his present home. There were signs of a storm brewing in the air which he did not like. His people had already endured much suffering—here and there, and almost everywhere—and it seemed to him that there was mischief near at hand. He had heard of London, the capital of a country where the people were safe; he had even sent precious stones thither; he knew by name some of his own people there, and especially one Ben Ezra, with whom he had corresponded on business connected especially with opals, and thither would he go.

Isaac Coloman was now advanced in life, and he would draw in from business so far as dealing in smaller and inferior stones were concerned; he would give up that branch to Sigismund, his son. Sigismund was his only child, he must inherit all that he possessed, he would let him now begin dealing on his own account, and he himself would keep to trading in none but stones of large price—the gems of the gems of the trade.

"It will cost me nothing," said Isaac Coloman to himself, "to go hence. Is not the world my home—is it not the home of our race—what true abiding place have we for the sole of our foot? As Abraham and Isaac and Jacob wandered, so do we; and the Turk has our land—may every hair of his beard grizzle and frizzle in Gehenna for ever! The religion of the Nazarene saith, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him,' but I am not of that faith; would that I could spit upon the beard of every Mussulman that is in my land. The world is my home," continued Coloman; "nay, my gems are my home, and where this gem shall be, that will be my home henceforth in the world; would that I could take it with me wheresoever I am going. For a life have I waited to possess this gem; who knows in what disturbance it may be lost? I will depart whither it at any rate shall be safe."

Cutting opals is a ticklish business; they are so brittle. Although the opal defies the blow-pipe, only giving off water and becoming dark under its influence, it can yet be easily shattered by a very little fall or blow. Its brittleness makes it anxious work for the lapidary, if he has a fine specimen to deal with.

No one was more aware of this than the possessor of the one of which we are writing now, and when the work was at last finished, and the gem had been brought up to perfection, both in symmetry and lustre, the weight of years seemed taken off old Coloman's mind.

So tender is the opal that the leaden plate on which it is cut has to be coated with adoucis—emery powder that has already been used upon other gems, and so deprived of its asperity; it cannot bear the same handling as other gems. But it was all now safely accomplished, and the heart of Coloman was at peace.

When Isaac Coloman arrived in London he made his way straight to the house of Ben Ezra, which was in a retired part of the East End. Ben Ezra was a thorough Jew, and he remembered the command to be good to the stranger, which he found in his law. This he sincerely wished to carry out; and it was no drawback to his doing so that his visitor was a man of large means, and one with whom he might in the course of business have many profitable dealings. At the most, old Isaac and his son Sigismund were only two mouths to feed, and that for a short time; and there might be profitable dealings with them for many days. In the course of a short time, Ben Ezra, who knew well the parts of the town where his own dwelling was, found a suitable place of abode for Isaac Coloman, and the old man and his host now sat together for the last time over the fire.

"Those Christian dogs," said Coloman, "say of us children of Abraham that there is no gratitude in us, but thou knowest better than that. Now, tell me, Ben Ezra, how can I show my gratitude to thee for the kindness thou hast shown to me and to my son?"

"What I have done," said Ben Ezra, "I have done according to the law, and seek no return therefor. Nevertheless, if thou wilt show kindness unto me, promise me that when I want a gem which thou hast, to make up a set, thou wilt not withhold any which thou mayest have, nor, knowing my need, charge me more than its set price. I have told thee that my trade consists in the matching and fitting of stones; a stone is of little use to me unless I know where to put it when I get it; it is the matching of gems that brings me my gain, and I pay any price in reason. It is true there has to be much money sunk, but then there is great profit to be gained; and I have those of our own nation who are able and willing to back me up in any enterprise I have in hand, and all I ask of thee is, that thou wilt help me when it is in thy power."

So Isaac put his hand under Ben Ezra's thigh, and, after the manner of their ancient faith, sware unto him. And Isaac, in truth, was not sorry—at least, not now; for if Ben Ezra made money out of somebody, *he* might make some out of *him*—anyhow, it was well, so early in his new career, to become in touch with evidently a man of mark in his own particular line, and one who might forward his own interests, and those of Sigismund his son.

But what about the opal? What if Ben Ezra should ever claim that? Isaac Coloman laughed in his sleeve. "For that," said he, "he will never come. I have sworn to sell him only those that will complete the sets; and never will he find stones that come even near to this. Nay, my jewel," said the Jew, "slumber in thy bed safe and sound, if, indeed, thy glorious fires can slumber or sleep. Ben Ezra will never, never come for *thee!*"

"And now," said Ben Ezra to his guest, "there is as much to be made out of this way of trade as by dabbling in petty stones all day long. As long as vanity and love are in the world—in other words, as long as there are women and men—so long will there be a demand for such goods as I deal in, and as thou dealest in too. No matter what the price, there will be found a customer. Some court in diamonds, and some are courted in them: that false god, Cupid, hath diamond-tipped arrows. Whole estates have gone into a necklace before now; and a paltry girl, scarce out of her school-room, has worn a large property upon her head. There is madness in the world, but what is that to us? If money can be made out of other people's madness by our sense, that is our gain. And now, as this is thy last night here, thou shalt see my jewels, and thou shalt show me thine."

So saying, Ben Ezra went to a small safe which was let into the wall, and brought out from it half a dozen round leather cases, and a little leather bag. "This is my stock," said the Jew, "easily carried if there came any threatening of danger, and easily hidden if there should be need to hide."

Then Ben Ezra opened one case in which was an almost complete necklace of single stones, all unset,

and each one resting in an indent which it exactly fitted. There were only three stones wanted—one about midway up the right-hand side, one near the top of the left, and the great centre stone itself.

"Each stone must fit its own indent," said Ben Ezra; "and its fitness, so far as size is concerned, is settled by its properly filling its place. That one of rubies is complete all to a single stone, and that a small one too. There are plenty to be had which would fit that hole, but they are not the true pigeon's blood.

"One stone only is wanting to this necklace also. These, as thou seest, are sapphires. They are my favourite stone. I love their chastened light—it suits my aged eyes; yet so, too, does that of the opal, and the emerald. Ah! the emerald hath been thought always a strengthener of the eyes, and those of old times were never tired of looking at their rings when garnished with this stone. Yet hath it extraordinary brilliancy, too; and amongst the ancients there was a tale of a marble lion with emerald eyes placed on the tomb of a king called Hermias, in the island of Cyprus, near the fisheries there. So far out to sea did the brightness of these emeralds shine, that they frightened the fish to a great distance; and it was only when the emeralds were removed that the fish came back. It may be a fable," said Ben Ezra, "and take it for what it is worth—but that is the tale.

"The sapphire is my stone—it seems to soothe my spirits when I am vexed, it seems to rest me when I am worried and worn with the chaffering and haggling in which I must at times engage; but, now that age has come, that is a weariness in the flesh, and best becomes those who deal in little stones. They tell wonderful things of the sapphire, friend—how it prevents evil and impure thoughts, and is an enemy to all poison. The folk of olden time, and even the Christians in former days, made much of my favourite stone, so you see I do not make much of it for naught. It is great, too, my friend, in medicine, being a remedy against fevers. Even the heathen knew how precious was this stone, for they wore it when they went to consult the oracles, and it was sacred to Apollo, their oracles' god. Christian and heathen are both alike to me, yet I am pleased to see they both had understanding of this stone. This is my favourite stone.

"And now what is thy favourite, friend? and having shown thee my gems, let me see thine;" and Ben Ezra opened the remaining cases, and emptied the contents of the leather bag upon the piece of velvet which he had spread upon the table.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

109. What was one of the special sins of the Jews which was very displeasing to God?

110. Quote some words of St. Paul in which he sets forth the duty of obedience to all constituted authority.

111. What is an essential part of true worship to God? Quote passage.

112. Why was the kingdom of Israel taken away from Saul and his family?

113. Against what people did Jephthah fight when he made his rash vow?

114. Which of the brothers of David is spoken of as a very fine man, both in stature and appearance?

115. Where is mention made in the Epistles, of Jesus suffering under Pontius Pilate?

116. What miracle was performed by God to save the life of Samson?

117. What great victory did God give to the children of Israel in answer to the prayer of their king, Jehoshaphat?

118. Which of the Judges are specially mentioned as men of great faith?

119. What words of David, spoken when persecuted by King Saul, show his complete faith and trust in God?

120. Quote a proverb which sets forth the duty of forbearance.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 720.

97. It was taken by the men of Kirjath-jearim to the house of Abinadab. (1 Sam. vii. 1.)

98. By Giving them *daily* supplies of food, so that they might learn to look to Him for their daily bread. (Ex. xvi. 4, 12)

99. "The Lord will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land for good, and the Lord will rejoice over thee for good, as He rejoiced over thy fathers." (Deut. xxx. 9.)

100. The acknowledgment of faults one to another, that so by mutual prayer we may obtain help. (St. James v. 16.)

101. By the name, "I am that I am." (Ex. iii. 14.)

102. The promise of eternal life. (1 St. John ii. 25.)

103. That they might be like the other nations round about them. (1 Sam. viii. 20.)

104. 1 Sam. ix. 17.

105. St. James says, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." (St. James i. 5—7.)

106. The land was divided unto them by lot. (Acts xiii. 19; Joshua xiv. 2.

107. The virtue of humility. (St. Luke xiv. 11.)

108. "The Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel shall be your rereward." (Is. lii. 12.)

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

OTHER PEOPLE'S HOLIDAYS.

PRE-EMINENTLY August is *the* month of the year for holiday-making among the English people—among those, that is, who can afford to leave their town homes for a few weeks, in quest of renewed health and strength. But while these fortunate ones are making arrangements for their much-needed change, there are others, whose need is probably greater, who cannot, without help, procure the almost priceless boon of removal for a while to purer air and more open country. From the poor children in London schools there comes a cry to their richer friends—and above all to richer children—for help, and, thanks to the Children's Country Holiday Fund (10, Buckingham St., Strand, W.C.), this help may readily be rendered them. Ten shillings paid to the Fund will secure a fortnight's holiday in the country for a London child, and the Society's voluntary workers will see that the child selected is one who would not otherwise be likely to have an outing, and is in every respect worthy of help. Last year no fewer than 17,637 children were thus sent out from the great city. It is pleasing to note that the parents of the children show an increasing appreciation of this good work, for during 1888 they contributed nearly one-third of the total cost of their little ones' holidays. And the gratitude of the children who have been sent away is often shown on their return with all the impulsiveness that only London children are capable of. One of the South London "visitors" of the Fund tells how some of the little ones brought wild flowers and fruit back with them, and gave these to her as a token of their thankfulness. All through the summer months this good work goes on, but it is in August that the greater number of the children should be sent away, so that, if possible, no break may be made in their school attendances. Last year, however, the contributions to the Fund practically ceased for a while just at this important period, when most help was called for. Friends are apt to fancy that it is too late in the season for help to be of any use, but we can assure them that this is not so. All through August the work will be at full swing, and the greater the number of subscriptions that are sent to the treasurer of the fund—the Hon. Alfred Lyttleton — the greater will be the number of children sent away. The readers of THE QUIVER have ever taken a warm interest in the poor children of London. We ask them to bear them in mind when they are arranging for happy holidays by land or sea, and secure at any rate for one of these London little ones a fortnight's change from the closeness of their cramped city homes. The physical good that such a respite may do the little ones is all but incalculable; and who shall say what wider ideas and nobler thoughts may not be kindled in the mind set free, perhaps for the first time, to study the great lessons writ large on rock and field and tree? The thought of the child's enjoyment and profit will sweeten, and add to, the pleasure of the other holiday-maker who has made it possible; and it would be difficult to select a more seasonable thank-offering than this to the Master, to Whom alone we owe it that it is possible for us to take and enjoy a more extended holiday ourselves.



"Some of the little ones brought wild flowers and fruit back with them, and gave these to her."

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

In a very real sense we *are* the keepers of our brethren. If we do nothing to make them better, happier, holier, we have reason to feel ashamed when we lament their shortcomings and their sins. We remember reading once of a church in which no light was provided, but each attendant carried a candle or lantern, and so the whole place was lighted up. We may, with reason, fear that our own light may be growing dim if our neighbour be in outer darkness. "What a dreadful neighbourhood!" we say sometimes of a district perhaps within reach of our own Christian service. Perhaps God has put us within reach of it to bring hope and sunshine and the message of His love to the people concerning whom we shake our heads. Let us not decide that nothing can be done to bless and help our neighbours till God and our own hearts bear witness we have tried our best. None of us would be content to enjoy spiritual good *alone*. We must, as Christians, bear our neighbours' burdens, remove their stumbling-blocks, make them the better for our own high privileges. Lady Hope has truly reminded us that responsibility means *ability to respond*, and each call of God implies a possibility of response. If, at this present, we are conscious of His summons to some work for Him and for our fellows, uncongenial even to our own preferences, we dare not shrink where the Master leads, for "to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

"ALL THE YEAR ROUND."

It is related of a kindly hearted soul that someone said, "She would have a good word for the Evil One himself." Just then the dame of gentle speech happened to enter the room, and quietly said, "Well, indeed, we might all of us imitate his *perseverance*." The admonition is worth remembering. The forces of evil and temptation are at work continually, no less in the brighter days than in winter, and perseverance in well-doing is needed to contest the ground with such. "All the year round" is a good motto for a meeting. It may not be possible in every case to continue a weekly gathering through the summer, but wherever it is not *absolutely* necessary to give it up, our advice would be, "Keep at it." There will be far less difficulty and discouragement when winter returns, and we begin to think the working time has come again. Fewer numbers need not mean no progress, for even amid rows of empty seats there may be deep and wondrous blessing for the two or three who have gathered in the Master's name. But there will *not* be empty seats after a while. It is a good plan to appeal to the meeting whether it shall be given up in the summer; experience proves the answer is almost certain to be in the negative, and once it is understood that there is no thought of giving it up, fresh interest and growth will reward the self-sacrifice which the leaders undergo during the warm, long evenings. Of course, if the classes and meetings can be transported to lawn or garden and beneath the shadow of drooping leaves, let the change be made—the alteration of routine will make success the surer. Especially is this matter important as concerns children and young people, some of whom will certainly be sought as attendants in vain when the winter classes re-open. Now our influence is round them, let us retain it to God's honour and glory.



"Beneath the shadow of drooping leaves."

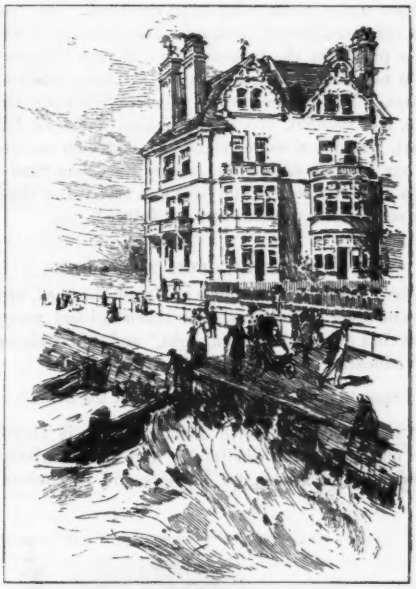
NEW BOOKS.

Readers of THE QUIVER cannot have forgotten Professor Church's story, "To the Lions!" which appeared as a serial in our own pages a few months ago. Messrs. Seeley and Co. have now issued the story in a separate form, and we are glad to call the attention of our subscribers to it, as a suitable work for a present or a prize.—Another book by Professor Church, which has also been issued by Messrs. Seeley, is entitled "Making a Start in Canada," and consists of gleanings from letters sent from the author's two sons, describing their experiences in the new home they have sought in Canada. To young men who are thinking of following their example, or to parents who have sons in the New World, the book should prove very interesting and useful. We commend it also to the attention of the conductors of Young Men's Bible-classes, that they may give their scholars the benefit of it.—The Bishop of Grahamstown's "Addresses for a Quiet Day" (Skeffingtons) have

for their keynote "the priesthood of the laity in the body of Christ. This is a subject which the Bishop handles with great skill and effectiveness, and though we are far from sharing many of his views and conclusions, we are glad that the privileges and responsibilities of the whole body of believers in their character of "priests unto God," possessing free access to the Throne of Grace without any intermediary agency other than that of the Great High Priest Himself, have not been lost sight of in these addresses. We would that this truth were more frequently brought before the Christian hearer from a truly evangelical standpoint, by writers and ministers in every branch of the Church of Christ.—Preachers might find some very suggestive material in the thoughtful little work on "The Divine Legation of Paul the Apostle," by Dr. E. B. Underhill, which has just been issued by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. Evidently the work is the result of much careful and painstaking study, and it is a valuable contribution to the armoury of the Christian advocate. The same publishers send us copies of the cheap new editions of Mr. Thayer's books, "The Pioneer Boy" and "George Washington;" two admirable books for boys, which should be in every Sunday-school library.—The Rev. W. Summers, of Epsom, has issued a very helpful little manual on "Friendly Counsels on Joining the Church" (Elliot Stock), which might be found very useful to pastors, if distributed among those who have recently come forward to make a profession of Christianity.—"God in Business," by H. J. Latham, and published by Messrs. Nisbet, is a collection of instances of help in temporal affairs given in answer to prayer, or as the outcome of consistent uprightness and well-doing, despite temptations to other and less Christlike paths of success.

"RESTING IN PEACE.

One who has been benefited by the healthy atmosphere and quietude of the old Wilton House of Rest at Hastings, writes "coming there really means resting in peace from all the billows of life." Devoted Christian workers sing with yearning sometimes about the Land of Rest and "resting by-and-bye," but those who appreciate their labours would like them to know something about rest on *this* side of the "swelling flood," and if this could be more generally arranged, many a lamentable breakdown might possibly be averted. The Wilton House of Rest was started some years since by Mr. Russell Hurditch, of the Evangelistic Mission, St. John's Wood, and it has welcomed many weary ones to send them forth refreshed and strengthened; during the two first years it was open, more than four hundred availed themselves of the Home, so that the need of a larger building became evident, and this summer the new premises at St. Leonards are available for use. Some of the visitors enjoy aiding Christian work in the district, and outsiders come in for services and Bible readings, so that this place of rest has been made the means of helping Christ's cause around. It is customary for each guest to choose a text at the breakfast-table, and one who had gone home writes, "It seems strange not to hear the usual 'bell' in the morning, and the 'pillow' at night." The Master Himself knew the meaning of weariness; the friends of this mission remind us He loved to come to the heartfelt welcome found in the home at



WILTON HOUSE, ST. LEONARDS.

Bethany, and He drew the lives consecrated to His service apart into the quiet desert, saying, "Come—and rest awhile." May Wilton House and every kindred spot of health-giving and Christian communion be endowed by the prayers and practical sympathy of those to whom a change is a matter easily accomplished.

"WHAT SHALL I RENDER UNTO THE LORD?"

A thoughtful writer has said that a right measure and manner in getting, saving, spending, giving, taking, lending, borrowing, and bequeathing money would almost argue a perfect man; certain it is that money often forms a crucial test of character; and those are happy, whether called rich or poor below, who have learnt to deal with their possessions in mindfulness of Him who sits against the treasury, and beholds His children casting in their gifts. "Boys, have you all your threepenny-bits? I like to see my boys give readily and cheerfully," says the head of a private academy in a modern work of fiction. How often is truth set forth by a tale! The

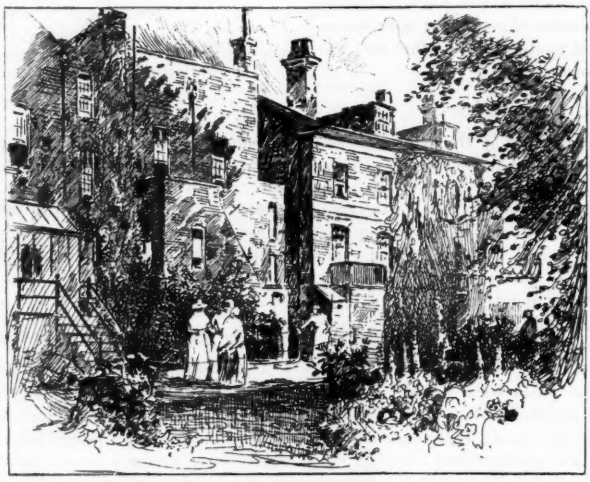
threepenny-bits are looked upon as the prerogatives of religion and charity, and the half-crowns and the gold as due to our own dwellings, comforts, and luxuries. Summer-time brings to many of us special joys and rest and travelling mercies. May they awaken within us the question—not how *little*, but how much we can render to the Giver of all good! But let those of full purse, as well as slender, bear in mind that money-gifts by no means represent the fulness of the offerings due unto our Lord. We cannot rid ourselves of spiritual obligations by bank-notes placed in the collection-box, though this may seem to some the easiest way of fulfilling religious duties. The Master gave us *Himself*, His time, His love, His thought, His strength, the fulness of His heart. Which of us, remembering the tender mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ, can do less than render unto Him the best of our lives and selves, our time, our service, our present, and our future?

CHRISTIAN CARE FOR THE BLIND.

The Royal Normal College at Upper Norwood, and various other institutions, have taken in hand young lives that are "exiled from light," and are training and educating them, so that they need not be

> "Shut from the living while amongst the living."

But we believe the North London Home is almost the only permanent shelter for the aged Christian blind, some of whom are helpless, and in constant need of nursing. Before their affliction fell upon them, many were comparatively well off, but now they would be homeless save for the sympathy of Mr. and Mrs. Bright, who founded the institution, and the friends who brighten their existence week by week by music, reading, conversation, and walks. Accommodation is provided for eighty blind persons here, and they enjoy the advantage of a hall for Gospel services, classes, tea-meetings, concerts, lectures, and the like. Here also their work is sold from time to time. A branch for younger women in positions of great necessity has now been added, and inmates are received from any district, and from every section of Christ's Kingdom. No voting system is in operation, each case being dealt with by the committee on its own merits. When possible, the friends pay somewhat towards the support of those received, but some have no means whatever. Our Lord showed tender compassion for the sightless, taking them by the hand, and opening their eyes to behold His face. We cannot remove their affliction, but by aiding the workers who are planning their help and comfort, we may do much to reflect to these lives in shadow the light of the Master's love, till they shall see the King in His beauty.



NORTH LONDON HOME FOR THE CHRISTIAN BLIND.

EVERYBODY'S READING.

Out of the familiar sheet, "John Ploughman's Almanack," has grown a collection of proverbs which Mr. Spurgeon is now publishing, through Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, under the title of "The Salt Cellars," the aim of the book being to direct the attention of preachers and speakers to the "salt" of proverbs. Only the first volume is issued at present, but Mr. Spurgeon's comments—often as pithy as the proverbs they are expounding—are so interesting and valuable, that we shall anxiously await the conclusion of this work. The compilation must have been a labour of love, and Mr. Spurgeon even admits that he may have added

to our store of proverbs himself. We wish he had always indicated these new gems in his collection.—Probably there are no two countries with which young people ought to be better acquainted than Germany and Russia. So we are glad to welcome new and cheaper editions of "Chats about Germany" and "All the Russias" (Cassell), works intended primarily for the information of young readers, and which ought to be in all family and Sunday-school libraries.—Stories for young people are always acceptable, and often doubly so when the volumes consist of collected short stories which at this season of the year may be read, one by one, indoors or out of doors, as the weather permits or the fancy dictates. Two such volumes are "A Store of Stories," by Frances Clare, and "Sunshine and Shadow," by W. H. Davenport Adams, both published by Messrs. Skeffington, and well deserving of popularity among the readers to whom they are addressed.—The mid-summer volume of "Little Folks" (Cassell) contains three serial stories and a very large number of shorter stories, which ought to insure it a place in the luggage of every family leaving home for a country holiday. For little people it is a library in itself.—The committee of the Swansea Y.M.C.A. have just issued a new text-book and birthday calendar entitled, "The Young Man's Text-Book," in which the carefully selected texts are arranged throughout the year in the order of the Books of the Bible. The little work is tastefully got up, and is published at so moderate a price that it ought to prove a great success.—With a beauty and vigour of style all his own, the writer of "Letters from a Mystic of the Present Day" (Elliot Stock) touches on various topics of religious thought and feeling in convenient fragments which invite the busy and preoccupied to read, and thus to profitably change the current of their thoughts. In some of these pithy passages there will be suggestions and views in which the bulk of our readers will, like ourselves, be unable to concur, but on the whole this little book should yield many a quarter of an hour's happy and fruitful meditation.—From the same publisher we have received a copy of the second edition of the Rev. J. Fordyce's "Aspects of Scepticism," a work which has already done good service, and which in its revised form should prove even more useful.—Some of the hymns in the Rev. John Ellerton's "Hymns, Original and Translated," published by Messrs. Skeffington, are very beautiful, though perhaps all would not commend themselves to some of our readers. Still, so many are admirable that the collection deserves careful study.—"A Window in Thrums" (Hodder and Stoughton) is a very powerful and very Scotch story by J. M. Barrie, which want of space alone prevents us alluding to at greater length. It is by the author of "Auld Licht Idylls," and this fact alone will commend it to many of our readers.



"Changeless, yet ever changing."

THE VOICES OF THE WATERS.

It does us good sometimes to listen in quietude to the sermon of the changeless yet ever-changing sea—emblem of the infinitude and power of the Almighty, mirror of His strength, His majesty and glory. How small is human power when matched with the profundity of ocean! How frail we seem to ourselves in comparison with these mighty, incomprehensible depths; yet there is comfort in the knowledge that He who numbers the hairs of our heads treads the waves as His pathway, and holds the boundless billows within His hand. Thus the "eternal bass" to which we listen reminds us how strong is our Master, and by its very glory proves the existence of our God. Someone has called the sea a prophet of sorrows, having heard foreboding in the moaning of the waters; rather let the Christian regard it as a minstrelsy of hope, telling of that

time when there shall be no more sea, and thus no more separation, no tempest, no death, no surging, no whisper of "good-bye."

CAN OUR SUNDAY-SCHOOL TREATS BE IMPROVED?

Last summer was so wet that many a juvenile, starting forth in brave attire of white frock scarlet-sashed, or with well-starched collar and new knicker-bockers, must have felt defrauded of the country outing which is the children's annual dream. May this year amply atone to our scholars for wet grass, dripping tents, and buns and cakes that partook of



"In search of leaves, grasses, and wild flowers."

the universal dampness! "I hope you enjoyed yourselves last week," said a teacher to his boys, who had been favoured with exceptional sunshine.—"Not at all," was the reply; "and we didn't the year before!" Even among children there are misanthropic souls who will never confess to enjoyment, and who refuse to admit the exhilarating influences of a march behind the banner, crowded railway carriages, and admission to a field where the swings and cricket accessories are probably already in the possession of the muscles best able to make way for their owners to the front. Teachers of sympathetic heart and decisive hand should be in charge of toys, swings, and games. "The treat" is the scholars' day, and a programme of arrangements should anticipate the needs of all sections of juveniles, so that happiness is not the monopoly of the strong, the inventive, or those with most money to spend. Singing at intervals will refresh the younger ones. Botanically minded teachers can lead forth elder children in search of leaves, grasses, and wild flowers; those whose nerves can best stand shouts of glee will fill many a little heart with rapture by driving about a van-full, carefully renewed at intervals.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE-READING SOCIETY.

BIBLE PASSAGES TO SEPTEMBER 8.

(Bearing on the International Lessons.)

AUGUST.	MORNING.	EVENING.
12.	Jeremiah vii. 13—28.	Hosea vi., to ver. 7; vii. 13—16.
13.	Isaiah i., to ver. 17.	Psalm l., to ver. 14.
14.	Deuteronomy xxviii., to ver. 19.	Micah vi., to ver. 12
15.	Proverbs xxviii., to ver. 16.	Mark xii. 28—33; Romans viii., to ver. 7.
16.	Romans xiii.	Hebrews x., to ver. 13.
17.	Psalm li.	Hebrews x., from ver. 26.
18.	1 Samuel xv. 10—31.	1 Samuel xvi. 1—13.
19.	1 Samuel x., to ver. 11.	Ezekiel xxxiv. 11—24.
20.	2 Samuel vii., to ver. 17.	John x., to ver. 16.
21.	Judges xi. 19—29.	Joel ii., from ver. 21.
22.	Acts ii., to ver. 21.	Isaiah xi., to ver. 10.
23.	Revelation xxii., from ver. 7.	Psalm lxxviii., from ver. 56.
24.	Psalm lxxxix. 19—37.	Isaiah lv.
25.	1 Samuel xvi. 1—13.	1 Samuel xvii. 32—51.
26.	1 Timothy vi., from ver. 12.	Psalm cxviii, to ver. 14.
27.	Judges xv., from ver. 9.	2 Corinthians x.
28.	Psalm xviii., to ver. 18.	Psalm xlvi.
29.	2 Chronicles xx., to ver. 12.	2 Chronicles xx. 13—22.
30.	2 Samuel xxii., from ver. 31.	Psalms cxxiv. and cxxv.
31.	Hebrews xi., from ver. 29; xii. ver. 1.	Romans viii., from ver. 28.
SEPTEMBER.	MORNING.	EVENING.
1.	1 Samuel xvii. 32—51.	1 Samuel xx. 1—13.
2.	1 Samuel xx., from ver. 32.	Acts iv., from ver. 24.
3.	Proverbs xxvii., to ver. 19.	Proverbs xvii. 7—17.
4.	1 John iv., from ver. 7.	Ephesians iii., from ver. 8.
5.	1 Peter i., from ver. 15.	1 John iii., from ver. 10.
6.	Psalm lv., from ver. 12.	Matthew xxvi. 37—50.
7.	Psalm xxii., from ver. 16.	Hebrews ii., from ver. 9.
8.	1 Samuel xx. 1—13.	1 Samuel xxiv. 1—17.

In our January number we offered two prizes for the best set of anecdotal and other illustrations to six well-known texts. The Editor has pleasure in publishing the award, which has been made after careful consideration of the papers. The FIRST PRIZE of Three Guineas is awarded to—

MISS CONSTANCE LOW,
The Kyles, Longside, Aberdeen, N.B.

And the SECOND PRIZE of Two Guineas to—

MISS F. WORTHINGTON,
8, Vernon Street, Derby.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

List of contributions received from May 22nd, 1889, up to and including June 21st, 1889. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month:—

S. M. W., Brecon, 10s.; H. S., Wherwell, 5s.; M. J., London, W, 5s; Some Friends at Grenoble, 12s.; J. W., Camden Town, 7s. 6d.; J. J. E., Govan (twentieth donation), 5s.; I. M. A., 10s.; Captain Mathison, Richmond, £1; A Wellwisher, Southampton, 5s.

Dr. Barnardo asks us to acknowledge 5s. from "Mary" for the funds of the Homes.





[*Drawn by* MARY L. GOW, R.I.

OLD LETTERS.

See p. 855.

HOW GOD'S HOUSE GREW.



ST. SEPULCHRE'S CHURCH, CAMBRIDGE.

ARCHITECTURE is history without an alphabet and without a voice. It is a dumb record of human vicissitudes, of conscious needs, and of pious feelings. There is, accordingly, the necessity of an interpretation, and it must be a curious mixture of prose and verse, of limitations and aspirations. The simple types lead to the more complex, and the early and the late mingle together so curiously that we may easily miss the significance of the former whilst overrating that of the latter. But when we have recognised growth as the law of human life, we find no difficulty in applying it to architecture as to any other form of civilisation, to the Christian temple as well as to the dwelling-house.

The growth of God's House is but a small chapter in architecture, but it is nevertheless full of vivid interest. It suggests self-sacrifice, persecution, and martyrdom. There is an intense personal element in it that lights up its record with peculiar glory, but we cannot identify the persons, and we have to be content with their work. The modern English church has distinctive features, and there is a history of them all. The story is long and involved, and it cannot be more than briefly sketched in these pages.

The word itself is a history. Etymology is not always a safe guide, but of the many names for God's House, descriptive of sites and conditions, it is singular that the "Church" remains, to attest primitive form and history. The word means a circle, or round house. There were round churches before the Crusades, and before the eyes of Englishmen had rested on the Church of the Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and before Charlemagne had designed his church at Aix-la-Chapelle. It may still be true that the knowledge gained by the Crusades led to the revival of round churches, such as the one built at Cambridge, shown in our engraving. The edifices constructed by the Knights Templars in London, at Baldock in Herefordshire, and Little Maplestead in Essex, were also circular. The term *Church* continued in use, however, long after round churches had ceased to be common.

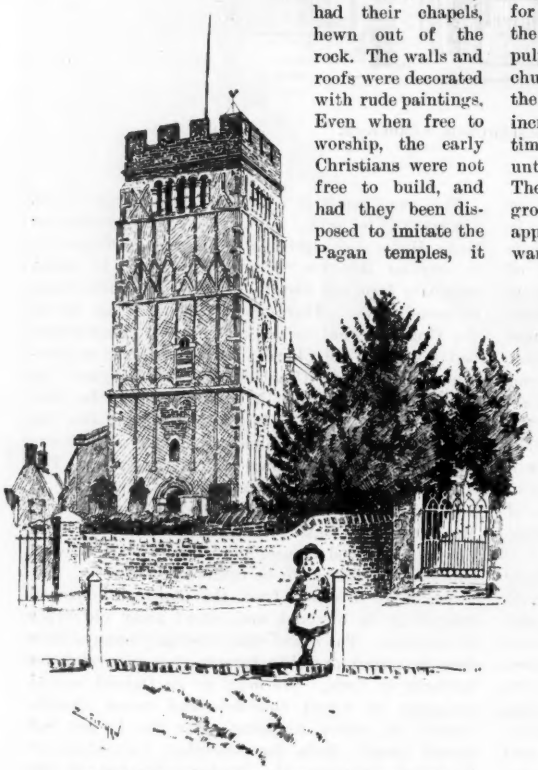
Successive invasions from the Continent changed everything in England, and swept away old types of churches. The round ones especially seem to have been destroyed, probably because they were used for barracks or forts. We must go to Ireland to find examples of round churches and round church-towers, the latter lingering after the former had passed away. Bede has described two kinds of Christian churches—the timber churches of the

Scots and the stone churches of England. There had been a time, he said, when British churches were of wood, and the one built by Ninyas was called *candida casa*, or White-church, from its novelty and colour. The blending of the two distinctive styles, timber and stone, which was needed, was seen in the British churches immediately before as well as after the Norman invasion. Our church architecture, in fact, has original British features, and has not been wholly derived, as some would have us believe, from Italy and the far East. The influence of national ideas may be distinctly traced.



ST. KEVIN'S CHAPEL, GLENDALOUGH, IRELAND.

The primitive Christians at first worshipped in their own houses. At Troas, St. Paul preached to the faithful "in an upper chamber" (Acts xx. 8), and in Rome, in "his own hired house." Persecution drove the Christians into secret assemblies and to the catacombs. They literally lived, as the writer to the Hebrews said the faithful had been compelled to do, "in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth" (Epistle to the Hebrews xi. 38). In the catacombs they had their chapels, hewn out of the rock. The walls and roofs were decorated with rude paintings. Even when free to worship, the early Christians were not free to build, and had they been disposed to imitate the Pagan temples, it was a distinct offence to do so. In times of persecution the Christians were compelled to work in the restoration of the temples they abhorred.



EARL'S BARTON CHURCH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Very humble and very primitive was the first Christian church. Lübke suggests that it grew out of the large rooms in their own houses, where the Christians worshipped in times of repression. The single room, oblong, and like a nave, was sufficient for the purpose, with a passage down the centre, at the termination of which was the reading-desk or pulpit. The flat ceiling of the earliest Christian churches would almost seem to be a reminiscence of the "upper chamber." As the size of churches increased, it was found convenient to expose the timbers upholding the roof, which remained flat until Pointed architecture brought about a change. The aisles are a record of the first stage in the growth of the Church, and probably made their appearance at an early date, and when light was wanted in the centre of the building, without penetrating its sides with openings through which the curious might gaze and the evil mock. Externally and internally, the walls of nearly all the older Christian churches in this country have traces of a commingling of the stone and timber styles, as was the case elsewhere. The adornment of the west front seems to mark a stage at which building had commenced along the line from west to east. The eastern window was an eye of glory, and so the western front became a beautiful gateway.

The semicircular apse was never a marked feature in God's House in Britain. When the round church was abandoned for the oblong, the chancel was made oblong also, or square. In one or two instances the semicircular chancel was introduced, but had to be removed in deference to British feeling. The British chancel is usually square or quadrangular, and so we find it in the early Christian churches in Ireland, notably in St. Kevin's Chapel. It has been accordingly suggested that the square chancel is earlier than the apse. Be that as it may, the explanation

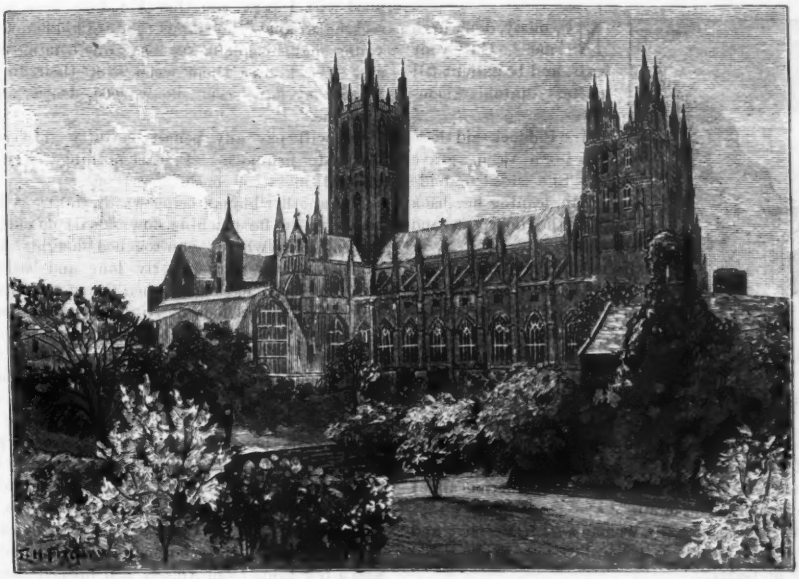
of our own historical form would seem to be this —that even in the early Irish Christian buildings that were circular externally, the interior was quadrangular. This heavy form of building might do very well in small churches, in the days before cement, but it did not suit large structures; and so we find the earliest chancels oblong or square in their forms. In the larger timber churches the chancel was quadrangular, because it had been so in the small churches that succeeded the round churches without any chancel at all, and because square building was easier with wood than round.

The simplicity of this early type has continued to our own time, though we do not in other respects imitate our early church builders. They always covered the chancel with slabs of roofing stone, though timber and lead were employed in roofing the other parts. There is a suggestion of antiquity in this custom which is worthy of attention. In many village churches stone roofing is still the rule. The dividing lattice-work, or cancel-work, from which the name of the east end is derived, has been long discontinued. The term chancel seems to have been first employed at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

An ornamented west front preceded the tower, which has a curious history. The use of bells to call people to worship implies confidence, safety, external recognition. It will be remembered that only of recent years have the Christians of Bulgaria used bells. Some early church towers were circular and partly fortified. The Irish round towers, some of which remain, were all associated with Christian buildings, and their strength has preserved them from decay. The doors were a considerable height above the ground, and there were storeys for the bells and for defence. They were of perfectly plain workmanship. On the Continent are several examples of the semi-fortified church tower. It is exceedingly probable that the early Christians in Ireland and Britain needed such towers to protect their churches from the rage of the Pagans, against whose rites and tenets they protested.

The tendency to discover the origin of everything in Rome, or outside Britain, is here very marked. The Christian churches in England which the Saxons had built after their conversion, as Scott points out in his "Mediæval Architecture," had "tall, narrow towers, unbroken or nearly so, in their vertical outline." He adds, a little rashly: "Such towers are clearly imitations of the Italian campanile, though in a rude form." But there were towers in the British churches, thin as well as round, and in the stone as well as the wooden churches, before the Saxons came. The Saxons derived their Christianity from the Britons in the main, and there can be little doubt that they copied, and perhaps improved upon, their church architecture. Scott proceeds to make note of a difference between Italian and Saxon towers that is of singular importance. The Saxon church towers, he says, "occasionally have oblique strips as well as the vertical pillars and horizontal strings, which suggest the idea of an imitation of timber work."

This imitation work is plainly visible in the broader and later tower of Earl's Barton, as may be distinctly seen in our illustration. It points to one of two things: (1) to the invention of the square tower by the Christians of the Saxon period, in the



CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

ninth or tenth century; or (2) to their imitation of a British wooden type, which had already left behind the fortified type, and was passing into the campanile proper.

The entire detachment of the Scandinavian *klock-stapel* (bells were formerly called clocks, as they were time-tellers), as it can still be seen in Norway, is probably the type with which the Saxons were familiar until they came to Britain. It is distinctly separate from the church, by no means lofty, and it in no way suggests a modern church tower, tall or otherwise. The towers Scott speaks of were therefore more likely to be of British suggestion than of Saxon introduction.

The square church-tower seems as clearly of British origin as is the chancel, though it has gone through more changes of form. With heavier bells it has increased in breadth, and breadth has suggested more ornamentation. Bells came into use in the sixth century. The date of their first use in Britain is doubtful, but they seem to have been almost coeval with Christianity in these islands.

The spire came to us with the Normans. It suggests a boldness on the part of the builder that comes of confidence in his art. It indicates prosperity and civilisation. There is an air of richness in its challenge that reveals more complex emotions. It is a summons addressed to a people who have surrendered to a new power.

God's church and man's castle divided between them the architectural skill of the centuries between the seventh and the fourteenth. There were as yet no burghers' halls, no civic public buildings. As Dean Milman says: "The castle was more for strength than for splendour. Architecture had the Church and the Church alone, and her adjacent buildings, on which to lavish all her skill, and to expend the inexhaustible treasures poured at her feet."

Our splendid cathedrals arose during this burst of energy, genius, and wealth. Canterbury Cathedral was amongst the earliest of them. But the humbler types of the smaller places still remain with us. The village church has still, as George Herbert quaintly hymns,

> "A fine aspéct and fit array,
> Neither too mean nor yet too gay,"

to stand for us as an illustration of the growth and the history of God's House in England.

E. G.

THE LOVE-DREAM OF GATTY FENNING.

BY SARAH DOUDNEY, AUTHOR OF "MISS WILLOWBURN'S OFFER," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

"THOR THE THUNDERER."



"NO, missy, don't urge me. Go your ways, and be patient till matters unfold themselves."

Mrs. Piddock said these words in a deep, grave voice. She stood outside her cabin, leaning her back against the doorpost, and facing Gatty.

"I won't leave you in peace till you have told me the rhymes," cried the girl vehemently. "Don't pretend to have forgotten them—people never do forget such things."

"It 's better that they should be forgotten, missy."

"No, no, no. Mrs. Piddock, if you won't tell me, you are unkind and ungrateful. I have done all I could for you, and have stood up for you against your enemies. Just do this one thing for me, and I will never tease you again."

A flush spread over the woman's swarthy face, and there was a pitying look in her dark eyes as she gazed intently at Gatty.

"Missy," she said gravely, "I come of a race that never forgets a kindness, and you and yours have done me many a good turn. And it 's because of the good-will I bear you that I'd fain keep you from seeking to know the things that are hidden. I've seen young maids eager to see what was coming to them; and I've known them weep over their impatience when they *have* seen. Be warned, dearie, and don't urge me."

"I will pay any penalty," Gatty answered, with obstinate firmness. "I fear nothing. Now speak, and tell me all at once."

Not another human being was in sight. All around them lay the far-reaching downs, with no entire track traceable anywhere; sun-touched heights and soft green hollows were utterly lone and still. The shadows had lengthened when Gatty came hastening homeward with a look of triumph on her face.

Days went and came; but no one guessed that the girl had a wild plan in her mind. People were beginning to talk about the young lady at the White House, and many said that she would be mistress there one day. Gatty appeared to pay little heed to this gossip, but Mercy was indignant when the rumours reached her ears. Gibbon Fenning said nothing; he seemed to stand still, and watch and wait.

Although Warren had promised that his mother should fix a day for Gatty's visit, the invitation did not come. Mrs. Mainsborough was tired of the girl, and a few hints from Angela had opened her eyes to poor Gatty's absurdity.

She was far too wise to tell her son that the child had lost her heart to him. There were touches of romantic feeling in Warren's nature which sometimes gave her uneasiness. He was not as thoroughly worldly as she wished him to be. At first she had feared that he would be too lazy a lover to win the much-coveted prize; but his quiet attentions seemed to please Miss Warburton, and the affair was making steady progress. Not on any account would she disturb his mind at such a critical time. And when he asked her to invite Gatty to dinner she made excuses with perfect composure.

"The poor girl is rather too much for my nerves, Warren," she said. "As she grows older her defects become more noticeable. As a child she was charming and docile, but I am afraid she has developed a temper."

"Well, mother, you don't mean to drop her altogether?"

"No, not altogether. But just at present," replied Mrs. Mainsborough, in her gentlest voice, "I don't feel equal to her. The least thing brings on my old headache."

"After having made a pet of Gatty, you can't possibly desert her. It would be too bad."

Warren had the masculine sense of justice which some women find so troublesome. Mrs. Mainsborough found it troublesome at this moment, but she made an effort, and preserved an outward calm.

"I don't intend to desert her," she said, uttering a deliberate untruth. "I only want to put her off for a little while. Her uncle ought to send her away, and let her see the world."

"Gatty will not go away." Warren spoke with an air of deep concern. "She clings quite passionately to her home. I really don't see what is to be done with her."

"Does it matter to us what is done with her?" asked his mother, her patience giving way at last.

"Well, yes, I think it does. We have been her intimate friends, and some sort of responsibility attaches to every close friendship."

"I don't see what I am to do," said Mrs. Mainsborough wearily. "If she comes here she will make us all uncomfortable, and cast vicious looks at Angela. I really cannot bear it, Warren."

"It is only her shyness that makes her scowl at Angela," replied Warren, bent on making excuses for the girl.

"I don't know what it is. She is quite beyond my comprehension. I am not strong enough to cope with difficult young people; pray don't worry me any more," entreated Mrs. Mainsborough, sinking back in her chair with a sigh.

Warren was reduced to silence, but he had an uneasy feeling that Gatty was not well used. Yet there was nothing to be done, and he could not talk about her to Miss Warburton. Angela was very gentle and calm, but he felt instinctively that she could only sympathise with the people of her own set, and not too deeply with them.

At Barrow Farm everyone was in bed and asleep when the clocks struck ten at night. About a week after her visit to Mrs. Piddock, Gatty went up-stairs to rest at the usual time, and sat in her room alone till every sound in the house was hushed.

All through that week she had been so cheerful that Mr. Fenning and Mercy were comforted. People were still talking about Warren's supposed engagement, but if this gossip came to Gatty's ears, it did not seem to affect her at all. She went her own way, and her uncle almost fancied that she had some secret reason for her improved spirits.

No one suspected what that reason was. No one believed her capable of the act of mad folly that she was about to commit. The farmer slept peacefully in his room at the other end of the corridor; Mercy's slumbers were unbroken in her attic overhead. The old clock at the foot of the stairs gave its customary groan of warning, and struck eleven. And then, after waiting a few minutes, Gatty began to stir.

She put on a close-fitting cap of crimson velvet that she had worn in the winter, wrapped herself in a knitted woollen shawl, and softly unclosed her door.

All was quiet in the corridor. Bright moonshine streamed in through the window on the landing, and Gatty stole down-stairs in the cold light that penetrated even into the hall below.

She gave a guilty start at the sight of her uncle's overcoat hanging on its accustomed peg, and the tall old clock in its oaken case ticked louder than ever clock had ticked before. She was not used to the strange aspect which familiar things always assume at night, and her nerves were scarcely equal to the strain. Yet she never faltered for an instant—never felt tempted to abandon her purpose and steal back up those moonlit stairs to her own comfortable room.

When she had unbolted the hall door her fears began to subside. The night air, sweet with the perfume of the quiet earth, revived her and cleared her brain. The door was thick and heavy, but she closed it noiselessly, knowing that it could be unlatched from the outside.

Once out of doors, alone in the moonlight, her resolution gained strength, and she hastened on between the hedgerows at the top of her speed. It was a very calm night; the sheep were in the fold, the cattle in the pen, and not a single human being was astir.

Just at the end of the lane that led to the farm, she paused to take breath. Was she growing bolder? If so, her boldness was of that fictitious kind which comes of nerves too highly strung. Whether her courage would have sustained her till she had really carried out her purpose was never known. Gatty was not destined to do the foolish thing that she had meant to do that night.

"Gatty, my child," said a man's quiet voice; and someone stepped out of the shadow of the hedge.

If he had been one whit less quiet—if the voice had not been perfectly familiar, Gatty would have screamed loudly. As it was, she gave a suppressed cry and staggered back a few paces, but Bennet Vardye took her hand and gently drew it through his arm.

"I will take you home, Gatty," he said.

Surprise had almost deprived her of the power of speech. He had actually begun to lead her homeward

when she roused herself suddenly, and tried to get free.

"Let me go," she cried tremulously. "I am safe enough; no one will do me any harm."

"You are doing yourself harm." His tone was very calm and firm. "My dear Gatty, I know why you came out to-night, and I am here to stop you."

"You know?" She looked up at him incredulously. "It is impossible that you should know."

"Mrs. Piddock has told me all," he answered.

"She is the basest of traitors!" Gatty's whole frame shook with passion. "And we have been her friends—her best friends. If it hadn't been for us she would have been hunted away from these parts."

"It was because she was grateful for your kindness that she made her confession, Gatty. There is more good in her nature than you know of. The soul in her has awakened."

His manner was so solemn that the girl's angry passion was stilled.

"Do you think that I can remain unmoved when a Christian girl behaves like a heathen?" He went on—"Have you no God to go to, that you must needs call on Thor the Thunderer? Is our Lord's arm shortened that He cannot save?"

"It is not that," she murmured, ashamed. "I want to know whether—whether I shall ever have the desire of my heart."

"You must wait, Gatty. And you may be very sure that Thor cannot tell you. Why, you foolish child, there is not a country girl in this valley who is silly enough to believe in Thor. It is well for you that only two persons know of your folly. What would they say at White House if this thing came to their ears?"

He felt the start she gave.

"Oh, Mr. Vardye, they must never, never know!" she whispered, pressing his arm entreatingly.

"Never, Gatty. And you must never, never be so absurd and wicked again. Depend upon it, if you steal out again at night somebody will hear of it, and it will get to the Mainsboroughs' ears. Will you promise, child, to think no more of Thor the Thunderer?"

Her answer came, low but distinct—

"I do promise."

"There is something else that I want to say, but I don't require any more promises: Those who trust in God do not need to fly to strange gods. They find Him a very present help in trouble."

By this time they had reached the garden gate. Gatty did not say good-night, but gave him her hand in silence. He watched her gliding up the path, and saw her unclose the door and disappear into the house. And even then he stood watching, until he caught the gleam of a candle from a window up-stairs, and knew that she was safe in her own room once more.

After all, Gatty was not sorry to find herself there. The excitement of her attempt had exhausted her, and she felt thoroughly tired and subdued—too tired to lie awake long. She fell asleep behind her dimity curtains, and was still sleeping when Mercy came to her in the morning.

CHAPTER XI.

A DARK NIGHT.

GIBBON FENNING and the curate met, and had a long talk, but no one at Barrow Farm knew anything about that important conversation.

If the farmer had been told of Gatty's midnight expedition, he gave no sign of knowing her secret. It was a relief to the girl that Bennet Vardye kept away from the farm, and she was glad to hear that he had gone up to London for a few days. Now that the excitement was past she felt heartily ashamed of her mad freak, and went about the house with a quietness that was new.

The sunshiny calm of September did not last till the end of the month. There was a sudden and unexpected change in the weather, and such a heavy downpour of rain as had not been known for a long time. Even Gatty, hardy as she was, had to content herself with indoor occupations. Day after day the rain fell, and the lane leading to the high road became a quagmire. Nothing was seen of Warren and Miss Warburton; their walks were given up, and no one brought any news from White House.

As there was nothing to irritate her, Gatty gradually became more tranquil, but her life was intolerably dull and tame. She had talked to Mercy on the subject nearest her heart until there was nothing left to say. Out of doors there were leaden skies and flooded fields; indoors there were the books that she had read over and over again, the music that she could not play correctly, the fancy-work that was of little use to anyone. She settled down into a dull calm which was only the semblance of true peace, and might be broken up at any moment.

One day she awoke to see a ray of sunshine creeping into her room. It was very pale and watery sunshine, but it seemed like a message of hope.

No rain fell that day, and on the next the sun shone out gloriously over the drenched earth.

Gatty stood at the window of the breakfast-room, and watched her uncle driving away to Petersfield railway station. He was going up to London for a couple of days on business, he had said. She was not very much interested in his business, but his going made a slight break in the monotony of her existence. Moreover, he had promised to bring home some new books, and any pretty thing that he thought suitable for a present.

As she stood there, looking out at the glistening bushes and hedges, she was seized with an intense longing to go out and breathe the fresh air. She wanted to be abroad in this newly washed world, and had no fear of the wet ground. It was impossible to stay in the house when everything outside was sparkling under a glorious sun.

The raised path running along the margin of the field was the best way to take. It had been constructed of stones for the convenience of the farmer and his neighbours, and one could traverse it without any danger of clogging one's boots, even after a fall of rain. So this was the route which Gatty chose, and went forth booted in rustic fashion, and wearing her red cap on her dark hair.

She meant to follow the path till she came to the bridge, and then cross over the Meon, and saunter on till she was within sight of Warren's lodge-gate. It seemed an age since she had been a welcome guest at the White House; her birthday was only a bright memory now. She would not go in and risk a cold reception.

There had been high winds as well as heavy rains, and the hedges had been despoiled early. But sparrows twittered cheerfully, and rich clusters of coloured leaves invited her to stop and gather them. She went on, anxious to gain her favourite haunt, and in a little while the noise of flowing water met her ears.

The Meon had changed its tone. Swollen with the rains, it rushed on with a deep, sullen roar that sounded angrily in the stillness. She reached the end of the path, and then stood still in amazement and dismay.



"Gatty stole down-stairs in the cold light."—*p.* 807.

The bridge was gone; it had been swept away by the swollen tide that was now foaming between her and the opposite bank.

Gatty turned pale, and a sudden dread smote her heart. To her morbid fancy the destruction of the bridge appeared an evil omen. They were gone—those old foot-worn planks on which she had stood with Warren by her side; the handrail, studded here

and there with tufts of moss, was gone too. Not a vestige remained.

It was like the breaking of the last link between Warren and herself. The river, rushing swiftly between his home and hers, was a type of lifelong separation.

Slowly and sadly she retraced her steps along the field-path, without bestowing a glance at the wet autumn foliage. Mercy, who was standing in the porch, saw her returning with a weary look on her face.

"Miss Gatty," she cried cheerfully, "there's such luck as you never knew! Four coal-black kittens were found in the barn this morning—not a speck of white on one of 'em! Just you come and look, my dear; it'll do you a heap o' good to see 'em."

The great barn had been often used as a play-house by Gatty in her childhood. She liked the place to this day, and as she walked across the farm-yard with Mercy some of the pleasant old feelings came back. The fowls were clucking about, and the ducks swam and dived contentedly in the brimming pond. The air, sweet and cold, blew freshly from the wet meadows. Cook, with her apron full of herbs just gathered, was bending over the nest of straw where the kittens lay.

Gatty looked down at the tiny black things, and listened to the delighted exclamations of the women in silence. And then she mentioned that the bridge was gone; but the news made very little impression upon them.

"'Twas a rotten old thing, and hardly safe," said Mercy. "Master 'll soon put up a new one."

But even the black kittens had no power to win Gatty back to good spirits; and as the day wore on she was tired and languid enough to betake herself to the old parlour sofa.

When Mercy brought in the tea-tray she was surprised to find her young mistress lying down, and asked anxiously if she were ill. But Gatty showed no signs of illness. She sat up, insisted that Mercy should stay with her, and drank her tea with some show of cheerfulness.

It was a black, moonless night. When the hall door was bolted, and the windows were shuttered, and the carter had brought in the keys of the stables and outhouses, Gatty began to wish that Uncle Gibbon had not gone away.

The air was keen and cold—colder than it generally is at the close of September. She shivered a little as she drew her uncle's easy-chair to the fireside, and sat looking into the glowing coals with thoughtful eyes.

She was wondering why her life should have changed so sadly. Why could not things have gone on in the old pleasant way? Surely if God had been "the very present help" that Bennet Vardye believed Him to be, He would have sent Angela away from White House, and brought Warren to Gatty's side.

It is always so hard for the young to see that the Master must rule; and that He loves them too well to let them manage their lives in their own impulsive way. Years must pass before they learn the wonderful truth that a wish unfulfilled is a misery escaped, and the love that grants is never deeper nor more tender than the love that denies.

It was a long, dreary evening. They adhered to old-fashioned rules at the farm, and Gatty's supper was brought in at eight o'clock. At nine she was not sleepy enough to go up-stairs, and ten still found her sitting in her fireside chair. Cook had gone to bed early with a toothache, and Mercy came into the parlour to see what her charge was doing.

"Miss Gatty dear, you do look woeful tired," she said.

"Do I?" Gatty lifted her head languidly. "Well, I'll go to my room at once, Mercy; but somehow I am feeling very wakeful."

"Oh, that won't last, my dear. You've been brooding here alone too long, that's all."

"I wish my uncle were at home," said Gatty, getting up slowly from her chair, and leaning against the chimney-piece.

"Now you're thinking that it's lonesome of us three women to be left in the house by ourselves!" cried Mercy, with good-humoured scorn. "Why, Miss Gatty, I'm a match for half a dozen robbers. There's nobody less timorsome than I be! If any o' them tramps was to come—— Oh lor! what's that?"

"That" was a sharp knock at the hall door.

"Perhaps my uncle has come back, after all," said Gatty hopefully. She was pale, but the maid was the more frightened of the two.

"No, no; master said for certain he should stay till to-morrow, and he ain't the man to change," Mercy answered in a trembling tone.

The knock was repeated.

"We must know who it is," said Gatty.

Together they went to the door, and withdrew the bolts. Then Mercy opened it an inch, and put her lips to the crevice.

"Who's there?" she demanded valiantly.

"Don't be afraid of me, Mercy," responded a familiar voice. "I'm not a thief, and I mean no mischief."

"Goodness me, it's Mr. Mainsborough!" exclaimed the good woman, drawing a deep breath of relief.

The door was thrown open in a moment, and Warren stepped into the lighted parlour, laughing at the two anxious faces.

"Nothing is the matter, Gatty," he said reassuringly. "Just now my horse fell lame, that's all. He stumbled so badly that he nearly threw me, so I got off, and led him down your lane to the gate. Can I put him into your stable till to-morrow morning?"

"Of course you can," she replied readily. "Mercy will get a lantern and light you to the stables. Don't forget the keys, Mercy."

While the servant conducted Warren and his horse across the dark farm-yard, Gatty stood waiting by the fire with a throbbing heart. She was so glad of this unexpected visit; the black kittens had certainly brought good luck. And then she bethought her of some home-made cherry cordial, and set it quickly on the table for Warren's refreshment.

"Have you come from the railway station?" she asked when he entered the parlour again.

"Yes; I rode to Petersfield to catch an early train to London this morning, and left my horse at the inn

there," he answered. "What a cold night it is, and as black as pitch! Is that the old cherry stuff on the table? Thanks, Gatty; you are very considerate."

He lifted the glass of cordial to his lips with a smile and a little bow. She returned the smile brightly.

"Now you are looking like the Gatty of old days," he said. "You have wrapped yourself in an impenetrable mantle of haughty reserve, as the novelists say. Don't be haughty any more, Gatty; it doesn't suit you."

"I wish we could bring back old days," she answered, with a little sigh.

"Well, it is very easily done. I shall come here next week, and take you home to lunch with my mother. She will be alone, and you know how she hates solitude."

"Oh, is Miss Warburton going away?"

The girl asked the question with such a light of gladness in her face, that he observed it.

"Yes, she is going to-morrow. You don't take kindly to her, do you?" he said, rather gravely.

"No. There's an old saying that people with golden hair are false and cold."

"That is as silly as old sayings usually are. Golden hair is very pretty, and in Miss Warburton's case it belongs to a very sweet girl."

"Sweet? Do *you* call her sweet?"

The hot blood rushed into her cheeks, and she stood fronting him with dilated eyes.

"Yes, Gatty, and I hope you will learn to think her so, too. I want you to like her, because she has promised to be my wife very soon."

There was a dead silence, and for the space of a lightning-flash their glances met. In her white, tragic face he read enough to tell him the whole truth at last. And then he hated himself for having been so blind, and felt an outgoing of kind feeling to the poor motherless girl who had made this terrible mistake. What could he do to make amends for the blow that he had just inflicted? He wanted to put his honest sympathy into suitable words; but he was afraid of hurting her by some clumsy expression. And yet he *must* speak; the silence was too dreadful to be borne any longer.

"We must always be friends, Gatty," he said. "I wish you were my own sister; I should like to have had a sister just like you. You—you will feel that you can turn to me when you want a brother's aid."

"I shall never turn to you. If I ever need aid I will not take it from your hands."

An angry light flashed from her eyes again as she spoke. He saw that it was useless to try to make peace just then, and yet he lingered.

"Gatty," he said, in real distress, "will you not give me one kind word?"

"You don't need any kind words from me," she answered passionately. "Go away; it's getting late, and I want to be alone."

He could say no more; but his heart was bitterly sorrowful as he went out of her presence into the dark night.

CHAPTER XII.

SUSPENSE.

THE hall door closed behind Warren, and Gatty stood just where he had left her. She hardly knew what she felt. Wild dreams of going away to some distant spot, and hiding herself from everyone, flitted across her brain. But that was impossible; she must stay in this dull house till her uncle returned. And after his return, some days must pass before she could depart. At any moment there was the possibility of seeing Warren again while she remained at the farm. Oh, if he could only be swept out of her path for ever!

Swept out of her path—swept away! With this thought came a swift remembrance of the swollen river. Ah! no one had told him that the bridge was gone, and in the darkness he would step from the bank into the foaming water. Did she really wish him to perish? No; Gatty did not wish that, even in her wildest moment. He could not have got across the field yet; there was time to run after him and save him.

She made a step towards the door, and then the rush of the river seemed to sound in her ears, and a mist rose before her sight. The strain had been too great. She tried to stagger on, and fell senseless on the floor.

Mercy, who had gone to sit by the kitchen fire with great content, confessed afterwards that she had dropped into a little doze. She did not hear the shutting of the hall door, for the kitchen was divided by a long passage from the front of the house, and sounds did not travel very quickly from the front to the back. But she woke suddenly, and with a great start, conscious that she had gone to sleep in the wrong place; and then she sat up, shook herself, and hastened to the parlour.

The lamp was still burning on the table, and Mercy's first thought was that Gatty had gone up-stairs, forgetting to put it out. Then she discovered a heap of something dark upon the floor, and bent over it with a thrill of terrible alarm. It was Gatty, lying face downward, in a dead swoon.

When the girl came to her senses she was being slowly carried up-stairs by the two servants. Cook had been roused by Mercy's call for help, and together the women raised her from the ground and took her up to her own chamber. And there Mercy sat with her through the long hours of that memorable night.

Lying on her bed in utter prostration of mind and body, Gatty went slowly over her interview with Warren, and came at last back to the very moment when she had lost consciousness. Had she succeeded in warning him? She knew that she had made haste to give a warning just as her strength began to fail. Did she open the hall door and call after him? She must know. "Mercy," she said, breaking the silence in a weak voice, "where did you find me lying?"

"Oh, miss, don't begin talking," whispered the anxious woman by the bedside. "Try to get a little sleep, my dear."

"Tell me where you found me," the girl insisted.

"Well, Miss Gatty, you were on the parlour floor.

You must have dropped down in a faint after *he* left you," said Mercy, with some reluctance.

"I remember now!" Gatty's voice grew suddenly sharp. "He shut the door and I stood thinking—thinking till a darkness came over me, and I seemed to fall into space! No one told him; oh, Mercy, no one told him!"

"Lie quiet, do, my love," pleaded the maid, in sore distress. "You 're wandering a bit, I 'm afraid."

"No, no, no; my head is clear enough now. No one told him."

"Told him what, miss? There 's something on your mind. What was he to be told?"

"That the bridge was gone!" Gatty brought out the words with a supreme effort, and fainted again.

Mercy used to say afterwards that this was the longest night she had ever spent in her life. The morning came at last, and in the first grey of the dawn Betsy ran down-stairs to meet the farm-labourers. The carter was despatched for the doctor at once.

"And call at the curate's lodgings on your way back," Betsy added. "Mercy wants to see him."

Gatty lay on her bed in mute anguish, while the light slowly brightened and widened. By-and-bye the old farm sounds began to creep into her silent room. She could hear the creak of a waggon in the lane, the voices of the men as they came and went, the whirr and flutter of the pigeons descending in a flock to be fed. And she waited, consumed by that terrible torture of suspense which is almost more than human strength can bear.

Mercy, who was not by any means a dull woman, knew much that was passing in her mind. She, too, was counting the minutes till help should come.

The curate was the first to arrive. And then, while Betsy took her place at the bedside, Mercy stole down-stairs and told him all.

"I don't know what passed between Mr. Mainsborough and my poor young mistress last night," she said. "I only know that when she came to herself she cried out that she had not told him something. Oh, sir, the bridge was swept away, and she let him go without warning him. And she don't know now—and I don't know—whether he 's alive or drowned!"

"I will soon settle the question."

That was Bennet Vardye's reply, and he was not the man to let the grass grow under his feet.

He went to the stables and saddled the farmer's stout cob with his own hands. And Mercy, who had returned to her post upstairs, looked out of the window and saw him ride away. She knew well enough which road he had taken.

It was still so early that the lodge gate of White House was fast closed. But the lodge-keeper bestirred herself when a handful of pebbles rattled against her window. She came out of her pepper-box dwelling in haste, and with a shawl wrapped round her head and shoulders. Her face, visible through the bars of the gate, was as cloudy as ill-temper could make it; but it cleared a little when she saw the curate.

"Sorry to disturb you so early," said Bennet. "Did Mr. Mainsborough come home last night?"

"Yes, sir; he got here between eleven and twelve. His horse fell lame, and he left it at Barrow Farm."

"Thank you," said Bennet briefly.

He turned the cob's head and galloped back at a pace which astonished the sober animal he bestrode. The woman unfastened the gate, and stood looking after him in wonder.

The curate went splashing along the miry lanes as if he were riding for a wager; and Gatty lay on her bed listening, with a sick heart, for the sound of hoofs. Mercy had told her that Mr. Vardye would bring tidings from White House.

Oh, how long the time seemed! Gatty felt a secret conviction that she was going to be ill, but her resolute will put off illness till she had heard the news she waited for. Only let her know whether *he* was living or dead, and then she would give herself up to this sickness which had been growing on her for days.

Meanwhile, Mercy stood with her face pressed to the window, watching for the return of the faithful messenger. Her glance took in the narrow path that bordered the little field, and the golden leaves in the hedges. She could see, too, the strip of woodland that marked the limit of the field and hid the river from sight. Had *he* gone that way in the darkness last night? And had he fought for his life in the cold water rushing behind that screen of trees?

To Mercy, as well as to her mistress, the suspense was becoming intolerable. Once, when she turned from the window for a moment, she caught a glimpse of herself in the glass, and started at the sight of the haggard, white-faced woman reflected there. But in the next instant she forgot herself altogether, and thought only of the unhappy girl on the bed.

Just then the hoofs sounded in the lane. Thud, thud, thud on the soft ground, they came nearer and nearer every moment. Mercy flew to the window again.

It was the curate; and when he came within sight of the house he took off his shabby felt hat and waved it joyously. With a smothered cry of thankfulness she turned again to the bed. But there was no need to tell Gatty; the girl was standing behind her, and had seen Bennet's gesture.

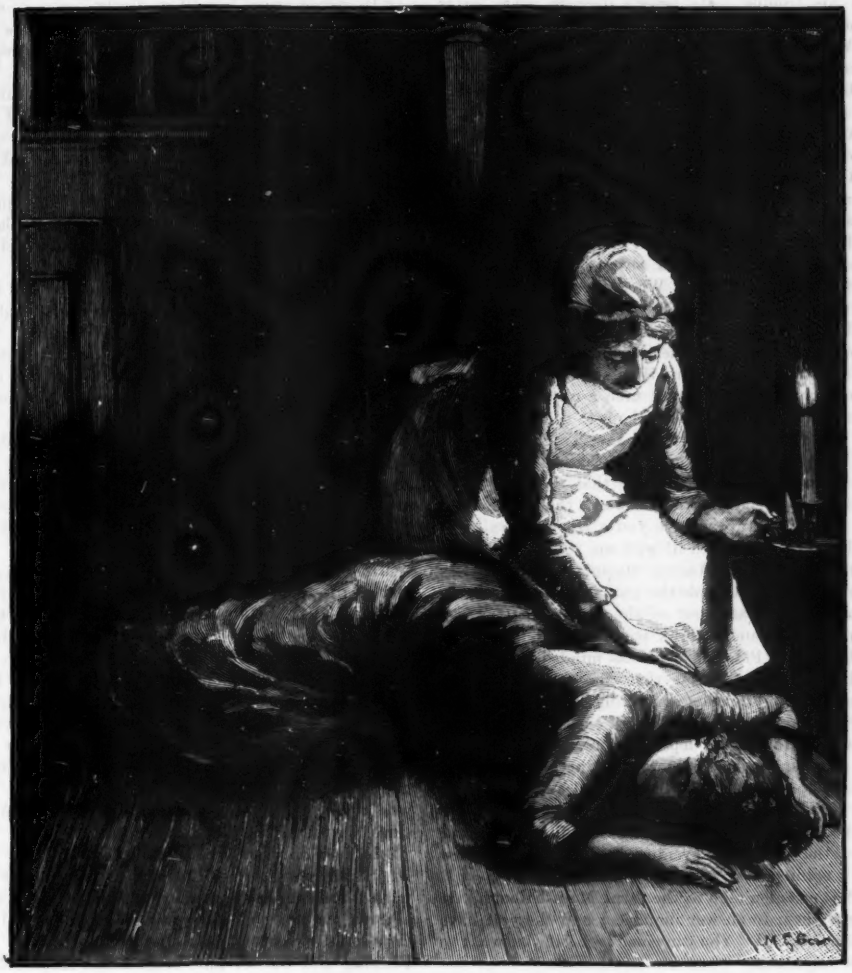
"It 's all right, Miss Gatty darling. Lie down, and be at peace," cried Mercy, leading her back to the bed with trembling hands.

"Yes, it 's all right." The words were sighed out from Gatty's white lips, and then her eyes closed, and she lay quite still.

Later in the day it was known among the neighbours that Gatty Fenning was seriously ill. The doctor had paid his visit, and had gone away with a grave face, saying that he would look in again in the evening. Everyone at the farm was longing for the master's return.

It was a sad home-coming for Gibbon Fenning. When he arrived the doctor had just paid his second visit, and Gatty was delirious.

The long day, which had passed away so wearily to the dwellers in the farm-house, had been a day of triumph for the Mainsboroughs. Warren had gone up to London to meet Lord Silverthorpe, and formally ask him for the hand of Miss Warburton. He had



"It was Gatty, lying in a dead swoon."—*p.* 811.

returned, not without some elation, as Angela's recognised lover; and even that depressing interview with Gatty was almost forgotten in his mother's joy.

Angela, too, had met him with more outward show of affection than she had before displayed. He was late, and she manifested her anxiety very prettily. Her delicate face had flushed when she greeted him, and her eyes had been eloquent. Surely his lot was an enviable one!

CHAPTER XIII.

VANISHED.

Gatty had been ill for several days before the news came to Warren's ears.

He had taken Miss Warburton up to town, where her guardian met her; and Lord Silverthorpe had asked him to come down to his place in Woldshire for October. They were going to Woldshire because the north was too bleak for Angela. Warren looked at his betrothed, and her glance seconded the Earl's invitation. He agreed to go, and they parted in excellent spirits.

White House seemed unbearably dull when he came back. Now that Mrs. Mainsborough's mind was at rest, she indulged in lengthy naps, and Warren was left a good deal to his own devices. He was glad to meet Bennet Vardye out of doors one day.

"Come and dine with us to-night, Vardye," he said heartily.

"No, thank you." Bennet answered. "I go every evening to sit with Fenning, and help him to

bear his trouble. He broods over it when he is alone."

"What is the trouble? I have not heard of any," Warren asked.

"Gatty is dangerously ill. She has a fever. To-day she seems worse, and they have telegraphed for a London doctor. Old Sowerby said he should like to have another opinion."

"Old Sowerby isn't worth much," said Warren, trying to hide the anxiety he really felt. "Doesn't he always make the worst of everything?"

"He has not made the worst of this case." Bennet's tone was grave. "It is a severe illness, and I am fearful about the result. When the fever leaves her she may sink."

"But why should she sink?" demanded Warren almost impatiently. "She is young and very strong, and she has never had any illness before. When the London man comes he will take a cheerful view of the matter. I can't believe she is as ill as you think. She was looking well when I saw her last."

"Ah! you had a narrow escape that night," Bennet remarked. "You did not know that the bridge was gone. Gatty remembered afterwards that she had not told you. Did anyone give you a timely warning?"

"It would have fared ill with me if I had not been warned," answered Warren thoughtfully. "I was groping my way towards the gate of the field when a woman's voice came out of the darkness. It was a peculiar voice, and I think it was that old witch of the hills, Mrs. Piddock, who was minded to do me a good turn. She told me that the bridge had been swept away. I owe her something for the kindness."

"She has disappeared," said the curate. "She must have taken her departure on that very night. The fact is, she had been harbouring that wretched son of hers, and thought it wise to leave the neighbourhood."

"About Gatty?" Warren spoke abruptly. "I shall go to the farm this evening to hear that London man's opinion."

"No, no; don't go to the farm, Mainsborough. It worries them to answer inquiries; and they all have their hands full. You can come to me if you want to know anything."

"Very well," said Warren, turning away.

He had made no display of feeling, but his heart was aching for poor broken-down Gatty. He remembered his pretty girl friend, who had loved to idle away a sunny hour by his side, and had looked up to him as a hero. And then he thought of the white face that she had turned to him when he had announced his approaching marriage, and blamed himself bitterly for his blindness. If she should die! But he put the thought away with desperate incredulity. No, no; she would live and get well, and forget all about him.

He went indoors, and told his mother the sad news. She received it with perfect indifference.

"Ah! she was not looking well when she was here. And a London doctor is coming. Dear me! he will want an immense fee, and we know that Gibbon Fenning is not a rich man," Mrs. Mainsborough remarked.

"He would spend his all on Gatty," said Warren. "Mother, I wish we could do something to show our sympathy. But Vardye thinks it best not to trouble Fenning with inquiries."

"Mr. Vardye is a truly sensible man. Of course I am very sorry for the poor girl, Warren; but I felt sure that she would either be ill or do some extraordinary thing. That was why I would not ask her here while Angela was with us."

Warren was silent. He stood with his hands in his pockets, looking out gloomily over the quiet lawn. The sun was shining again; the peace and sweetness of autumn had come back.

"We are going to have a lovely October," said Mrs. Mainsborough, after a pause. "How glad I shall be when you have betaken yourself to Woldshire! You are getting quite dismal now that Angela is gone."

He was wishing that he could see Gatty just once more before he went away. He would have liked to clasp her hand and beg her pardon for any pain that he had unconsciously made her suffer. Yet he dared not go near the house in which she lay. Vardye was right: it was better not to make inquiries at the farm at present. He could not forget his last glimpse of that passionate white face, and the last flash of the brown eyes.

Mrs. Mainsborough partly guessed his thoughts, and again rejoiced that the time of his departure was near. He would spend a month or six weeks in Woldshire, and when he returned to White House they would have taken Gatty away somewhere for change of air. She hoped it would be a long time before he saw the girl again. Gatty was not likely to die, she thought; youth and strength would surely triumph over the fever. But she might rise from her sick-bed a new and softer Gatty, and Warren might be dangerously kind and sympathetic. It was a very good thing that he was going to Woldshire, out of the way of harm.

The London doctor came, and approved of old Dr. Sowerby's treatment of the patient, but he admitted that the case was a very serious one. Then a trained nurse was sent down from town, and the farm-house was kept as quiet as a church. Mr. Fenning and the servants crept about in soft shoes, and Dr. Sowerby and the curate were the only visitors. Bennet's sympathy strengthened the farmer, and helped him through this weary time of sorrow and unrest.

Gatty was still lying between life and death when Warren went away. He had hired a fly to take himself and his luggage to Petersfield; and when the vehicle came to a certain turn in the road he leant forward to look out of the window. From that spot he could see the old farmhouse, its dark red bricks glowing in the morning sun, and a mass of foliage clustering over its porch. All around rose the quiet hills where Gatty had loved to roam; here were the hedges from which she had gathered dog-roses and honeysuckle. He drew a deep breath, and flung himself back in a corner of the fly again. Of course, he was a happy man; was he not hastening off to meet Angela? Yet he could not forget poor wilful, suffering Gatty.

The long struggle for life was fought and won; but it left Gatty so weak that her friends hardly dared to rejoice.

Six weeks had gone by since Warren's departure, and his mother had begun to expect his return. She had heard but little news of Gatty, and had contented herself with sending to the curate's lodgings to inquire for the girl. She felt sure that Gatty would get well, and wanted to check any renewal of the old intercourse. Every question in Warren's letters irritated Mrs. Mainsborough more than words could express. She had won her heart's desire: Warren was engaged to the heiress; yet she could not forgive the farmer's niece for daring to fall in love with her son.

One day, about noon, a party of travellers were waiting at Petersfield railway station for the up train. A nurse in her white cap and black bonnet and a rosy country-woman were carefully supporting an invalid girl between them. A special carriage had been engaged; the three got in and took their places, and Mr. Fenning and Bennet Vardye found seats in another part of the train.

It happened that none of their acquaintances witnessed their departure. Gibbon Fenning had been almost nervously anxious that their movements should not be known to any of the dwellers in the Valley, and so carefully had all arrangements been made that the country people had been kept in ignorance to the very last.

The farmer had had a quiet talk with his niece as soon as she was able to converse; and he had heard her earnest wishes from her own lips. She wanted to escape with all speed from her old home.

Yes; the girl who had vowed that she would never go beyond her beloved Vale was now impatient to turn her back on it for ever. She could not get well while she stayed there, she said. She must travel as soon as she could be moved from her room; Uncle Gibbon must come with her, and never leave her. He would do everything that she asked; would he not? Ay, that he would, with all his heart.

Gibbon Fenning hurried on all their preparations for leaving, and managed to do everything without attracting attention. It was touching to see Gatty's gratitude; for the first time in her life she realised all that her uncle really was to her, and her heart suddenly opened to him. Bennet Vardye was their faithful ally, helping them to carry out all their plans. He had decided to leave his country curacy and return to his work in London, and so it was agreed that they should all travel together.

Warren Mainsborough came home on the day after the departure of the Fennings. The early night had fallen over the country when he passed once more through the familiar lanes. At the turn of the road he sat up, as he had done before, to get a glimpse of the farmhouse. He could just distinguish its outlines, but not a single ray of light shone from the windows. The place was as dark as a tomb.

Yet he knew that Gatty was better. His mother had not failed to answer the inquiries in his letters. He resolved to call on Bennet Vardye after breakfast next morning.

His own home looked cheerful enough as he crossed its threshold, and Mrs. Mainsborough hastened out into the hall to give him a motherly greeting. She was so eager to hear all that he could tell, and so deeply interested in his slightest doings, that he had not a chance to ask a question. But at last, when the late dinner was over, and he had drawn his favourite chair near the drawing-room fire, there was a brief pause, and he seized the opportunity to say—

"How is Gatty?"

"Getting on very well, I believe," replied Mrs. Mainsborough, a little coldly.

"You have not seen anyone from Barrow Farm, I suppose?" he asked.

"No; I have stayed indoors a good deal. All the news has come through Mr. Vardye."

The sun was shining when Warren went out in the autumn morning, and a few late roses still lingered in the gardens amid naked boughs and yellow leaves. He took his way at once to the cottage in which Bennet had made his home, and tapped on the window, as he had often done, to attract the curate's attention; but a glance showed him that the room was quite empty, and then he went to the door.

"Mr. Vardye is gone, sir."

Bennet's old landlady gave him this answer with a melancholy face.

"He only left us yesterday," she added; "and I'm sure I don't know what we shall do without him."

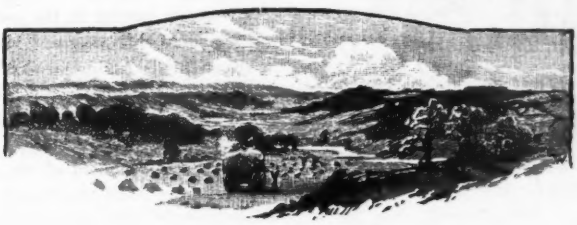
"Don't you know where he is? Didn't he leave any address?" asked Warren.

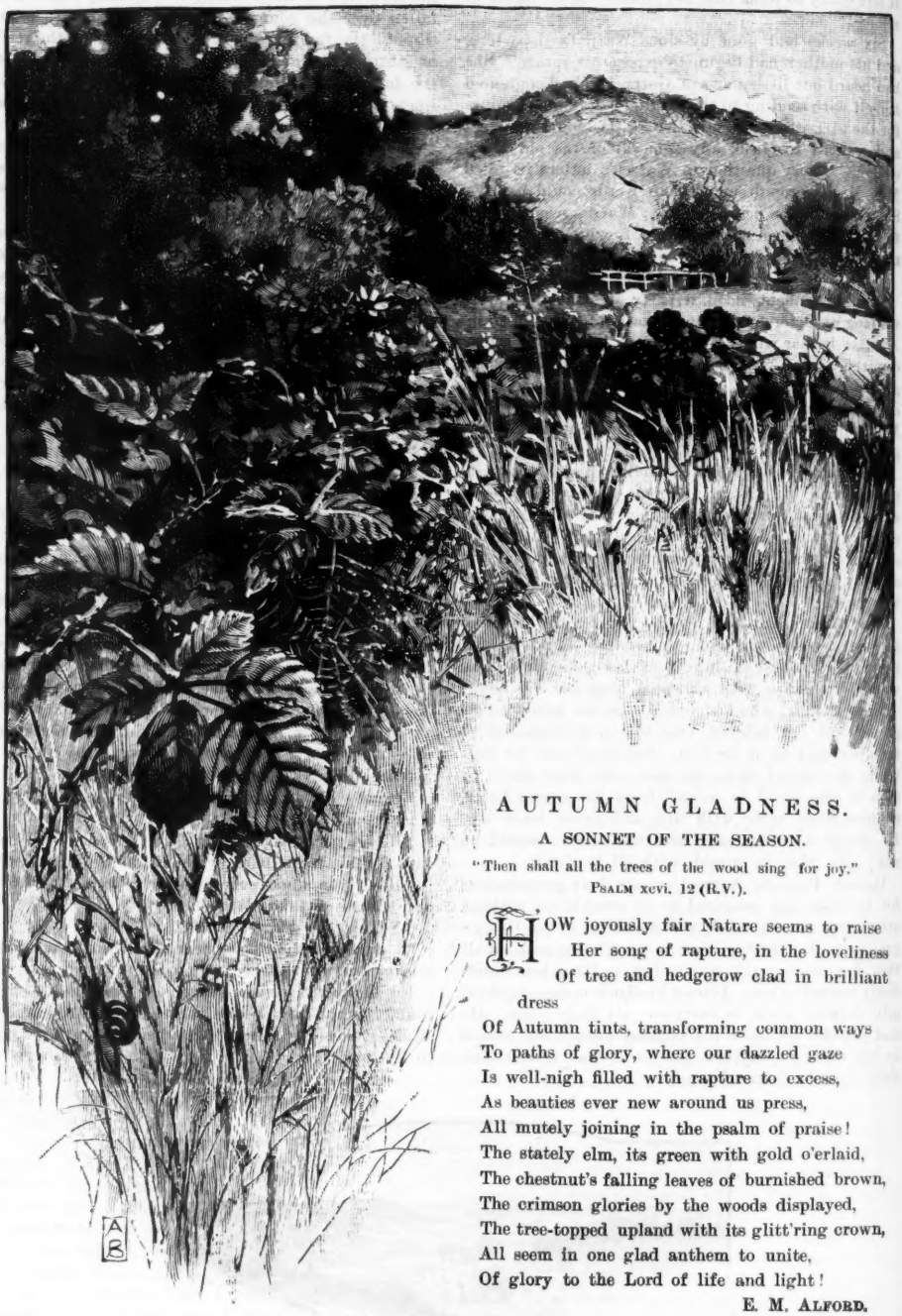
"No, sir; no address at all."

"I daresay I shall soon hear from him," said Warren, as he turned away.

He hesitated for a moment or two, and looked round him at the old hills, where autumn lights and shades were softly lying. And then he bent his steps to Barrow Farm.

(To be concluded.)





AUTUMN GLADNESS.

A SONNET OF THE SEASON.

"Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy."
PSALM xcvi. 12 (R.V.).

HOW joyously fair Nature seems to raise
Her song of rapture, in the loveliness
Of tree and hedgerow clad in brilliant dress
Of Autumn tints, transforming common ways
To paths of glory, where our dazzled gaze
Is well-nigh filled with rapture to excess,
As beauties ever new around us press,
All mutely joining in the psalm of praise!
The stately elm, its green with gold o'erlaid,
The chestnut's falling leaves of burnished brown,
The crimson glories by the woods displayed,
The tree-topped upland with its glitt'ring crown,
All seem in one glad anthem to unite,
Of glory to the Lord of life and light!

E. M. ALFORD.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

SEPTEMBER 15TH. DAVID SPARING SAUL.

To read—1 *Sam. xxiv.* 1—17. *Golden Text*—*Rom. xii.* 21.

DAVID SPARING SAUL. (1—7.) Our last lesson told of Jonathan trying to help David. All of no use. Saul's envy of him increased. Why?

(*a*) David had shown himself a better warrior.

(*b*) David, he knew, was to succeed him in the kingdom.

(*c*) David was in favour with the people—Saul was not.

Giving way to *envy* led Saul on to *hatred* and *malice*. Tried all he could to kill him.

David had fled from the Court of Saul—wandered about with a few followers—had many escapes. Is now hiding among the caves of wilderness of Engedi, on west side of Dead Sea. (Show map.) Saul hunts him with 3,000 picked men. At last David gets a chance—catches Saul in a dark cave—gets so near as to cut off a piece of his dress, but does no more. He leaves him alone. Notice—

(*a*) God had promised to deliver Saul into David's power.

(*b*) David might have killed Saul in self-defence. Why, then, did he not?

1. Because Saul was the king chosen of the Lord.

2. Because forgiveness is better than revenge.

So he spared him, and kept his men back from harming him.

II. DAVID PLEADING WITH SAUL. (8—15.) David tries to win Saul to a better mind. See what respect he shows him—

(*a*) In his address to him—"My lord the king."

(*b*) In his manner—bows down before him.

David both feared God and honoured the king. (1 Pet. ii. 17.)

Now he addresses Saul. He pleads—

(*a*) *His own innocency*—he has done Saul no harm.

(*b*) *His respect for Saul*—as the Lord's anointed.

(*c*) *His own littleness*—only as a dog compared to Saul.

He calls his present act in witness—he has spared his life.

He calls God to witness—the Righteous Judge. (Ps. vii. 8, 11.)

III. SAUL CONVINCED. (16, 17.) David's words take effect.

What does Saul do? He shows the three marks of repentance—

(*a*) *Contrition*—professes sorrow for the past.

(*b*) *Confession*—acknowledges his wrong. (Ps. li. 3.)

(*c*) *Change*—alters his conduct to David.

But his repentance was only skin-deep. Soon began again as before.

LESSONS. What does David teach us?

1. *The nature of forgiveness*—full, free, unqualified.

2. *The blessedness of forgiveness*—makes an enemy a friend. (Golden Text.)

3. *The necessity of forgiveness.* (St. Matt. vi. 13.)

SEPTEMBER 22ND. DEATH OF SAUL AND HIS SONS.

To read—1 *Sam. xxxi.* 1—13. *Golden Text*—*Psalm xxxiv.* 16.

I. DEFEAT. (1—3.) A sad story. Miserable end of a wicked life. Saul had forsaken God—now God forsakes him. What had been his chief sins?

(*a*) *Sacrilege*—offering the sacrifice. (xiii. 9.)

(*b*) *Disobedience*—not destroying Amalekites. (xv. 22.)

(*c*) *Hatred* of David. (xviii. 10.)

(*d*) *Witchcraft*—consulting the witch at Endor. (xxviii. 9.)

What were his punishments?

(*a*) David preferred before him.

(*b*) God departed from him. (*See* xxviii. 15.)

(*c*) His prayers were unheard.

(*d*) His enemies prevailed against him.

On this occasion Philistines—old enemies of Israelites—attacked them; won complete victory. Killed three sons of Saul—wounded him mortally by an arrow.

II. SUICIDE. (4—6.) Saul asked his armour-bearer to kill him. Why?

(*a*) He was grievously wounded.

(*b*) He did not want to be mocked by the enemy.

But his armour-bearer was afraid. So Saul killed himself.

What sin was there in this?

(*a*) *Cowardice*—afraid of his enemies.

(*b*) *Murder*—taking away his own life.

Result was—crushing defeat of whole army.

See what indignities were heaped upon Saul—

(*a*) His *head* was cut off.

(*b*) His *armour* removed.

(*c*) His *body* fastened against a wall unburied.

How different from Jehu's wish to bury Queen Jezebel, though so wicked, because she was a king's wife and daughter! (2 Kings ix. 34.)

Now the news of Saul's defeat and death circulates all round the country—told in all the idol temples.

What a miserable end! (Golden Text.)

III. FRIENDSHIP. (11—13.) One bright spot in a dark, sad story.

Saul had befriended the men of Jabesh when attacked by the Ammonites. (xi. 11.) What do they do now?

(*a*) *Remember* his past kindness.

(*b*) *Rescue* his body from dishonour.

(*c*) *Bury* Saul and his sons decently.

(*d*) *Mourn* for them seven days.

LESSONS. 1. As men live, so will they die.

2. Opportunities for repentance if neglected may not come again.

3. True friends will not forsake us in trouble.

4. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb. x. 31.)

SEPTEMBER 29th. REVIEW OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS.

HAVE had five lives brought before us—Eli, Samuel, Jonathan, Saul, and David. Each teaches many important lessons.

I. ELI. High priest of tribe of Levi.

Held very responsible office as chief of God's ministers.

But neglected his own family—brought religion into disrepute.

Did not pay sufficient heed to God's warning message.

Died of grief at the taking of the Ark by God's enemies.

LESSONS OF HIS LIFE. 1. Special responsibilities bring special duties.

2. To-day if ye will hear God's voice, harden not your hearts.

3. Foolish sons bring a father to shame.

II. SAMUEL. Have seen Samuel in private and public life—

As a babe—dedicated to God by his mother.

As a child—growing in favour with God and man.

As a man—doing his duty fearlessly and diligently; *e.g.*—

Offering up sacrifices when so ordered by God.

Anointing Saul, contrary to his own wish.

Convincing the people of their sin in asking for a king.

Reproving Saul for his sin of disobedience.

Praying for Saul when he seemed penitent.

Anointing David to succeed Saul.

LESSONS OF HIS LIFE. 1. The blessing of a godly mother.

2. The blessing of an early dedication of self to God.

3. The reward of piety—favour with God and man.

4. The blessing of a whole life spent in God's service.

III. SAUL. What have we learned about him?

Beginning so well—humble, brave, God-fearing.

Ending so badly—a coward and murderer.

The cause of this—(*a*) Envy leading on to hatred.

(*b*) Desire to win the people's applause.

(*c*) Seeking other counsellors rather than God.

LESSONS OF HIS LIFE. 1. Check the beginnings of sin.

2. The fear of man bringeth a snare.

3. The difference between false and true repentance.

4. Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.

IV. JONATHAN. *A good son* to his wicked father.

A true friend to David in his troubles.

A brave patriot, fighting for his country to the end.

LESSONS OF HIS LIFE. 1. There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

2. Friendship is tested by adversity.

3. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

V. DAVID. A simple shepherd boy doing his duty.

Happy in his life—singing Psalms.

Brave in his work—defending the flock.

Courageous against his country's foes—killing the giant.

Forgiving to his enemies—sparing Saul.

Faithful in friendship—lamenting over Saul.

LESSONS OF HIS LIFE. 1. Forgive and ye shall be forgiven.

2. Trust in the Lord at all times.

3. God seeth not as man seeth.

4. He raiseth up the poor—to set him with princes.

OCTOBER 6TH. THE TRIBES UNITED UNDER DAVID.

To read—*2 Samuel v.* 1—12. *Golden Text*—*Psalm cxxxiii.* 1.

I. THE TRIBES UNITED. (1—5.) Seven years and a half had passed since Saul's death.

David had already been twice anointed, viz.:—

(*a*) By Samuel in Bethlehem. (1 Sam. xvi. 13.)

(*b*) By men of Judah in Hebron. (2 Sam. ii. 4.)

Had spent these years in overcoming opposition, and preparing to reign over whole kingdom. Does not hurry on events by claiming kingdom before people are ready to receive him—waits patiently. Now time come at last. Notice—

(*a*) *Unanimity*—all the tribes come and ask him. (Golden Text.)

(*b*) *Consanguinity*—all claim kindred with him.

(*c*) *Divine approval*—God had chosen him as leader and captain.

(*d*) *Ratification*—they make a solemn covenant to support him.

(*e*) *Dedication*—they anoint him king once more.

These three anointings of David types of three anointings of Christ by the Holy Spirit—

(*a*) At His incarnation at Nazareth. (St. Luke i. 35.)

(*b*) At His baptism in Jordan. (St. Matt. iii. 17.)

(*c*) At His ascension from Mount of Olives (St. Mark xvi. 19) to reign over His whole Church. (Phil. ii. 10.)

II. JERUSALEM TAKEN. (6—9.) David now determined to take Jerusalem.

Jebusites, old inhabitants of the land, still held its strongholds. What do they do?

(*a*) Send a contemptuous message.

(*b*) Place the blind and lame in front of the walls.

What did David do?

(*a*) Called for volunteers for the assault. (1 Chron. xi. 6.)

(*b*) Joab took the city by storm.

(*c*) David repaired and strengthened the whole city.

(*d*) Called the place after his own name. (St. Luke ii. 11.)

Remind of the past history of Jerusalem—

(*a*) Called Salem—had Melchizedek as priest and king. (Gen. xiv. 18.)

(*b*) Altar built by Abraham at Mount Moriah. (Gen. xxii. 14.)

(*c*) Adonizedek, its king, formed alliance against Joshua.

(*d*) Formed the border of Judah and Benjamin. (Josh. xv. 8.)

(*e*) Taken by Judah from Canaanites. (Judges i. 7.)

(*f*) Goliath's head brought there by David. (1 Sam. xvii. 54.)

(*g*) David now expels Jebusites from Mount Zion, north part of city.

(*h*) David praises it in Psalms. (Ps. xlviii. 1, 2; lxxvi. 1, 2.)

III. David's Prosperity. (10, 11.) He prospers and becomes a great king.

Reason being that he fears God.

Makes alliance with Hiram, King of Tyre, for workmen and timber from forests of Lebanon.

Builds a palace for himself at Jerusalem.

Lessons. 1. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord.

2. When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh his enemies to be at peace with him.

October 13th. The Ark brought to Zion.

To read—2 *Sam. vi.* 1—12. *Golden Text*—*Psalm lxxxvii.* 2.

I. The Ark Fetched. (1—5.) Describe state of the country at this time—

(*a*) David firmly settled on the throne.

(*b*) Twelve tribes all united under him.

(*c*) Peace, prosperity, and plenty everywhere.

(*d*) Jerusalem the seat of government.

But one thing was wanting. Where was the Ark?

(*a*) Was taken by Philistines just before Eli's death.

(*b*) Rested in house of Abinadab at Kirjath-Jearim.

(*c*) Cared for by Eleazar, his son. (1 Sam. vii. 1.)

All that was seventy years before.

Now David determines to bring the Ark to Jerusalem.

(*a*) The army of thirty thousand collected.

(*b*) The people of Jerusalem assembled with the king at head.

(*c*) The Ark is placed on a new cart.

(*d*) Procession arranged of singers and minstrels. (Ps. lxviii. 25.)

(*e*) A new Psalm composed by the king is chanted. (Heading to Ps. lxviii.)

What a happy day in Israel! What would it mean?—

(*a*) Revival of outward worship. (Ps. cxxii. 1.)

(*b*) Revival of religion. (Ps. xcv. 4.)

II. A Sad Incident. (6—11.) An accident happens. The oxen stumble—Ark just going to fall. Uzzah rushes forward—puts out his hand and touches it—is struck dead on the spot. What was his fault?

(*a*) *Disobedience*—none but priests allowed to touch Ark. (Num. iv. 15, 19.)

(*b*) *Irreverence*—probably in the way he did it.

(*c*) *Rashness* in pushing himself before the priests.

Easy to imagine the solemn effect this would have—

(*a*) *Silence*—music and Psalms would at once cease.

(*b*) *Fear*—they would learn how awful is God.

(*c*) *Reverence*—all that has to do with God must be treated reverently.

(*d*) *Grief* of David over this sad event.

The carrying up of the Ark not completed—it remained three months in house of Obed-edom, who was blessed for his care of it.

Lessons. 1. Our God is a consuming fire.

2. Holy and reverend is His name.

3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

A MANCHESTER MINISTRY.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE REV. J. A. MACFADYEN, M.A., D.D., OF MANCHESTER.

BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.

"IT took me some time to learn how to buy books. I find the best course to pursue is to obtain those works of reference which take one to the fountain-head, instead of procuring all the books published on a subject. It is surprising how constantly the same things are handed down, even mistakes in commentaries."

And as Dr. Macfadyen, whose views we have thus summarised, has an unusual number of commentaries, and owns a very extensive library of theological and ecclesiastical books, we may well imagine he has had wide experience in collecting volumes, especially as he also admitted that he had been a book-buyer all his life, and further, that he had gathered a library for "pure working use."

There are good results of his book-collecting about us. Dr. Macfadyen's large study is literally walled with books. Up to a good height every inch of wall space except the doors and over the mantelshelf, is covered with well-filled book-shelves; and up-stairs is another room also well filled. Over the mantelshelf are some beautiful photographs of the large and handsome Congregational Church in Chorlton Road, Manchester, of which Dr. Macfadyen has long been the honoured and beloved pastor.

In the middle of the room is a large table well covered with books and papers; but the table at which Dr. Macfadyen works is by a window on the right hand as we enter. Strictly speaking it is not a table, but a sort of bureau with pigeon-holes and drawers, and the mahogany flap on which he writes may be easily closed up. It is an heirloom, for it has been in the family for a hundred and fifty years, and it is perhaps characteristic of Dr.

Macfadyen that he uses a cabinet of this sort, for he has a large amount of organising work in hand.

The lower part of the window is decorated with two designs, one illustrative of some beautiful lines from Tennyson's "St. Agnes' Eve."

The other window in the room is decorated in a similar manner with two designs and quotations, one of which is from Henry Vaughan, the whole four being the selection of an architect friend of Dr. Macfadyen's.

The house itself stands back from a main road at a junction with another thoroughfare in the pleasant residential suburb of Whalley Range. It is not very far from the large and handsome pile of buildings known as the Chorlton Road Church and Schools, of which Dr. Macfadyen is the minister. When he became the pastor in 1863, the church was situated quite on the outskirts of the city, but now the town has come to it and surrounded it, and the buildings are situated in a densely populated district. The church itself has been greatly enlarged, and now affords accommodation for fourteen hundred persons; while in the schools, consisting of a large room and sixteen class-rooms, room is afforded for over a thousand children.

The entire cost of these extensive enlargements was £12,000, of which Dr. Macfadyen himself collected £2,355. The whole amount was raised in three years from the date of opening. Since then a further sum of over £4,000 has been raised and expended on the church and schools, including the purchase of a new organ. In addition to this work, three mission stations have been founded, and a branch church bought, while lately another church, situated at Knott Mill, which will hold a thousand people, has been taken, and is being worked by the Chorlton Road Church. Thus there are five missions and "sub-churches," if such we may call them, connected with this church.

The principle on which these are worked may be simply stated. Each one is under the charge of a responsible layman, who is in fact a lay-pastor in everything but the name. The teachers and other helpers are also all lay-workers, and all of them give their services gratuitously. Thus the teaching, etc., is carried on with only an expense of £60 or £70 from the mother church.

The aim is to keep all the places open every night in the week, and also the school connected with the Chorlton Road Church, so that there is something to attract and occupy the young people almost every evening should they care to avail themselves of it. In fact, says Dr. Macfadyen, they know that they may meet in their class-room for almost any unobjectionable purpose they choose, and there is always some responsible person to whom reference can be made, and who sees that everything is free from harm. Thus the schools become to the young people something of the nature of "clubs" for week-days as well as places of religious instruction on Sundays.

In fact, the Sunday-school in Lancashire is quite a different thing from what it is in London. It plays a very important part in church life, and statistics do not really represent the attendance at church, unless cognisance is taken of the scholars and work at the school.



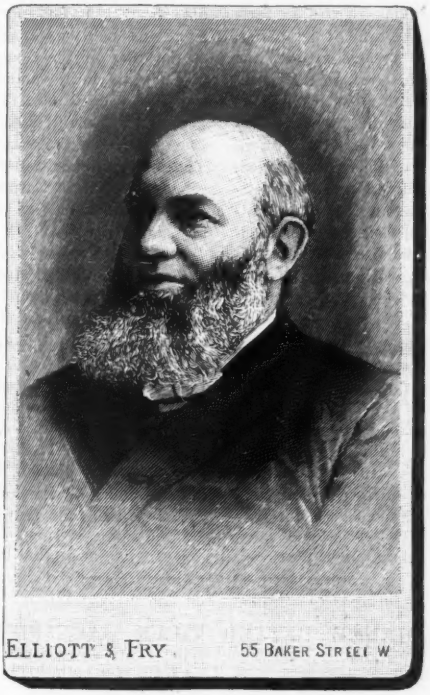
DR. MACFADYEN'S STUDY.

This will perhaps be better understood when we say that Chorlton Road Sunday-school has its own separate services on Sunday morning and evening, its choir, its own missionary society, Young Christians' Union, and band of hope. Its library contains over 2,400 volumes, and during the year 1888 the average issue of books each Sunday was ninety in number. Including infants, over a thousand scholars were on the rolls, and the average attendance in the afternoon was 642. In the morning it was not so large, being 229 only. Annual examinations are held, in connection with which prizes are awarded, and prizes are also given for punctual and regular attendance.

To some extent, the large school is graded. That is, it is divided into the infants' class, sometimes numbering a hundred attendants, the elementary section, and the "large school." Of the elementary section it is said in the "Manual" for the present year that—"Contrary to the opinion often expressed, experience shows that children from ten to twelve years of age need an especial amount of careful and patient teaching and oversight; and to the painstaking, conscientious devotion of the teachers to the work may be attributed, in a large degree, the present prosperity of this section of the Sunday-school."

The management of the school is centred in a council. This body meets every month, and consists of representatives elected by the teachers, the church-members, and the deacons. Dr. Macfadyen is president, and the superintendent is vice-president. The council does much to promote the harmonious working of the church and the school, and forms as it were a bond of unity between them. The teachers have also their monthly meeting, and the affairs of the school are, moreover, from time to time brought before the meetings of church-members.

An annual custom is regularly observed of presenting a Bible to each scholar who has reached the age of fifteen during the previous year. The Bibles are presented in public on the first Sunday of every January, at a special service. For two months previously, the intended recipients meet in a special class under Dr. Macfadyen, on Sunday afternoons. On one occasion, as many as seventy-six received Bibles.



THE REV. J. A. MACFADYEN, M.A., D.D.

Over three thousand children are on the rolls of the various Sunday-schools; and during the week, also, Dr. Macfadyen meets a number of graded classes of children and young people, numbering in the aggregate from three hundred to five hundred. Thus, on one afternoon is held the children's class of perhaps a hundred little ones of ages from five to twelve. The next is the intermediate class, of ages from twelve to sixteen. Then there is a third, consisting of youths and maidens over that age, in addition to which is a young men's association and a young ladies' class. The latter used to take up a literary subject, as well as a Biblical subject, once a week. There is now, however, less need for what may be called ordinary educational work in any of these classes, because of the evening classes at Owens College, and other educational advantages offered in the city.

Dr. Macfadyen has held his present pastorate for more than twenty-six years. Born at Greenock, in 1835, he spent his childhood and youth there, and when a boy of fifteen went to Glasgow University. He took his M.A. degree before he was twenty, and in 1857 came to Lancashire Independent College, and remained there three years. His first pastorate was at St. Helens, where he went on leaving college, and where he also remained three years. In March, 1863, he came to Chorlton Road Congregational Church, where he has continued in spite of various offers from America and Australia, as well as from different parts of England. He has enjoyed all the honours which the denomination offers to which he belongs. He was chairman of the Union of England and Wales in 1882—in which year he received the degree of D.D. from Glasgow University—and also chairman of the County Union—that of Lancashire—with which his church is connected, in 1879; while he is a member of most, if not all, the denominational committees, and has frequently preached special sermons in London. He has also preached in America, having on two occasions taken charge of Dr. Scudder's church at Brooklyn. And it was after these visits that he received pressing invitations to churches across the water.

Dr. Macfadyen makes a broad distinction between

two classes of sermons, and his method of preparation for each is different. There is one class of discourses in which, he said, the preacher is to be a herald, and there is the other in which he is to be more of a teacher; in these sermons he necessarily discusses or explains questions and subjects which a herald would pass by. These latter sermons he would also call "expository." He is fond of exposition in preaching, and though it is his practice to preach a sermon of each class on the Sunday, yet, if he should but preach once, it is the expository sermon which he retains.

Dr. Macfadyen writes his sermons—writes, in fact, often more than he delivers at the time of preaching, and, though he is quite able to preach without the manuscript, yet usually reads his sermon. His experience is that he does not suffer such nervous exhaustion when he reads his discourse, and his congregation receive more pastoral work from him in consequence. And that work is extensive and varied. Judging from the number and diversity of the institutions of the church, and also the number of denominational and ecclesiastical organisations with which he is connected, we should say that Dr. Macfadyen is a most laborious and persistent worker. His power of organisation is very great, and in all his arrangements he is very methodical.

In his pastoral work he makes a point of visiting the families of his large congregation of 1,400 persons, at least once in every year; while to summarise briefly the multifarious works of the church, of most of which Dr. Macfadyen is president, we may divide them roughly, as in the "Church Manual," into educational and benevolent institutions. In the former are the minister's classes; the Chorlton Road Association, with its essays, lectures, and discussions; the Literary Club, in the syllabus of which a course of Oxford University extension lectures has recently been incorporated; the church choir, which holds weekly meetings for practice, the church magazine, the large library, the temperance society, the evangelistic mission, and the Sunday-school with all its varied works.

The work at the various missions is to some extent like a smaller copy of the work at the large church. But there are variations and adaptations to the varying needs and circumstances of each. At the Russell Street Mission, musical drill for girls, modelling in clay, and drawing are taught on certain evenings, and also the making and mending of clothes. On another evening is held a gymnastic class for young men, while on Saturday nights a concert takes place. There are also mutual improvement society, singing class, and mothers' meeting, etc. There appears to be something going on at Russell Street every night, and sometimes two or three meetings are held at the same time. The Tatton Street and Melbourne Street Missions present somewhat similar features, and the church at Chorlton-cum-Hardy has its literary society, band of hope, and Sunday-school.

In addition to the work connected with his church and its branches, Dr. Macfadyen takes a good share of labour in connection with work in the county. He has worked hard to found a fund for building churches, and also to add to the incomes of the poorer ministers. He has also been chairman of the Committee of the Lancashire Independent College. Work, work, work seems to be his watchword, and the organisation of work his delight. And after many years of labour he still presides over his large working church, with its various institutions and branches, which have grown and multiplied so greatly during his pastorate.

OBEDIENCE BETTER THAN SACRIFICE.

BY THE REV. CANON MONEY, M.A., VICAR OF HOLY TRINITY, KILBURN.

"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."—1 SAM. xv. 22.



AS there can be no contradiction in God, so there can be none in His Word. There may be statements which seem to contradict one another, statements which it is not even possible for man fully to harmonise; there may be difficulties which are calculated to humble and bring down man's intellectual pride; there may be truths which it seems as impossible for man's mind and heart to receive as for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, but there can be no real contradiction. It would therefore be entirely false to say that God proclaimed obedience in the Old Testament and dispensed with it in the New, and that obedience is less required and enjoined under the Gospel than under the Law. All through the Jewish and the Christian dispensations, God's great aim is to bring men to obey Him. No man can really glorify God except through obedience to God. It was the disobedience of Adam that ruined man, and raised a barrier between him and Heaven. It was the obedience of Christ that provided salvation for man, and opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," and so we find in the New Testament a Gospel rule which declares that, "being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Let us then consider—

1. The obedience of Christ.
2. The obedience of those who are His.

First, *the obedience of Christ,*

He came to glorify God and to save man, through His obedience. "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." (Heb. v. 8, 9.) When He came to the Baptist to be baptised, He gave this as His reason, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." When Satan tempted Christ to worship him by holding out, as he thought, a magnificent prospect to Him, the answer he received was, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." When He was found by Joseph and Mary in the Temple, He described the object of His whole life in these words, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" When He was brought face to face with an awful climax of darkness and suffering, and asked if it were possible that He might be spared this inconceivable and unutterable agony, He expressed His firm resolve to obey in these words, "Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done" (St. Luke xxii. 42). Thus did He finish the work which was given Him to do. Thus did He render a perfect and sufficient obedience for us, . . "for it became Him for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." So that in this obedience of Christ's we see Him obeying for man, doing what man could not do, experiencing what man would have been called to experience if Jesus had not suffered and died for him. We see the eye of Justice scanning all Christ's work and finding no flaw. We see the hand of Justice laying hold of Christ and meeting no resistance. We see, not sacrifice without obedience, but obedience exhibited in sacrifice. All that God required was rendered, all that man needed was supplied.

The obedience of one was thus made the means by which many should become righteous. It was so rendered as to enable man also to obey. In it three elements were combined: There was satisfaction as regarded God's law, there was motive power as regarded man's will, and there was a pattern as regarded man's conduct.

Secondly, *the obedience of those who are Christ's.*

This has now become possible through the object presented to the eye of faith. An atoning Saviour; a bleeding Sacrifice; a sinless Man.

From the atoning Saviour there comes to us a voice of hope and of power, "It is finished." Your safety is secured. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. viii. 3, 4.)

From the bleeding Sacrifice there comes to us a voice of tenderness, compassion, and of deepest love. The thought of such a sacrifice could only issue from the heart of God, the offering of such a sacrifice could only be made by Omnipotent Love.

From a sinless Man, a voice reaches us which irresistibly persuades to obedience and holiness. But why, it may be asked, was it impossible for man to have contrived such a plan, and carried out such a course? For two reasons. First, he could not know what would satisfy God. Secondly, he could not, in his sinful nature, rise to the conception of such moral grandeur, and such sublime self-sacrifice.

But now, what does belief in the efficacy of this sacrifice, and acceptance of this Saviour, involve? It leaves not a man where it finds him. When God declares that there is only one way of escape; when He presents to us one only Saviour; when He declares that the virtue which is in Christ shall only flow to you through the channel of faith; when He says you shall be pardoned and received as a sinner for Christ's sake, and not as a saint for your own, He is claiming from you the highest act of obedience and the most complete surrender of your will.

Now the all-important question for each one is, Am I obedient to the faith? Am I submitting to the righteousness of Christ? "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep and lowing of the oxen" which we hear? What means that thought of salvation which comes not from God, and which rests not on His Word? What mean those unslain sins, those reserved pleasures? What mean those prayers and religious services which you have presumed to offer from a heart where Christ's sacrifice is neglected, and Christ Himself is not followed or obeyed?

Obedience is the fruit of faith, and stands in close relation to it. When sin is pardoned, God's eye rests on the obedience of Christ rendered for the sinner. When obedience is rendered, God accepts it for Christ's sake. The obedience of man is not to be preferred to the sacrifice of Christ, for it flows from it. But to obey is better than the most splendid act of self-denial which springs not from love to Christ, and which renders not all honour and glory to Him. Obedience is the movement of a soul made alive in Christ, and strengthened by His Spirit. Obedience knows no doubt, and chases away all fear. Obedience is the safety of the sinner, and the glory of the saint.

But now, if you would really desire to obey, you must hearken. Three things should distinguish your obedience—(1) celerity, (2) integrity, and (3) constancy.

(1) Celerity. "I will run the way of Thy commandments." To do this we must listen for the voice of God. Samuel's waiting attitude must be ours: "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Then there must be promptness, despatch, desire.

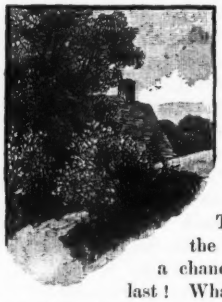
(2) But there must also be integrity, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left. "Salute no man by the way."

(3) Lastly, there must be constancy. This obedience must be rendered always, in spite of troubles, in spite of cares, in spite of the attractions of wealth and honour and pleasure, in spite of the bleating of the

sheep and lowing of the oxen. The fear of God must restrain us, the love of Christ must constrain us, the hope of heaven must draw us. When some way of self-sacrifice opens to you, when there seems to be an opportunity of doing some great thing for God, and at the same time securing some advantage to yourself; when the sacrifice proposed seems splendid, and the path of duty humble and unnoticeable; when you feel it will be easier to do some great thing for God than to surrender some evil habit to Him; when you would prefer to multiply acts of worship, if only you might omit some painful acts of duty, then remember the fall of Israel's king and the declaration of Israel's prophet: "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

AUNT JANE'S NIECES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SYLVIA MORETON'S PROBATION," "MRS. SCOTT'S DAUGHTERS," ETC. ETC.



"JOHN, JOHN!" cried the owner of Mr. John Smith *and* Pine Wood Cottage to her husband, as she excitedly tore off her working-apron, "if there isn't a fly from the station driving up the hill! There! it *has* stopped at the gate, and we shall have a chance of letting our rooms at last! What a mercy I put on a new cap this afternoon! Three ladies getting out," she continued, standing at the open door, and speaking down the passage in a loud stage-whisper—"three ladies, and never a man, for which I'm truly thankful."

"Mrs. Smith, I think?" said a pleasant voice. "I have been recommended to your apartments; can we look at them now? The cab will wait here a few minutes."

"You can look over them now, ma'am," was the reply. "I'm not the one to require two hours' notice to have the dust removed. Walk into the parlour, please. That young lady looks worn out.—Sit down here, my dear," and Mrs. Smith pushed forward a large arm-chair with many cushions and antimacassars, into which Miss Kitty Fairfax sank with a weary sigh.

"Thank you, Mrs. Smith," said the lady in a bonnet, who seemed the eldest of the party by a few years only. "My niece is tired after her journey.—Kitty darling, take a little of this sal-volatile."

"No, Aunt Jane; I'm better now. It was that dreadfully stuffy fly.—Cecilia, pull up the blind, and tell me if we have a view of the old farm buildings, and shall we get the sunset effects?"

"Them old buildings, miss, which I own is a blot and a eyesore," said Mrs. Smith, with an air of candour, "can be hid by a lattice, which my man, who is clever with his tools—though I say it, as shouldn't—will put up any morning. The windows face east *and* west, so you have the effects of morning or evening sun, whichever happens to be good for your complaint. My last lady, who had the rheumatics——"

Cecilia gave her a glance, and Kitty laughed in spite of herself. Aunt Jane's face brightened at the sound. "We hope the air of your pine-woods will strengthen my niece, Mrs. Smith," she said. "We have written to the clergyman of the town, who spoke of the comfort and accommodation we should find in your house. Your bed-rooms are equally airy, I suppose?"

"*If* you will step up-stairs, ma'am, with the other young lady, who looks nimble, and I'll stay with Miss Kitty. You'll excuse the liberty, but it do sound so natural, Kitty being my own christened name. Right and left of the landing, miss; you can't make a mistake."

Cecilia's laugh overhead was distinctly audible at intervals, whilst Kitty was favoured below with the interesting particulars of Mrs. Smith's life-history. They had just come to the end of the second volume, as she afterwards told Cecilia—the dismissal of the first suitor, and the appearance of John Smith on the scene—when the explorers returned.

"We like your house very much," said Aunt Jane. "About your terms, Mrs. Smith. We are not rich."

Mrs. Smith mentioned a sum so moderate that Cecilia exclaimed involuntarily, "But we paid just twice as much in London last winter!"

"Bless you, my dear!" said Mrs. Smith, with a toss of her new cap, "I'm no London landlady to prey on the vitals of my lodgers, and I can reckernise true-born ladies when I see them; likeways I always make a *senserble* reduction for single ladies, without the encumbrance of gentlemen's dirty boots and untidy ways."

"Then, Mrs. Smith," said Cecilia, "we'll gladly take your rooms for a fortnight.—I'll pay the man, Aunt Jane, and Kitty shall see the last of that dreadful fly."

Whilst Mrs. Smith was bustling to prepare their frugal meat tea, Cecilia and her young aunt brought out their books and other treasures, and made the

various small alterations suggested by the little autocrat of the easy-chair.

"Take off that horrible white antimacassar from the round table in the window, Cecilia," she said, "and the wax fruit under the glass shade. Put them both away in that hideous chiffonier with the red silk lining. Oh dear, how it smells of the rheumatic lady's pickles! Drape my old-gold sash over that 'Return from the Market,' or whatever they call it, and put those screens on the mantelshelf



"The two girls were silent after their eager talk."—*p.* 829.

to cover up the framed memorial-cards and family photographs. What a trial it must be to Mrs. Smith to have such ugly relations!"

"You *do* like the place, dears," said Aunt Jane, tenderly. "I had only dim recollections of the pine-woods and old church, when I stayed here as a child with my nurse."

"Dim! I should think they would be dim!" cried Cecilia. "I only wonder they have not been rubbed out altogether. Since she was a child, Kitty! We used to say your grave, staid ways were put on, Jane, to delude us into thinking you were old enough to look after two naughty girls, and take pupils into the bargain! *Now* we know better! You are really old, *aged!* I shouldn't be a bit surprised if you were forty last birthday! I'm going on a quest, to find out from intelligent friends of old Nurse Clayton the exact age of Jane Gordon, spinster, whilom of the City of Edinbro', now of the parish of St. Stephen, Milltown! You have the most lovely complexion, child," she went on, touching her aunt's cheek tentatively with a finger-tip. "I've examined it carefully in the strongest light, but never found out how you put it on! Here comes tea!—You are as welcome as flowers in May, Mrs. Smith," said the merry girl. "Let me hold the tray—it's heavy for you—whilst you spread the cloth. We've filled up your useful little table in the corner. What lovely butter and lettuces! Now, I believe you made that cake yourself!"

"Well, miss, I won't deny it! I had a dream the night before last (so it was baked yesterday, and is ready to cut, ma'am), and I said to John, 'If that doesn't mean lodgers before you're three days older, my name's not Kitty Smith!—He's got you some roses from the garden, Miss Kitty; you'll like to arrange them while the tea is drawing. I've brought this handsome blue vase for them."

"Oh, thank you!" said Kitty, with a slight shiver; "I would really rather not have the vase" ("It might be broken," put in Aunt Jane), "if you have a coarse brown jar."

Mrs. Smith returned with the teapot, and some lovely roses and long fern-fronds.

"Here is the same jar, Miss Kitty," she said, "that an artist gentleman had in this very room. He preferred it to the blue vase. 'A matter of taste, ma'am,' he'd say to me. Wonderful simple tastes his was, too, poor gentleman. Hardly ordered a bit of butcher's meat from week's end to week's end, but sadly messy with his paints and things. You wouldn't taste such eggs as *them* in your London lodgings, miss! I hope you'll enjoy your tea, I'm sure."

"You'll forgive the little alterations we have made in your room, please, Mrs. Smith," said Cecilia coaxingly. "We've got into such old maids' habits, you see."

"Old maids, indeed! Bless your sweet face!" said Mrs. Smith benignantly, retiring to her own peculiar domain.

"As nice young ladies, John," she remarked to her husband, "as ever we've had! The aunt is a sweet, gentle creature, and Miss Cecilia as light-hearted and free-spoken as possible. Miss Kitty—well, it strikes me she's had her own way too much; but there! the delicate one in a family always does get the petting and notice. Fancy her not wanting my best blue vase, John, with the pink and yellow flowers painted on so natural!"

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"Ten days of our holiday gone already! You couldn't have chosen a sweeter place to spend it in, Aunt Jane!" said Kitty enthusiastically. "The air is delightful, and at every turn there is some charming bit that makes one wild to try one's pencil or brush. It seems a paradise after the schoolroom, and those stupid children. I suppose you don't feel the incongruity, auntie; but if you could have left behind that table-cloth you are mending. Anything is horrid that reminds me of what we must go back to again! If you had brought some of the art needlework you do so beautifully——"

"Then, Kitty," said Miss Gordon, "I could not have sat out-of-doors with you in this lovely sunshine. Don't abuse our poor tablecloth!"

"But it *is* art needlework," said Cecilia, looking up from the pages of her book. "Look at those perfect darns! We idle creatures are just amusing ourselves, and she goes on toiling and moiling as she has been these five years past, since she was a girl of nineteen—I mean five-and-thirty, the sweet darling! Not but what she is perfectly happy doing that, as long as it is for us, 'bless her!' as Mrs. Smith would say. Just hold my book, Jane, whilst I see how the sketch is getting on. The colour of that roof is splendid, Kitty," as she looked over her sister's shoulder. After a pause—"I'm going to ask a great favour of you, dear."

"Well; please move a little first, then," said Kitty. "You are just breathing on the back of my neck, Cecilia."

"If you *would* paint a little portrait of Mrs. Smith——"

"I couldn't do it!" returned Kitty, without a moment's hesitation. "I might attempt it, perhaps, if she were grotesquely ugly; but with her dumpy figure and red cheeks, and those artificial flowers in her cap, I cannot and will not!"

"She would be very delighted, Kitty," began Aunt Jane.

"She has a dear, comfortable face," protested Cecilia; "ever so much nicer to live with than your puling mediæval things, that look as if they were starved! If only I could paint——"

"But you can't, Cecilia! and what's more," said Kitty, "you have not a scrap of artistic feeling! We artists choose subjects that do not, in a sense, profane our brush——"

"Fiddlesticks!" said Cecilia. "What are some of those portraits in the Royal Academy, then?" and, without waiting for an answer, she snatched up her book and ran down the hill, disappearing in the pine-woods.

"Cecilia, Cecilia darling," cried Kitty; but in vain.

"It is not like Cecilia!" said Aunt Jane, quite disturbed.

"Oh, I'm so vexed and sorry!" said Kitty remorsefully. "I had forgotten for the minute all she has to bear; and she has kept up so wonderfully!"

"Kept up! Had to bear! What *do* you mean?"

"Why, Aunt Jane, you must surely have seen—but I suppose you did not find it out—you always seem to fancy we are nothing but children—Maynard Williams, then——"

"But Cecilia does not like Maynard," said Miss Gordon.

"*Like* him, Aunt Jane! she is perfectly infatuated!"

"But, Kitty, she laughs at his staid, sober ways. *You* have always said kind, appreciative things about him!"

"Oh, don't you know Cecilia better than that, auntie? Why, till Maynard has spoken to her, she would sooner die than own that she cares a straw about him! I found her out months ago, and I know what a comfort it is to her to talk about him. She abuses him, and laughs at him, just for the pleasure of hearing me contradict her. But if anyone else ventures to speak a word against him—— And a month ago he said such things, and sighed, and all that rubbish, you know, Aunt Jane," continued the wise Kitty, "that we thought——"

"Oh, how blind I must be!" said Miss Gordon, clasping her hands. "He came to consult me, Kitty, and asked if there were any hope for him. I couldn't say I thought so, and the poor fellow went away in despair."

"I don't pity him a bit," declared Kitty. "He should have plucked up a little spirit, and gone straight to Cecilia. She is worth winning! Poor

dear! I suppose one must forgive a little irritability. What a comfort it is to have art to fall back on! To *me*, a bit of harmonious grouping, a cloud effect, is full of consolation! I have known disappointment too, Aunt Jane!" with a deep-meaning sigh.

"Yes, Kitty," said her aunt, rousing herself, "I was sure you had some secret trouble. Do confide in me, my darling!"

"You must know then, auntie, that for the last year I have determined to submit one of my sketches to Mr. Galbraith, that artist and critic whom poor father thought so highly of; and about a month ago I finished what I *felt* to be my best sketch, and sent it to him, asking for his opinion. You can fancy my suspense. At last the answer came. Aunt Jane, I only glanced at that letter before I threw it in the fire. One sentence haunted me as if the word were written in flame—'Your drawing is infamous!'" The girl's face grew white and her eyes dilated. "Cruel! And I felt I could never touch a pencil again. But that terrible time is past. I am convinced I *have* genius; I shall work steadily. In questions of art *no* one is infallible—but Mr. Ruskin."

Kitty had gone to her room that night: Cecilia had just finished a long chat with Mr. and Mrs. Smith in their kitchen, talking over the grand question of costume, *pose*, etc., for the penitent artist had asked to be favoured with a sitting; Aunt Jane was writing a long letter to her dear Milltown friend, Miss Elizabeth Marsden; Cecilia was curled up on the sofa opposite, apparently devouring the last chapters of her book. Looking up at last, Miss Gordon met her niece's earnest eyes.

"What is it, dear?" she asked.

"I was wondering," said Cecilia. "I did not know, till Miss Elizabeth told me a little while ago, *all* you gave up when poor father died, and left us helpless and penniless. We can never love you enough, Jane. But when the days went by, and you did not see him or have a word—did it *keep on* hurting so"

Jane Gordon's pen dropped in her confusion, and then she seemed to be very busy in mopping up a tiny blot on the red and black tablecloth, whilst her pale lips tried to frame an answer. The wound, which she would fain believe time had healed, was still very sensitive to the touch. Before the words would come there was a tap at the door, and their landlady appeared, with beaming face.

"You 'll excuse me, ma'am," she said; "but I knew Miss Cecilia had not gone to bed. I just slipped in to say I 'd settled it at last. I wear that cap with the pink roses and green grasses, the mourning brooch that belonged to John's poor first—who died, ma'am, without chick or child, or Kitty Smith 's not the woman to put it on—my new silk dress, the tartan-plaid shawl thrown over my arm, careless like; as to drapery, that Miss Kitty talks so much about, we must send over to Hodson's shop in the morning. John would never stint me in anything reasonable, though what more is wanted I can't exactly see. It 'll make a lovely picture, and he 's as pleased as Punch. And though you don't paint it, my dear, it would never have been thought of but for you: *that* I know for certain."

Aunt Jane heard Mrs. Smith up with the lark next morning; her duties were finished and her silk dress on by eleven o'clock, she feeling, as she described it, "all of a twitter." Cecilia gave herself up to her amusement, and, the artist becoming interested in her work, promised a most successful portrait; at breakfast she had worn the air of a martyr to her own good-nature.

"Now, remember," said Cecilia, as Mrs. Smith foided up her plaid shawl, "we expect a magnificent high tea at seven. We are going out for the whole afternoon. Miss Kitty is never tired of painting, and she means to sketch the old farm-buildings on the hill, to take home as a keepsake. We have everything in good repair in Milltown."

"Now, don't, I beg of you, Miss Kitty," said Mrs. Smith to that young lady, who was standing with knitted brow and a most critical air, examining the portrait in different lights. "What a character we shall have for tumble-down rubbish! When there is the new model farm not half a mile further on, square and handsome. It does you good to look at it. If you would make a picture of *that*, now!"

"But we want the Milltown people to acknowledge their blessings, Mrs. Smith," said Cecilia. "Is this weeping-willow in the brooch made of seaweed, I wonder?—Why, Kitty, you are packing up your things already."

"Are you *never* coming?" cried her sister emphatically. "I shall start, then. You've another tablecloth to mend, I see, Aunt Jane, and a perfect regiment of old serviettes. Cecilia can bring the lunch-basket. You will find it more comfortable to stop under that clump of elms at the foot of the hill. You won't mind my saying so, but I *long* for the silence of nature."

So Miss Gordon and Cecilia leisurely collected their books and working materials, and settled themselves as directed. Aunt Jane tried in vain to take up a thread of yesterday's interrupted talk; Cecilia would not keep serious for three minutes together. She was greatly interested to see the fly from the station drive up to Pine Wood Cottage, with an elderly lady and gentleman, and pretended to immense jealousy at the idea that they should soon take their vacant place in Mrs. Smith's home and affection. But in a few minutes they appeared again, and were directed, with many significant gestures, to the little encampment under the trees.

"Oh, Cecilia," whispered Aunt Jane, as they came nearer, "it is Mr. and Mrs. Galbraith."

"Don't let us disturb you, Miss Gordon," said Mr. Galbraith, as she started up to meet them; "I see you recognise us. What a delightful nook

you have chosen! This is Miss Kitty Fairfax, I suppose? Your other niece, the artist, is at work on the hill, I am told," with a kindly smile, which lit up for the moment a rather harsh, rugged face. "You are not like your father, my dear."

"You will be surprised to see us here, Miss Gordon," said Mrs. Galbraith; "but perhaps you did not know that my husband received a formal note from your niece, Miss Fairfax, asking his opinion of a sketch she forwarded. Mr. Galbraith must confess he is sadly absent, and he did not at first connect the name with his late dear friend, and, in fact, could not realise that he had a daughter so old. He told me he just glanced at the sketch, and sent off a few hasty lines. We were in great trouble just then, and soon after our only child passed away—a girl about Miss Fairfax's age," and the poor lady stopped. Jane Gordon instinctively took the trembling hand with a silent sympathy. "Then," continued Mrs. Galbraith, recovering herself a little, "my husband, in arranging his papers—for we mean to leave home for some time—came across your niece's letter, and it flashed on his mind that she must be one of Herbert Fairfax's little girls. We have been to Milltown, but found, to our disappointment, that you were away. A lady—Miss Elizabeth Marsden—happened to be at your house, asking the servant for news of you all, and from her we heard what has very much touched and interested us both."

"She is a very warm and staunch friend of yours, madam," said Mr. Galbraith. "I examined several of Miss Cecilia's sketches—capital idea of colour—very good indeed."

"My niece will be delighted to hear you say so," replied Miss Gordon; "but she is Kitty—this is Cecilia."

"I know I ought not to be," said Cecilia, with a comical look. "My name has been a trouble to me all my life; I *could* have lived up to 'Kitty.' But not to have, as Kitty tells me, a scrap of artistic feeling—only just to know the difference between 'Rule Britannia' and 'Bonnie Dundee,' and then to have such a name! I feel as if I wore a false label, like those antiquated jackets in the village shop, Aunt Jane, with 'Just received from Paris' stuck on. It *is* hard! I was born when dear father was painting his beautiful picture, the St. Cecilia"—("I remember it, my dear," put in Mr. Galbraith)—"and I was not even to be called Cissy, which would have been a slight alleviation. Of course he was very much disappointed when he found out my stupidity, but Kitty's wonderful talent soon consoled him."

"Never mind," said Mrs. Galbraith, with a kind look; "we are not all gifted in the same way. But, Miss Gordon, we want you and your nieces, when you leave here, to spend a little time with us, and talk over a plan which my husband and I have very much at heart. We intend to travel on the Continent, and have a great longing to take Kitty with us—our dear lost child has left such a terrible blank; she should be treated like our own."

"And her art education shall not be neglected, Miss Gordon."

"Oh, Aunt Jane!" gasped Cecilia. "How happy Kitty will be! It's what she has been longing for ever since she could touch a brush."

Mr. and Mrs. Galbraith exchanged pleased glances.

"And now," he said, rising, "for a little chat with your sister herself."

"I will run and call her," said Cecilia, starting up.

"And prepare her for the fact that I am not the ogre she thinks me," said Mr. Galbraith, his eyes twinkling under their shaggy brows. "No, Miss Fairfax; I prefer to see her at her work, and break the ice myself. But will you be so kind as to direct the driver to meet us with the carriage at the road the other side of the farm? we must not lose the afternoon train, and we'll say good-bye to your aunt and you here, my dear. I am very happy to have renewed our acquaintance."

"And we may hope to see you on Monday, may we not?" said Mrs. Galbraith, kissing them affectionately.

"I will write to-morrow."

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Mrs. Smith is moving impatiently from the table to the window; half-past seven, and her ladies have not appeared. "John," she called to her husband, "if those tea-cakes stand five minutes longer, they won't be worth eating. Oh, there they come at last! Miss Cecilia carrying the camp-stool, and easel, and everything, of course. Dear me! how they are talking away, and how happy they look, to be sure!"

"Mrs. Smith," cried Cecilia, "what have you got for our tea? Tea! it ought to be a perfect banquet, to celebrate this reddest of all red-letter days!"

"We have been hearing some very good news, Mrs. Smith," said Miss Gordon, smiling; "and——"

"Mrs. Smith, can you fancy Miss Kitty gliding along in a gondola, or flirting with the oldest of the Old Masters?"

"No, Miss Cecilia, that I can't," returned Mrs. Smith. "Your dear aunt has brought you both up too well for such nonsense. There, you needn't kiss me like that, bless you! I know you are at your little jokes again. But what I was going to say, ma'am" (turning to Miss Gordon), "was, that a gentleman called here two hours ago, and when he heard you would not be back till seven, said he would look in again about half after. On a bicycle, miss—a steady, nice-looking young gentleman. Smith thought he looked like the medical profession, only, as I told him, they're generally above bicycles."

"Maynard," said Kitty, flushing.

"It must be Mr. Maynard Williams, Mrs. Smith, a gentleman whom we know very well at home."

"Hadn't we better wait tea for him, auntie?" said Kitty.

"Certainly not," said Cecilia, instantly. "I'm famished, Mrs. Smith, and I'm positive I can smell hot tea-cakes."

"You could come and have a slice or two in my kitchen, miss dear," whispered Mrs. Smith, "if Miss Kitty wants to wait tea so particular."

"I shouldn't be satisfied with that," declared Cecilia, laughing.

The meal was over at last; Aunt Jane was sweeping the crumbs from the table; the two girls were leaning back on the little sofa, silent for a moment after their eager talk. Then Cecilia said:—

"You poor Kitty! how I longed to tell you that Mr. Galbraith was so kind-hearted, after all. But I might have known you would not have said anything silly or awkward, as I should have done."

"And he really saw great merit in your sketch, my pet," said Aunt Jane, and she took one little hand fondly. "How *can* I part with her?" she thought. "Tell me over again just what Mr. Galbraith said, if you don't mind."

Kitty evidently did *not* mind, and throwing back her fluffy auburn hair, she was beginning her story with a smile of perfect contentment, when Cecilia suddenly interrupted her with—

"Is that Mr. Smith's wheelbarrow, I wonder?"

"As if you don't *see* Maynard's bicycle passing the window, Cecilia," said Kitty, half laughing, though she felt almost cross. "Listen, there he is at the door!"

"Yes, sir," they heard Mrs. Smith say, "the ladies is quite disengaged. They 've just finished tea. Miss Kitty wished to wait, hoping you might join them, sir; but Miss Cecilia feeling rather sinking—— Walk in sir, please."

"We are *very* glad to see you, Maynard," said Aunt Jane.

"Oh yes, Maynard; and to tell you our delightful news. My dream is realised at last! I am going to Italy—to Bologna, Florence, and Milan," began Kitty excitedly.

"Is Cecilia going too?" asked Mr. Williams, who was decidedly nervous and embarrassed.

"Maynard," said Aunt Jane, "you asked a question when I saw you last, and I find I gave you a wrong answer."

His face brightened as if by magic.

"What question?" said Cecilia. "It sounds like a riddle."

"Cecilia, will you come with me into the pine-wood, and I will tell you?" said Maynard. "The moon is rising over the hill."

"We can see it just as well from the window," said the perverse Cecilia.

"Go, dear," whispered Aunt Jane, with a tender kiss; and Cecilia, her cheeks rivalling Mrs. Smith's, strolled out into the garden, murmuring, "Kitty would have told you the story much better herself."

Miss Gordon watched the pair as they passed through the little gate and climbed the hill together, Maynard bending over Cecilia and talking eagerly. Then she turned away, with a sad smile on her patient face.

"I suppose, Aunt Jane," said Kitty, "they will see no beauty in those lovely drifting clouds and the shadows of the pines, though Maynard *did* pretend to such an interest in the moon! I daresay the explanations will take some time. Maynard is a good, steady fellow, no doubt; but he would never realise *my* ideal. However, if Cecilia is satisfied, it doesn't matter. I must say, he is wonderfully unsympathetic; he did not show the slightest interest when I began to tell him about my plans. Lovers are so frightfully selfish, Aunt Jane!"

HANDS AND HEART.

BY THE REV. FREDERICK HASTINGS.

"Clean hands and a pure heart."—Psalm xxiv. 4.

MAN can "ascend the Hill of the Lord" and stand in the "Holy Place" of which this Psalm speaks. He can enter the presence of God on earth. The Invisible is nearer than the visible. The infinite purity of the Supreme requires that there should be purity in those who approach Him.

Let us think seriously of two cardinal points of fitness for approaching God. None of us wish to act in any sense hypocritically. We seek by association in worship to be fitted better for the battle of life here and the rest of heavenly worship hereafter.

Take, then, the two points—*outward and inward fitness for worship.*

I. *Cleanness of hands is necessary to consistent worship.* Of course, the text is not speaking merely of well-washen hands, but of moral cleanliness. The Pharisees were particular in respect to the former, not to the latter.

The hard, horny, unwashen hands of the toiler may be much cleaner than the white, soft, begloved hand of the idler. The clean hand may—save in the case of

the literary man or the account keeper—indicate only luxury and laziness.

Look at this wondrous member of the human frame—the hand. When a youth, I chanced to read "Bell on the Hand." It was a rather elaborate treatise, but it gave me a lofty idea of the wisdom of the Creator in furnishing man with an instrument so useful and supple as the hand. How few, looking at the hand, think of the great number of parts of which it is composed, of the way in which finger answers to finger, and the thumb to the whole, of how the hand is fitted to pick up and arrange the delicate parts of the smallest watch, or control the movements of a mighty steamship; manipulate the tiny microscopic specimen, or sway the irresistible shock of an army. Some have professed to see some indication of personal character in the hand, as well as in the face—to be able to detect the hand of a thief or the palm of an honest man by the grip. Palmistry has become at once a science, an amusement, and a speculation. Whatever of truth there may be in its claims, it is evident that the hand has a character, and becomes in a sense morally heightened or lowered according to that in which it has to engage. It is that with which we touch. It may be said to contract moral stain when it touches the unholy. The hand of Ananias held part of the amount he professed to have devoted to the Lord. The palm of a Judas received the guilty gains of treachery. Thirty pieces of silver left their impress on the palm. The impress was invisible to other eyes, but felt by his soul. We know how long the clasp or touch of a cold or clammy hand can be felt after it has passed; so Judas doubtless felt the money burning his palm long after he had jerked the pieces from him upon the marble pavement of the Temple. The hand that had "dipped" in the same dish with that of Him who was the "Lamb of God" was the same that took the payment for betrayal. That hand was not clean; that man could not "ascend the Hill of the Lord."

Sometimes the hand that takes, at a solemn communion service, the symbol of Christ's broken body, may the next day strike a bargain with sin, sign some false document, write some deadly words, or inflict some murderous wound.

When we look at any hand, we may see nothing remarkable, but its acts are there written as with invisible ink. Thus the guilty king in the tragedy felt when, looking at the hands which had been engaged in the murder of his trusting guest Duncan, he said—

"This is a sorry sight. . . . These hangman's hands. . . . What hands are here! Ha! they pluck out mine eyes. Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather the multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one red."

So also his wife, watching in her sleep an imaginary spot on the palm, says, after ceaseless rubbing, "What! will these hands ne'er be clean? . . . Here's the smell of blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."

Ah! what sighs she heaved in her strange sleep-walk as she gazed on that hand!

But, without committing heinous crime, there are many whose hands might, like the stones from the wall, cry out against them. For profit the palm is polluted. A costermonger told me with shame of how pained he felt as he thought of how formerly he was accustomed to thrust his thumb in the fruit measure to keep the plums from filling the quart can, and all unseen by the unsuspecting purchaser. Many a hand has had to do some dishonourable and sinful act which will not bear thinking about. It may measure the linen or cloth short. It may press the scales unseen. It may sign a false statement. It may steal into the pocket of another. It may close in an apparently friendly clasp with that of one known to be conscienceless. It may establish guilty monopolies and syndicates. It may point scornfully to a holy man. It may be lifted in opposition to the pure. It may grasp the rewards of iniquity. It may betray and point out the hiding-place of the wronged. The hand of many a man might well cry out against him.

"Washing hands in innocency," is spoken of in one place by the Psalmist. There are a great many who need it. There is no better laver. Who of us can lift up clean hands? Who of us is without spot?

One great religious reformer said that "cleanliness is next to godliness." We may say that without cleanliness of hands there is no godliness. There must be a cleansing by Christ for each one. It is not enough that, like Pilate, we take water to cleanse them ceremonially. His hands were, after his show of washing, still dyed with the blood of Christ, as much as those of the man who handled the blood-stained hammer, and who actually drove the blunt nail into the Divine and quivering palm.

There has never in this world been more than One whose hands were perfectly clean, and who therefore can cleanse. We speak of Him who ever sought to help, who laid hands on men and healed them, who stretched forth His hands to suffer, who lifted up His hands on Olivet to bless, and ascended to the Throne in the act of blessing. Those hands are still outstretched over us to pardon. His blood cleanses from all sin. There is no other way of cleansing but that which He has provided. We can have our sins forgiven through the sacrifice of that sinless Christ. We can then wash our hands in innocency. We can then hope to render consistent worship. Realise now the grand and glorious fact of forgiveness that must precede the life of consistency.

II. *Purity of heart* is essential to consistency of outward life. Cleanness of hand must grow out of purity of heart. It is not by having the cup and platter of human nature washed outside, but by having it cleansed within, that true fitness is acquired. To the centre, the core, of the soul there must be purity.

Only the "pure in heart can see God." Seeing God in the soul makes us pure. His holiness then consumes our sinfulness. His mercy even provides for the renewal. "'T is not a new world, but new hearts we want," says F. W. Robertson. Where there is true purity, there will be the checking of unholy desires. We can check them. Our wills and desires are under our control. We can set a watch on the heart as well as on the lips. We can act conscientiously or not. Some deny this, and say that man is the slave of circumstances. Certainly, much evil arises from unjust laws, bad maxims, and evil circumstances; but who has made these laws, who started those maxims and evil practices? Man started them, following the bent of his own heart. Whatever may be the circumstances surrounding us, if we have the knowledge of law we have sin. If we have no knowledge of law, God does not account our evil acts as sin. We know that we ought to be pure, and this makes us responsible. We are to rise above all evil circumstances—to desire, to hunger, and to thirst after purity.

The habit of purity can be constantly cultivated. If man can train a weed into a plant fit for the conservatory or drawing-room, surely his own heart can be renewed by God's Spirit and fitted for the Holy Place. What a state would not that be in which we should habitually think only the right! But, alas, how difficult to attain! How far off it seems! Sin is ever pressing in upon us.

Standing by my study window, with arms leaning against the sash, I was gazing, one winter's day, on the snowy space before me, and on the trees, whose lace-like branches were whitely edged, and I was thinking of this subject. Warm the room. The fire blazed in the hearth. Cold outside. Draughts keen came through the crevices of the window and under the door. They came in sideways and somehow from above. Through every cranny the cold air struggled to get in. The draught on the back of my hand was like the keen cut of a razor. So sin presses into the heart from all sides. How hard it is to close it up, or to seek out every little crevice and opening! How hard it is to maintain, amid worldliness, the fire of love of holiness, of purity of thought and act!

We have to watch at all times lest we should in some way sin against this love of purity. Watchfulness is needed in little things as well as in great. A friend of mine with his wife and little girl were about to travel by train. The child was just three years old on the day they were to start. He would not be able, according to the company's rule, to take her without a ticket. He accordingly sent on his wife and child the day before, that he might save his conscience and his cash. Now the man who would do this may be perfectly trusted in any great matter as well as small. Some would call it squeamishness; but would there were more of it! In the presence of such a man another would be made better. An habitual cultivation of purity makes a man sensitive to those things that others would account as trifles. We have to avoid anything which would lower our moral nature. We only do this by keeping ever before us the grandeur of moral purity.

The heart can become habitually pure, and it can become gradually more hard. A man can harden so, that he might yield to evil acts to which he at one time would have thought it impossible for himself to be inclined. Our natures can develop in two widely divergent directions—heavenward or hellward, Godward or devilward.

Sometimes, from a wrong idea as to religion, men think that because a man has passed at one time through certain feelings, he is not only pardoned, but put above the power of sin. Such a man must be very careful. No man has more religion than he has purity of heart and love of God.

Religion is not merely being saved from hell, and getting a hope of a Paradise of bliss after death. Religion is something that must enter into the whole life, and purify the whole soul. Religion is that spirit which leads us, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do it all to the glory of God. We must live the life of love and purity. But much religion is only to the glory of our own selfishness, seeking the rewards of godliness without doing the will of God.

"Is religion any the better for being everlasting selfishness?" says a writer. Alas! much preaching may have led only to the idea that our great business in life is to secure eternal happiness for our miserable selves hereafter. Religion does bring happiness, but it aims at the renovation of the whole nature. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Christ said, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself." He meant, I let them see purity embodied, that they also may be "sanctified through the truth."

Purity of heart is more by far than power of brain, more than deftness of hand. Human welfare is all built up on moral purity. Our acts are the outcome of thought, and the character of the thought depends on the moral state.

Now, for the sake of others, for the sake of our nation and of the world, we should cultivate this purity, so that it may become habitual as well as doctrinal.

If individuals were pure, how exalted the nation would become! Some talk of diplomatic prestige, of naval and military prestige, but the true pre-eminence and prestige will be with that nation which is exalted by righteousness.

A venerable minister said, in my hearing, that in his early days—days of Chartist troubles—he heard an illiterate but godly man pray most sensibly thus:—"O Lord, we hear a great deal about reform in these days, but we are very loth to begin with ourselves." This is true. Even many Christians are loth to begin with themselves. Yet nothing damages the Church so much as the lives of inconsistent members. Our prayers ought to be not merely, "Lord, send prosperity

outwardly," but, "Send us purity; help us as individuals to 'begin with ourselves.'"

Some are saying, "We know we ought to be pure, but how?"

Doubtless some of us are conscious enough of failures. That which they desire is, not so much condemning, but cheering, guiding, delivering, elevating. Well, see how Christ treated a Zaccheus. He trusted him, showed him His love, went to stay with him, defended him, made manifest that the man was more than his position or occupation, and called him by the name of honour—a son of Abraham. He lifted the man by letting him see what was expected of him. So He treats us. He cleanses also by His sacrificial work. Directly we believe that He died for us individually, we are accounted as pure before the great avenging, implacable law of righteousness. Our sins are covered; they are not imputed to us. This release is life and strength; it leads to purity. There is mention in Virgil of a river in the Campania to which fable attached the power of making all beings white that drank thereof or touched it; it made the oxen and sheep white; it made articles of darkest dye white; it made black men white. That is fable. There is, however, a stream in which we may wash, and of which we may drink and become pure—the stream of mercy and self-sacrificing love which flowed from Him who died for us. Drink thereof, and our strength shall be renewed for the uphill climb to heaven's gate. Wash therein, and no enemy shall be able to point to spot of contamination. Shall we not be prepared for worship here, and finally to ascend the Hill of the Lord, and stand in the Holy Place with clean hands and pure heart?

OUR SOLDIERS' AMUSEMENTS.

AT THE TIN HALL, ALDERSHOT.



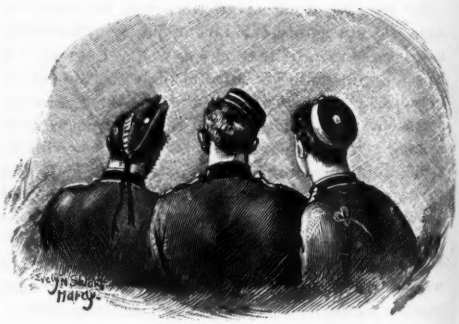
AN ACCOMPANIST.

WITHIN the last few years great efforts, in which earnest, warm-hearted women take the lead, have been, and are still being made to better the condition, socially and morally, of those who may be called upon at any moment to give their lives for their country.

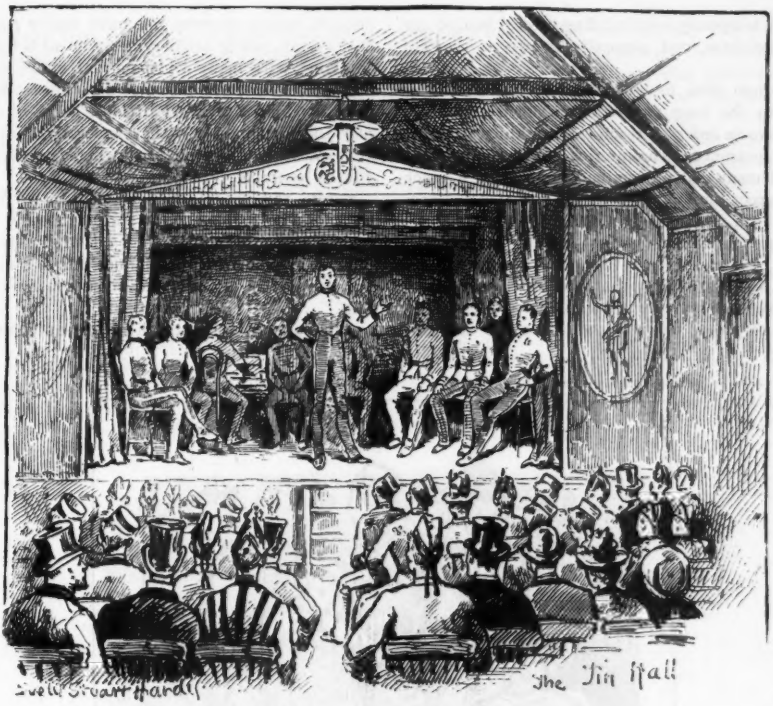
With this view the soldiers' amusements are borne in mind, for Tommy Atkins must have his share of play as well as the routine work of cleaning accoutrements and learning the art of war; and at the present time the monotony of drill or the barrack-room cannot be pleaded as an excuse for his frequenting the public-house or the low music-hall.

Books and periodicals—if not always as plentiful as they might be, now cheap and good literature is to be had—are found in the recreation-rooms. Soldiers' Institutes—on the admirable plan inaugurated at Portsmouth by Miss Robinson, at Aldershot by Mrs. Daniels and her daughter—are either built or projected at all large garrison towns, and are as well known to the general public as they are appreciated by the more thoughtful of the men for whose use they are intended; while so much encouragement is given to athletics that annual meetings for military sports have been instituted by every regiment in the service, and are looked upon as the regular events of the summer season.

Unless detailed for guard or piquet, the soldiers' evenings are at their own disposal. After the drill or route marching of the day, they may be seen, in fine weather, strolling along such country lanes as are within a walk of their quarters, or making the



IN THE AUDIENCE.



streets of the nearest towns gay with their presence. But in the long dark nights of winter, other ways of passing the time having to be resorted to, some thoughtful friend suggested that once a week, at least, the regiments and corps stationed at Aldershot might take turns in providing entertainment for the rest by a series of concerts and recitals.

The suggestion appears to have been cordially responded to, for during the past winter these concerts—to which everyone in uniform is admitted free—were given regularly; and so thronged were they by approving audiences that they may be pronounced a decided success.

And that success appears to owe little or nothing to outsiders. The bandmaster, or his deputy, conducts; the bandsmen give their services gratuitously, and play their best "for the honour of the corps;" the singers, etc., are drawn from their own ranks, and the additional aid they frequently receive is given by such of their officers, and the ladies connected with the regiment, as are gifted with good musical talent, and good-naturedly willing to employ it for their benefit.

A couple of hours, and a concert, however elaborately got up, is at an end; but every amateur who has assisted at one knows that the mere singing of a pretty ballad, or playing of a fantasia, has little to do with the pleasurable excitement it has given him and his colleagues for many preceding days.

There have been the glees to practise; that difficult passage for the clarionet or euphonium solo to be mastered; the most telling recitations to be selected and submitted to a few critical friends; and the charade or proverb—if one is attempted—to be rehearsed again and yet again before it approaches perfection.

In one quarter these entertainments have been



THE GENERAL.

given in a temporary iron building erected behind one of the Institutes, and generally known as the Tin Hall.

Come there with us, good reader, and do not be repelled by the long narrow entry down which you have to dive in order to reach this building, or by its homely appearance. The interior is cheerful enough, the red element that predominates imparting a much livelier aspect than an ordinary black-coated audience can give to a concert-room.

Already it is filling rapidly—so rapidly that it is a relief to see that all the doors open outward. Perhaps the first thing that strikes the inquiring stranger is the courtesy with which he is received by a couple of young dragoons, who keep the door and usher him to a seat; and as soon as he has taken possession of it, he cannot but note the order that reigns in this large and varied assemblage.

Men of all ages and grades in the service are here, from the little drummer to the grey-haired general in plain clothes, who has looked in to see how the thing works. There is a sprinkling of civilians, who pay a small sum for their seats, and the female element is not lacking.

That the larger number of the privates we see around us are mere boys no one can deny; but when we compare them, smart, clean, and well set up, with the hobble-de-hoys to be found at our street corners, we feel also that the course of military training and discipline is making men of them.

We should rejoice to hear that the agitation in favour of more food and better cooking for these growing lads was bearing fruit; but this subject does not trouble them just at present. There is a buzz of cheerful talk as the room gets more closely packed, and half a dozen young artillerymen who sit behind us are enjoying, with many whispers and much suppressed laughter, some jest that mightily amuses them; but there is no noise, and very little—if any—of the horse-play in the back rows, that generally occurs to the annoyance of everyone else, wherever country-bred youths assemble.

Before the programme commences, we have just time for a cursory glance at our neighbours. Directly in our van sits a burly sergeant of the 1st Royals, flanked by men of the Ordnance Corps, some lancers in their smart undress, and more soberly clad rifle-men.

Over our shoulder we catch a glimpse of a sun-bronzed infantry man, whose badges and medals attest his long service in India. A cluster of recruits who have just arrived from the depôt are not far off; a couple of the army chaplains are strolling about the room stopping to say a few kindly words to those they recognise, or to admire a fine fat baby, who must also have been reared under military discipline, for he never obtrudes himself on public notice, but sits on the knee of his proud father—one of the hussars—absorbed in his thumbs and the music till his eyes close, and he is transferred to the arms of his mother.

With military precision the curtain rises at half-past seven, and the band files on to the platform; a wave of the bâton, and the opening chords are struck of one of the most effective of overtures. This is followed by a glee, in which the voices of the little drummers and fifers do good service. Two or three solos are beautifully played, as well as two or



"Absorbed in his thumbs"

three selections from our best composers, these being interspersed with songs and recitations, both serious and playful. In the latter there is nothing of which the most captious can complain, and if the soldiers evince a preference for a ditty with a refrain in which they can join lustily, who can wonder?

"You should have been here last week," says one of my neighbours, "then you'd have heard Mrs. M—— sing. She's the wife of one of our doctors, and it's a rare treat to listen to her!"

"Aye," asserts another, "and that chaplain standing over yonder, he's worth hearing, he is! But give me Major Blank if you want a good hearty laugh; he's the singer for me!"

There are several vociferous encores, but they cannot always be responded to, for at half-past nine the gun will boom forth the signal of recall. Already some of the boys are slipping quietly from the room, perhaps with a pang of regret that they may not stay for a merry little interlude acted by four of the performers. By the time the gun does send forth its warning, the hearty applause that follows this has died away. "God save the Queen" has been played, and the hall is rapidly emptying.

We stop to read a programme for the following Tuesday, and see that it includes handbell ringing, in which some of the men are said to excel. We pause again, after threading the narrow entry, to listen to the trumpeters making the air ring with the cavalry call, and the roll of the drums at the infantry quarters.

By the time the clocks strike ten even these sounds will be silenced. A little later, and the command "Lights out!" will envelop in darkness the long lines of barracks and huts. It has been a pleasant evening to many, and who would not rejoice that such evidences of good comradeship and interest in better things than the soldier has been credited with, can be found at the Tin Hall? LOUISA CROW.



"LIGHTS OUT."

INFLUENCE.

(PREACHED BEFORE A YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.)

BY THE REV. J. R. MACDUFF, D.D.

"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep and was laid to his fathers."—ACTS xiii. 36.

DAVID, "the man after God's own heart," had been consigned to his grave. He had passed away like the sun of a summer or autumn evening from his place among his fellows.

But has the glory of that lustrous orb finally departed, as he sinks in the horizon? Do no surviving rays linger after his earthly course has run? Is his harp now left to moulder on the willows of Zion? Nay, nay, there is music to this hour in those silent strings. The light of his life, and influence, and character survives the tomb: the beams of the vanished luminary loiter and linger on the hoary mountain tops. As we stand by the mausoleum on the brow of his own holy hill, we listen to the panegyric pronounced over him by one who had imbibed much of his spirit, and is sharing now his crown:—"David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep and was laid to his fathers."

I.

IN deducing from these words moral and spiritual lessons, I would observe generally, that *each individual in this life has some great purpose to fulfil.* "David *served* his own generation."

Every thing in the wide universe has its special mission. The flower fulfils its design by unfolding its colours or scattering its sweet odours wherever it blooms. As we see it dropping one by one its decayed and withered leaves, we feel its little destiny in its own little world has been attained. The lark as it mounts

in the air, and chants its matin carol ("singing up to heaven's gate") fulfils its mission by these tuneful melodies. If we take a loftier survey, and ascend amid the glories of the firmament, we see the sun fulfilling his great appointment to give light to the system: coming forth "like a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run his race"; or the moon, faithful sentinel, lavishing her nightly care on the earth—a majestic beacon-light to land and ocean! Turn to what page we may in the vast volume of creation, we shall find in each the record of some peculiar office and vocation. Dragons and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind, all fulfil the word and decree and design of God.

And is it different with man? Has he alone no momentous work to perform in the economy in which he is placed? Is our whole earthly destiny to eat and drink, and sleep and die? To fret our brief hour on life's stage; to be ushered in with a few rejoicings at our birth, followed by a few tears at our departure? And when our sun has gone down, when the grass of the grave covers our resting places, shall we be as if we never were?

How many there are who, to all appearance, think so! Who have never yet wakened up to a sense of their high destiny, as having a part to act and a sphere to occupy: whose inward feeling seems to be that in this great world, with its teeming millions, it signifies nothing how they live: that they soon shall be as though they never existed; that when they sink into the tomb, it will be like the vessel going down in mid-ocean. There will be a few plungings and heavings as it momentarily wrestles with the storm; but the tempest sweeps, the sea opens its yawning mouth, the waves close over it and then resume their wonted play. Not a trace or vestige remains; the place that once knew it, knows it no more!

My brethren, that solemn, that awful reality they call *existence* is no plaything. It was given you as the mightiest of possessions, burdened with immeasurable responsibilities. The weighty saying, which many a tongue was taught earliest to lisp (believe it or no) was this, "Man's chief end is to glorify God!" Have you ever, in sober seriousness, realised what is the meaning of these two simple words, "I LIVE"? Have you ever, in due solemnity, thought of the familiar utterance in prayer, "O Lord, I bless Thee for my creation"? Nay, that not only with reference to yourself, but with reference to others, that *creation* is either a blessing or a curse, and must be perpetuated as such; that if it be not the one it must be the other? Yes, you and I are now *living*, and in spite of ourselves we must live *after death*. The remains of ancient Nineveh—its winged symbols of power have been untombed from the dust of ages. Its hieroglyphics of forty centuries shed a light on the past and have sent their words to the ends of the earth. The coral and alabaster rocks are the monuments and mementoes of millions of years, records of hoary time silently discoursing on eras long antecedent to the creation. So with man, and the more enduring influence of mind and character. His influence, unknown to him, descends from age to age. Nineveh and all its living throng have long ago passed away. The world's rocks and mountains have this carved on their stupendous brows: "They shall perish." But the human mind, the record of thought, and character, and example, is imperishable.

Little did David think when he was humbly serving his God, either in early days amid the flocks of Bethlehem, or in later years in the palaces of Zion, that he would form one of the great waymarks of all time, his name and words telling upon unborn multitudes. Speaking only of the better and brighter phase of his history, little did he think, when he was mentally maturing the building of a material temple, that in his own priceless Psalms he was uprearing for every age a glorious edifice, whose walls were salvation and its gates praise; thus not only serving God in his own generation, but, as he himself expressed it, writing "for the generation to come, that the people which should be created might praise the Lord!"

His position was in one sense indeed peculiar and unique. He formed a conspicuous landmark among his fellows. "The fierce light that beats upon a throne" brought out in bold relief the features of his varied and chequered life alike in their grandeur and their baseness. But what may have been in a greater sense with him, is equally true in a lesser sense with every one of us, though our names be unknown and our spheres limited. Oh, truly it is a solemn thought that each one of you is exercising some sway, for good or for evil. If you are not serving your day and generation for the better, you must be serving it for the worse. There can be no such thing as mere negative influence. You must either, like the aromatic plant, be diffusing a grateful fragrance, or, like the fabled upas tree, be casting a deadly shade all around.

And if so, it well becomes us individually to address to ourselves the personal question, Am *I* fulfilling the great end and design of my being? Or, is it so, that I have done naught to serve my God, or to benefit my fellow-men? Am I one of the men of Meroz, the "do-nothings," on whom the curse formerly fell? Were I summoned to my dying hour this day, could I point to one thing, in this blank existence of mine, in which I had sought the promotion of good; and would no gap be made or felt by my absence? Yonder fig-tree on the way to Bethany is a parable designed to warn and instruct in every age. See it, stinted, shrivelled, withered. It had borne no fruit. It had not fulfilled the design of its creation; and a tender, gracious Saviour pronounces upon it the cumberer's sentence and the cumberer's awful doom!

Happy are those who, like the minstrel King of Judah, have been led to regard life as a golden talent: have realised its momentous requirements and stern responsibilities. True, the old Hebrew monarch failed,

grievously failed, in maintaining without blot or stain loyalty to the God of heaven. How lamentably low he fell beneath his once divine ideal! His sun, glorious as it was, went down amid weeping clouds; and bitterer tears still would he have shed could he have foreseen the many taunts and scoffs with which the enemies of truth have pointed to his crimson crimes. His influence, however, *on the whole* was good. The dark passages of his life-story are left to warn, while the loftiness of his aspirations is still bequeathed for our imitation and rebuke. Yes! sleep on, mighty hero! Peace to thine ashes! Thou didst serve thy God, and that too in high places in thy day and generation. If thou hadst never lived, this great world would have been the loser. Without thee, Zion would have missed her temple, kings and monarchs a consecrated example; the Church would have forfeited that glorious inspired legacy of sanctified genius, which has dried many a mourner's tear and healed and soothed many a heart crushed with sorrow! If thou wert to break thy slumbers, or rather, to come a visitant from the spirit-land, thou wouldst hear a teeming chorus of voices this day in "the Church throughout all the world," like the noise of many waters, chanting thine undying words! There would be a blank in our Bibles, there would be a blank in our memories; there would be a blank in our sublimest solaces, if the harp of the sweet singer of Israel had never been strung, and his lips never tuned to pour out these jubilant and soothing numbers. He may well fall asleep and be gathered to his fathers: for he has stirred a noble ripple, which extends, and will extend, to remotest shores. He has left his indelible footprints on the sands of time! more than a million suns have risen and set on his grave; but his voice is still heard: "he being dead yet speaketh."

II.

BUT let us note, farther (and this is the only other point to which I shall advert), the special sphere and limit of influence spoken of in the text. It is "*his own generation.*"

We have thus spoken of David's influence as extending far beyond his own age. But observe that there is nothing specially said in the text about posthumous influence; nothing said about his serving *posterity.* Nay, rather, it is "*his own generation.*" And not only was this the peculiar vocation he was called to discharge, but he seems powerfully to have been impressed with the same idea himself; for in the seventy-first Psalm, which was penned in the close of life, he says:—"Now when I am old and gray-headed, O God forsake me not, until I have showed Thy strength *unto* THIS *generation.*"

We have thus brought before us the practical, all-important truth, that our duties and sympathies are mainly to be occupied with the age in which we live, and the fellow-beings around. And though it be true with regard to each one of us also, as with David, that our example reaches beyond death—that the wave which touches one age must affect the next, yet the specific claim and responsibility is with our *own generation*, the race of living contemporary men. Each planet in the material system has its period of revolution. That period, with us, is *the present.* While, in the well-known lines of the poet,

> "Life is real, life is earnest,
> And the grave is not its goal;"

he adds—

> "Act—act in the living Present,
> Heart within and God o'erhead."

Here, too, it behoves us to interpose the personal interrogatory, What is the peculiar talent with which God has invested me, and wherewith I can best serve Him? Is it wealth? Is it intellect? art, or science, or literature? Is it birth, or public station, or private influence? Whatever it be, let me seek to occupy it till my Lord shall come; that when He cometh, He may receive His own with usury. Nor should any power be regarded as too small and insignificant. It is in the moral and spiritual as in the natural world, the tiniest particle, the invisible globule helps to load the cloud which descends either in gentle showers or in terrific waterspouts. The lowliest and humblest rower propels the vessel. The lowliest and humblest can help directly or indirectly to untie the bandages from a sin-stricken, woe-worn world, and send it forth from its fevered couch, walking and leaping, and praising God. If from peculiarity of disposition or situation some may feel as if they were unequal to the outward activities of Christian work and service, yours may be the silent but equally potent example of a holy, meek, loving, peaceful life.

In outer nature there are varieties of forces; some active, energetic, busy, noisy, and patent to all. There are others not less striking and important, working secretly, and only known by their effects.

The foaming torrent and waterfall with the noise of thunder is wearing gradually the rock on which it strikes. Around it, up the steep ascent, are the winter trees. In their bare and leafless stems, more quickly, though noiselessly, another and far different process is going on. The sap, unseen and unnoticed, is creeping up their pores. Silently they are "with verdure clad," till they come to wave in their summer glory. Characteristically says Luther, regarding his most faithful and beloved associate, Melancthon:—"I was born to contend on the field of battle with factions and wicked spirits. This is why my works abound with war and tempests. It is my task to uproot the stock and the stem, to clear away the briers and underwood, to fill up the pools and the marshes. I am the rough woodman, who has to prepare the way and smooth the road. But Philip advances quietly and softly: he tills and plants the ground: sows and waters it joyfully, according to the gifts that God has given him with so liberal a hand."

"Timid before men," the historian of the Reformation thus aptly records regarding one of the English worthies, "timid before men, he was full of boldness before God; and day and night called upon Him for souls. But while kneeling in his closet others were at work in the world." It is a noble influence, you truly say, that of the minister of the Gospel, swaying hundreds by pure and holy and heart-stirring appeal. But remember the aphorism, "While preaching moves earth, prayer moves Heaven!"

Further, with regard to this apportionment of duty and service of which I speak, we learn from our text the comforting truth, that all our situations and positions in life are Divinely ordained. "David served his own generation *by the will*," or, as the word means, "by the appointment of God." HE gives us our allotted tasks, He sets the bounds of our habitation. Nay, more, He adapts us for the sphere or department He wishes us to occupy. He suits the soldier to his place, and the place to the soldier. It is He also, our text tells us, who appoints for us the hour of our death. It was *by the will of God* David "fell asleep." It was the Divine word and summons which silenced his earthly harp, and called him to a higher minstrelsy, amid ministering seraphim. "WHEN thy days be fulfilled," said God to him by the mouth of Nathan—"*when* thy days be fulfilled" (not before) "thou shalt sleep with thy fathers." "HE turneth man to destruction, and saith, Return, ye children of men!"

But on this and other suggested topics I shall not enlarge. Let me rather conclude by saying a few words in connection with the special occasion of this discourse. "The Young Men's Christian Association" is a cheering title. It speaks of many of the youth of this place associated for mental and intellectual culture; but who are wishful to proclaim that a nobler and holier bond of union cements them: that they glory in the name of Christian. They are confederated to serve Christ in their day and generation.

My young friends and brothers, members of this society, I congratulate you on your recognition of the great truth which has been engaging us, that you *can* do something, and that you *are* doing something for God. I know well your trials and your temptations. I have seen more than once, in a rural sphere of labour, the tear standing in the parents' eyes as they bade farewell to their boy, as he was being launched for the first time from the cottage of his birth, amid the evils and snares of a great city like this. There may be such here amongst us—someone who has not long ago left the sanctities of a distant home with all the hallowed memories of a mother's prayers and a father's counsels. You have not dishonoured or abused the confidence they have reposed in you. You have manfully breasted the torrent; and in this momentous period of your existence—when your characters are just moulding—when much depends on the stand you now make, the principles you now imbibe, the friendships you now form—you have wisely avouched the Lord to be your God, and resolved to follow the ways of holiness, which are the ways of happiness. Make it your earnest endeavour and prayer, that whatever your lot or position or circumstances in life may be, you may be enabled to glorify *Him*, either by some lowly services, or by the quiet unostentatious influence of a pure, consistent, godly life.

Others, your own age (perhaps your own associates in daily business), may allow themselves to become the prey of shallow minds and depraved companionships, suffering all that is noble in human nature to be drifted on the rocks, making shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience. Aye, and not only ruining themselves, but dragging other vessels freighted with immortality down the same dark whirlpool of perdition. Be it yours not only to serve your God, but so to live that the world may be the better for you, and that when you die and your hand lies withering in the grave, the seed dropped by that hand, years on years before, may spring up bearing fruit to the glory of God.
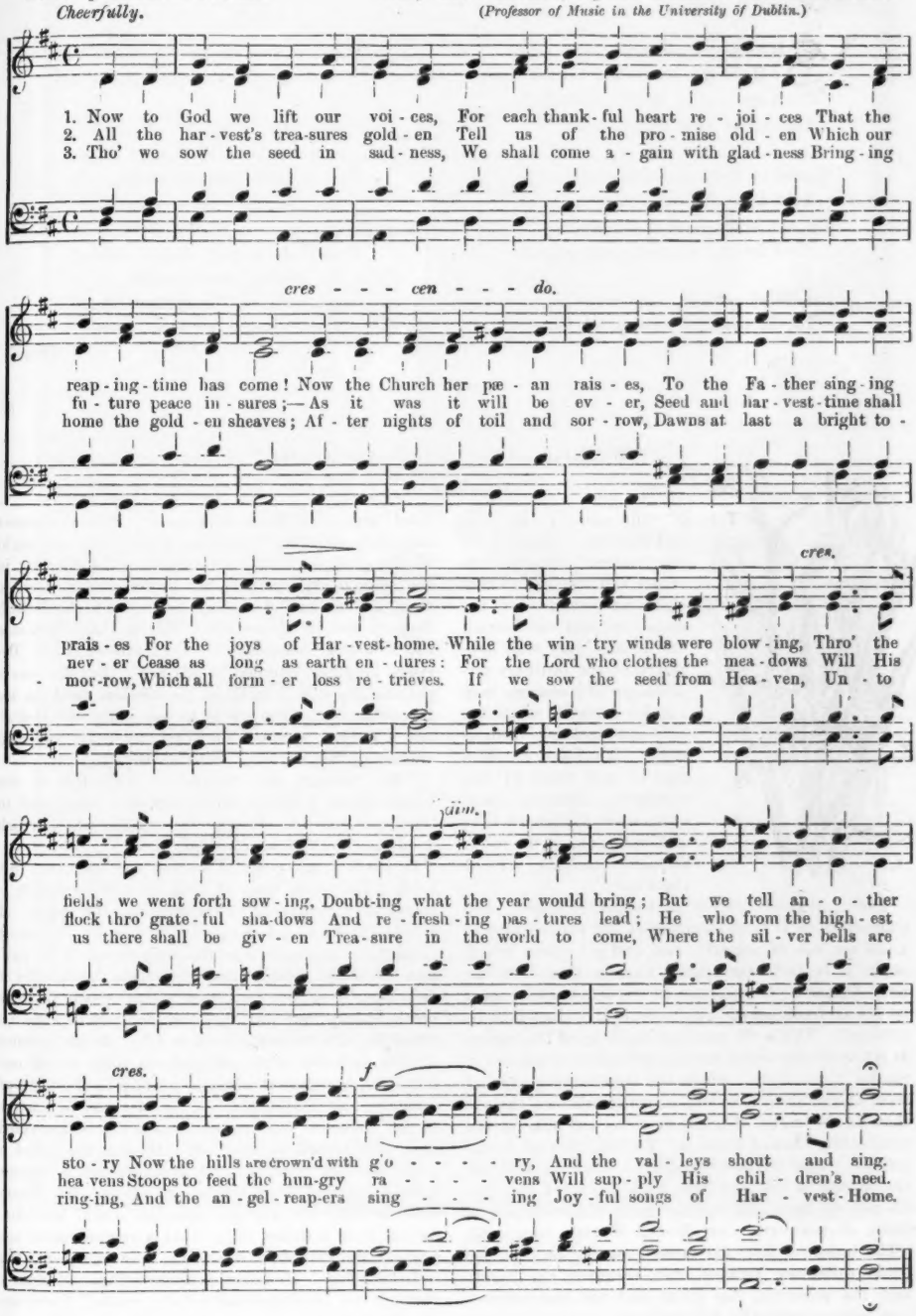
Yes! you young men who love Christ, and feel honoured to be among what Bunyan calls "the Host of the Lord," yours is a vast responsibility, yours a glorious mission! The spiritual well-being of this country of ours for the next generation is, under Him, very much in your hands; your example for good may not only extend to those now around you and with whom you come in daily contact, but the seed we have spoken of may germinate from one age to another. Those you may never be spared to see, may thank God that you have lived.

Difficult undoubtedly it may be (situated as many of you are) to do something in the way of *actively* influencing others. We are aware of the opposition you are called to encounter, in these our days, when a rampant infidelity is coming in like a flood, when licentiousness walks with unblushing front our streets, when dens of dissipation and iniquity crowd our lanes, when thousands of unwary youth are engulphed in the awful vortex, and the broad way is still, as ever it was, the densely crowded one. We know the battle you have to fight, we know the inequality of numbers. Yet be not discouraged. We have seen lately in another land what a handful can do, with bold hearts in a sacred mission, grappling with forced marches and hot suns and swarming foes! And shall it be otherwise in the moral warfare?

Only be strong and of a good courage. Go forth to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty; and if others affect to scorn that holy name, and to treat with levity these words of truth and soberness we preach, be it yours (conscious of the grandeur of your destiny and the sacredness of your cause) to bear amid the world's fiery temptations and legion foes, the old watchword and battle-song, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ!" "Whatsoever others do, as for me I will serve the Lord."

Hymn for Harvest.

Words by ELLEN T. FOWLER. *Tune*, "ST. WILFRID'S," *by* SIR ROBERT P. STEWART, Mus.D.
(*Professor of Music in the University of Dublin.*)



EVENING HYMN.

SHADES of evening, softly falling,
Hush my heart, and let me hear
Angel voices sweetly calling,
Telling me that God is near.

Shades of evening, calmly closing,
Fold away all earthly care,
Let my heart, on God reposing,
Find its rest in praise and prayer.

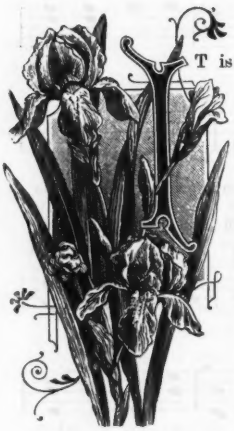
Shades of evening, stars revealing
In the peaceful arch of night,
Peaceful o'er my spirit stealing,
Show me Christ, my Star of light.

Shades of evening, holier living
Bear me from the heaven above—
Rest in God's own sweet forgiving,
And the gladness of His love.

Shades of evening, slowly stilling
All around in rest secure,
Let me rest, and wait fulfilling,
Trusting God, for God is sure.

J. HUIE.

"WARRANTED FAST COLOURS."



IT is an expression of the mart and the shop. But if there are indeed sermons in stones and lessons in every sight and sound for the seeing eye and the hearing ear, it may very well happen that the ordinary terminology of commerce may furnish texts for rambling, yet not reckless, meditations. We have an idea that we may fairly lift the salesman's familiar praise of his wares to higher levels, and read into it an interpretation the same, yet not the same.

There are fast colours in human character, and colours which it is an easement of the pain of pity to know are not of necessity fast, and yet others which ought to be fast—for friends warrant them—but are not. Certainly the pattern of the life-purpose must be set in fixed, unwavering colours if success is to be achieved. This is the uniform teaching of biography. It is one of the truths emphasised in such works as Dr. Smiles' "Self-Help," where the inspiriting warp and woof of narrative is woven of many brilliant threads that in the midst of every diversity are alike in the dominating hues of decision. The red glow of Longfellow's "star of the unconquered will" has suffused the spirits of the men who have garnered the best sheaves of fame and fortune from the world's wide fields of industry. Sir Fowell Buxton once said, "The longer I live, the more I am certain that the great difference between men—between the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant—is energy, invincible determination; a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory." His own career supplies a striking illustration of the value and might of the qualities he thus commended. Following in the steps of Wilberforce, Sir Fowell was resolved to make a final end of slavery throughout the British Empire, and he introduced a Bill to that effect into the House of Commons. He stood almost alone. Derisive laughter vibrated in his ears. But the brave philanthropist had faith in his mission, faith in his favourite text, "The battle is not yours, but God's," and a purpose stamped on mind and heart and conscience in fast colours. Said he boldly—

"Mr. Speaker, the reading of this Bill is the beginning of a movement which will surely end in the abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions." And he was right.

In every department of human activity the rule holds. The great mass of evidence supporting it is continually receiving accessions in the pages of autobiographies and memoirs. Some of the most interesting testimonies to the importance of a purpose set in fast colours come to us from the records of men born with the proverbial silver spoon in their breakfast-cup, but not therefore content to have an unworthy or a fluctuating aim in life. As an instance of this, and also of the doggedness with which our industrial benefactors cling to an idea in the teeth of difficulty and disappointment, the case may be quoted of Mr. Lister, to whom a monument has been erected in a public park at Bradford. He was the son of a gentleman of position, and destined for a career widely different from the one he chose. The dream came to him—the average capitalist would have dismissed it as a dream only—that a remunerative use could be discovered for silk waste, then regarded in the mills as refuse. He began experimenting, and mainly through his instrumentality "silk waste" forms today the basis of numerous valuable fabrics. He made



"Let me hear
Angel voices sweetly calling,
Telling me that God is near."

EVENING HYMN.—*p.* 240.

princely gains, but the pith of the parable is here: before hitting on the right method Mr. Lister was as much as £350,000 out of pocket, and still persevered!

And in the introduction to his encyclopædic work, "The British Navy," Lord Brassey gives us the views of another specialist. Speaking with quiet depreciation of his own talents—in which estimate many will refuse to join—he points out that from boyhood the sea and things pertaining thereto have been his passion, that his whole public life has in the main been devoted to nautical matters, and he adds, "Unity and fixity of purpose, combined with patience and application, will slowly win the ear of the public and secure their grateful appreciation."

Fast colours! "That young painter will write R.A. to his name one day." "The new member for Nonborough is certain in the long run to reach ministerial rank." "Our young friend's first brief is the bottom rung of a ladder likely to lead to the Woolsack."

How often words like these are spoken with apparent justification! Conspicuous ability exists in each case, talents that should conduct to eminence. But alas!—

> "If Fancy, for a season flushed with hope,
> Through boundless ether soars with wing unchecked,
> A little space for her is ample scope."

In the sequel the past prophecy of triumph has to be discreetly forgotten. The dauntless determination that alone could have carried the aspirant to his goal through the thickest press of competitors has proved a vanishing quality. Yes, the lives of men who have risen are legion in our libraries, but what an endless, depressing, impossible task it would be to tell the stories of the men who ought to have risen, but through their own failure of purpose or of effort sank, in spite of every natural gift and favouring circumstance, into the abyss of obscurity. There is salutary instruction in remembering (not unkindly) those who promised well in the start but tired in the race.

It has been remarked that there are colours, sinister and sad, which it is a relief to know need not be the permanent hues of character. The dark tint of some evil way, some moral infirmity, can be changed by the forgiveness and help of God for the beauty of a reformed life. A power mightier than the spell of habit is at man's avail to make the future far other than the past has been. But here again the pattern of the purpose must be set in fast colours.

Even the November grey of indifferent physical health can sometimes be brightly modified by persistent adherence to sanative measures. Over and over again the naturally delicate have thus won their way to a green old age. A very wonderful example of what can be accomplished in this direction is supplied in the career of Ludovico Cornaro, a Venetian noble and physician, who flourished in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In the first flush of manhood his health disastrously failed by reason of over-indulgence in the pleasures of the table. He was warned that he need not expect to attain advanced years. But Cornaro took a resolution to live by strictest rule, and to build up day by day habits of austere abstinence from all that would not conduce to the reinvigoration of his feeble frame. He persevered in this with the notable result that he deceived all his pessimist acquaintances and died at last a centenarian.

Sometimes the warranty of fast colours turns out to be worthless, to the equal discomfiture of those who give it and those who rely upon it. Moving to and fro in a world where many shadows pass muster as substance for a space, we cannot help but observe this sorrowful fact.

The lad comes to the entering-desk in a city counting-house, highly spoken of by everyone, with a capital home and school record behind him. Integrity, industry, solicitude to please superiors, are the virtues that seem to form the design of character. For a time, in sunny weather, with temptation at a distance, all goes well. The promise of the most flattering testimonial is redeemed in daily performance. But though the hour of searching trial tarries long, it does not tarry ever. It arrives when least anticipated. The stealthy whisper that the dull round of duty need not be the whole circuit of life steals through some unwatched avenue into the mind. Dubious associates wind the meshes of their nets of folly about the youth's feet. Little by little he yields to the insidious approaches of mischievous suggestion—to break loose at last from every mooring of principle and prudence, and make pitiful shipwreck of his prospects. After all, the colours were not fast.

Or a fair young maiden, brought up in a home where comfort, but not luxury, has reigned, well reputed for sense, economy, and every household virtue, is wooed and won by a suitor of apparent means and standing. The bells ring merrily in the old church tower, friends press warm and sincere congratulations upon both bride and bridegroom. For the blushing girl, who in her brave array is queen for an hour of all hearts, it is an excellent match. And he who conducts her to the altar is deemed equally fortunate. His wife will be no extravagant devotee of fashion, neglecting domestic duties and the high service of affection and esteem in the home shrine for the reckless pursuit of the vanities of society. She has been too well trained to commit so huge a blunder. Honest work-a-day hues predominate in the texture of her hopes and wishes.

Ah, but the colours are not fast! The months revolve apace, and with their march clouds lurid with menace gather on the horizon. Ambition has come with opportunity to the young wife. Conscious of her charms and accomplishments, she seeks for them a richer and more sparkling setting of homage and admiration. She essays to prove by the brilliance of her little court that those early congratulations were not misplaced, but that she has indeed married well, and is able to gratify every desire of her heart. That love may thereby come to mourn—

> "Its early dead;
> Hope its illusions fled,
> Or rudely slain,"

she does not pause to think. Of the heavy burden of wasteful expenditure, of soul-weariness caused to the husband who is chagrined and disappointed, of the fears for the future mooted in well-informed quarters, she is contentedly ignorant. Life seems a long

summer day, and she basks gayest of the gay in the pleasant glamour; until the storm-rack blots out the sunshine, hushes the idle voices of flattery, replaces heedlessness by remorse, and bursts in a flood of financial ruin that she has provoked but cannot retrieve.

Or the counterpart of this melancholy picture may be a fact. Here it is the wife who suffers the grief of disillusion. "Comfortably settled," was the verdict of kinsfolk and friends upon the life-choice irrevocably ratified on the marriage morn, and the bride in her shy confidence endorsed the finding with a glad heart. A true man stood at her side, honour and rectitude and courtesy stamped upon every word and action of which either she or the world at large had cognisance. In the article of contracting that high treaty the truth was even as the surface showed. The bridegroom might lawfully have written upon his escutcheon "*Sans reproche*." Blue of honesty, rose of tenderness were genuine tints of his character.

But not fast colours. Business perplexities thicken, and a brusque, bitter temper is developed beneath their rude friction. The canker of impatience eats through the thin veneer of home courtesy. The struggle with unpropitious circumstance is allowed to shatter the home peace. Worse is in the near future. The tempter comes with hints of easy ways to wealth; and the prevailing conditions, so adverse as they seem to advance by plodding steps, heighten to a dangerous degree the contrast between grim reality and the glowing canvas painted of imagination. Into rash adventures the dupe of greed and discontent plunges, with the old weary result of a shameful catastrophe in which the poor wife's shaken edifice of trust is dismally overwhelmed. Panels of the realistic present, these, outlined almost daily in the columns of a score of newspapers! Specimens, too, of a sad gallery open to everyone's observation.

Fast colours, the colours of steady, wholesome purpose, of the will to mend what is amiss, of virtues and excellences that will emerge uninjured from under the severest tests—how shall these be won?

Some progress towards possession of the first may be made by an adequate recognition of the hard facts of life, by taking to heart the knowledge that in most enterprises want of decision means want of success. But for the resolution to redress moral weaknesses, for the power to keep a tight grip of integrity, and to preserve a noble, sweet serenity when trials come in swift succession, we must turn away from self and set our faces upwards to the hills, from whence cometh our strength. The energy of the higher life is a borrowed energy. Our help cometh from the Lord. It is His Almighty grace which must set the pattern of a complete and well-balanced character in colours pure, winning, and *fast*.

FELIX FERRY.

DOROTHY'S VOCATION.

BY EVELYN EVERETT GREEN, AUTHOR OF "MONICA," "OLIVER LANGTON'S WARD," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.—AN ADVENTURE AND ITS RESULT.



IN one second Ralph had grasped the situation and the imminence of the peril. His presence of mind did not desert him, though that alone was insufficient to avert the coming danger. It was impossible to back the boat up-stream in the teeth of that rapid current, and to attempt to turn, and so present a broadside to the volume of water, would be to court instant shipwreck. He saw all this in a moment.

"There is only one thing to be done, Mabel," he said. "We must try to shoot the fall. Keep the boat's head steady, and aim for the spot where there seem fewest impediments. This is one of the few open weirs on the river. There is just a chance we may do it. Can you swim?"

"No, hardly at all. I could not swim in my habit, any way."

"True. Then take an oar." (There were oars in the boat, luckily, as well as sculls.) "Yes, take it, and have it close at hand. If we overturn at the bottom, as is almost sure to happen, let go the tiller-ropes and seize the oar. Don't let go, whatever else you do. It will keep you afloat, and I will pull you ashore."

"Very well," said Mabel, who was very pale, though she tried hard to emulate Ralph's coolness.

"Are you afraid?"

"Yes; but I'll be quiet if I can, and do just what you say. Ah!"

This exclamation was wrung from her by a momentary access of terror, as the boat reached the head of the weir, and was swept along the rapid descent of wildly foaming water, with a velocity like nothing she had ever before experienced. The air seemed full of rushing, and roaring, and hideous confusion. Her senses reeled beneath the wild tumult of conflicting sounds. Foam and spray were dashed over her; the boat already seemed half full of water as it went crashing and bumping along; and at last came that strange sense of upheaval, never to be forgotten when once experienced, and in another moment the girl was struggling in the water. She had, however, grasped the oar when she saw that the capsize could no longer be averted, and though blinded and deafened and half choked by the water that surged around her, she had a sort of confidence of ultimate salvation that robbed the present terrors of their worst power.



"The boat was swept along the rapid descent of wildly foaming water."—*p.* 843.

It seemed a fearful time before this wild chaos resolved itself into anything more quiet, yet in reality it was but a few seconds after the upset that Ralph guided to shore the half-drowned girl, still clinging desperately to the oar, and helped her up the steep bank, upon which she lay for a few minutes, gasping and exhausted.

Help was close at hand. There was a mill not a hundred yards off, and the miller's foreman, whose warning shout had first aroused the careless rowers to a sense of their peril, was already upon the scene of action with two of his underlings, and was now engaged in the task of rescuing the boat and its appurtenances, which were floating about in the weir pool. The lady and gentleman were safe ashore before they could reach the spot.

"Mabel," said Ralph, stooping over her. "You are not hurt, I hope."

She shook her head, but could not speak for a few moments. She was dazed, breathless, bewildered. He gave her his hand and helped her to gain her feet.

"You had better come to the mill, where we can get dry."

The choking sensation was passing off. Breath and sense were alike returning.

"Oh, Ralph!" she said, "oh, Ralph! I'm afraid I am very silly, but I was so horribly frightened!"

"I think you were remarkably plucky. It was a very nasty kind of adventure, especially for anyone so encumbered as you were by your dress. Take my arm and let us go up to the mill. We must not return to our party like two drowned rats. We shall never hear the end of it if we do not contrive to restore ourselves to a certain amount of respectability."

He spoke lightly, yet looked down at her with a kind of friendly concern that was pleasant and reassuring. Mabel tried to shake off the nervous tremor that still held her in its grasp, and to laugh with something of her usual gaiety.

"Yes, indeed. It would never do to return in our present plight. Let us get dry first, and then review the situation calmly." She took Ralph's arm, and began to mount the little bank that led towards the mill, but pausing to look back for a moment, she added, with a little shiver, "I think you saved my life just now."

"I am sure I led you into danger by my abominable carelessness," he answered. "So you owe me no thanks, even if I did fish you out in the end. Not but what those fellows would have done the same for you a few minutes later if I had failed. If you had not held the boat's head steady as we went over the weir, we should have come off much worse than we did. The danger in these accidents is less of actual drowning, than of being dashed against rocks, and stunned and injured. We only overturned at the foot of the fall, and so escaped that peril; and the credit of that is due to you."

It was pleasant to be praised in that frank and friendly fashion. Mabel had never felt so much at ease with Ralph, or been able to take so much real pleasure in his society as she had since she had taken a resolution not to think of him in any other light than that of a cousin or friend.

The miller's wife now came bustling out, full of sympathy for the unlucky pair, who had met with so

untoward an accident. She hurried Mabel up-stairs to change her wet clothes, whilst Ralph was consigned to the kitchen, to do the best for himself that he could beside a blazing fire.

Presently Mabel joined him, quaintly arrayed in the country-woman's Sunday attire.

"How nice a fire is!" she exclaimed. "An impromptu ducking is a chilly thing. I hope you won't take cold, Ralph, drying in your clothes like that. What would your mother say?"

"She would doubtless feel it very harrowing, but I can't say I feel it to be so myself. I am as warm as a toast, and shall be as dry as a bone in another half-hour. You must have something hot, Mabel, to keep off a chill. I have mixed you a potion, and you are to take it, whether you like it or not. There!"

"What a tyrant you can be, Ralph! I always thought you had it in you. Well, give it to me—nasty horrid stuff! You must take the consequences if I steer down another weir going home."

"We 'll risk that. It wasn't so bad, after all. It is a great thing to *have done*, you know. We shall always be able to boast in days to come of how we shot the lasher in safety."

"Yes, such adventures as these are pleasanter in retrospect than in reality. But, Ralph, I shall not think it well for the future to let you have Dorothy's letters. If the results are always as disastrous as they were to-day, it would be too dangerous a pleasure."

Ralph smiled, and for once appeared to have no repartee ready. A little flush mounted to his face. Mabel saw this with an inevitable stab of pain, and a faint sensation of jealous anger. But the resolutions taken under a sudden impulse did not desert her. She had insight sufficient to see that from every point of view it was far wiser to accept the inevitable cheerfully and with good grace.

"I must go and see about that boat," said Ralph, rising, after a short silence; and Mabel was left alone to dream over the fire, whilst listening to the flow of talk that issued ceaselessly from the lips of her hospitable hostess.

She heard so many narratives of boats upset in the lock or over the weir, that she began to wonder how the good woman managed to make time for all the drying of clothes and housing of drenched folks that seemed a common element in her daily life. She grew a little drowsy over her speculations as she sat in the hot kitchen, and was only roused by Ralph's return.

"No great harm done, luckily, and nothing lost, thanks to the promptness of those good fellows. One plank has sprung, but the men are mending the leak in a way that will hold for to-day at least. Some of the varnish is knocked off the boat, and the cushions are well soused, but there is no great damage done. I have arranged, if you have no objection, to remain here till our garments are dry, and then I will row you quietly home. It seems a needless exertion to go all the way back up stream, only to come back again, and we are not exactly show figures to present ourselves again at the picnic."

Mabel had no objection to raise to this proposal; indeed, the arrangement suited her very well. She felt no disposition at all to join a merry, laughing company of pleasure-seekers. She had been for perhaps the first time in her life face to face with danger, possibly even with death; and although the adventure had ended thus happily, she could not shake off the serious feelings that had been aroused. Perhaps nothing could more have helped to strengthen her in her resolutions after greater unselfishness and self-denial than the incident that had followed so quickly upon the adoption of that sudden resolution.

So a message was despatched to Mrs. Castleford, explaining and excusing the desertion of this pair of guests; and in due course Mabel and Ralph returned home alone together, and met over a *tête-à-tête* tea upon the terrace late on in the afternoon.

Mabel was unusually silent at first; but all in a moment, and without any warning, she broke out with this sudden remark—

"Ralph, I think I shall go down to Shag's Bay in a few days to relieve guard, and free Dorothy to go visiting in my place. It isn't fair that we should have all the fun, and she nothing. Don't you think it would be a good plan?"

"I hardly know. I must think about it. It 's exceedingly kind of you to propose it," and he gave her one of those glances that sent the blood coursing through her veins. "But the question is, would she come? would she leave her post?"

"I don't know," answered Mabel, who had hardly considered that side of the matter. "Perhaps she wouldn't. The children would hate it, of course. They adore Dorothy, and don't care at all for me. I 'm not sure if she would leave them."

"I suppose it is open to doubt; and then, you know, Shag's Bay may not be altogether so destitute of attraction. Remember, there is the possible visit of Mr. Harold Sopely."

Ralph's face was absolutely inscrutable, yet Mabel's colour flamed up again.

"Ralph," she said, "I wanted to tell you about that. I only said it to tease you. There is not the slightest chance of any such thing as that. He did pay her attention, and he did make a sort of proposal, through papa; but Dorothy never cared in the least about him, and when she was shut up with the children in isolation the whole thing went into abeyance. Mr. Sopely may be pining in secret, for all I know to the contrary; but I don't in the least expect that he will go to Shag's Bay."

"Ah!" answered Ralph, with his enigmatical smile and lapsed into silence.

"It was foolish and not—not—well, not quite straightforward of me to say what I did the other day," continued Mabel, resolved to get out what she had meditated saying in the quietude of her own room that afternoon. "I am not quite sure if you believed me; I don't much think you did. At any rate, no harm has been done, and I hope you will forget that I ever was silly enough to make jokes about anything of that kind. It was very bad taste, and not very good-natured. I am sorry now I ever did it."

The words were spoken rapidly, and not very coherently; but Ralph understood them, and understood, too, what was expressed rather than spoken. He

put out his hand and took Mabel's, in token of amity and mutual good-will. From that moment Mabel's perceptions told her that if she had lost Ralph in one sense, she had gained him in another.

After a period of silence, which neither at first seemed disposed to break, Ralph said suddenly, "I think, after all, I wouldn't offer to change places with Dorothy."

"You wouldn't? Why not? I'm really quite willing, if she would only agree."

"I do not doubt your willingness, Mabel, but I doubt hers."

"I know that would be the difficulty."

"Dorothy's devotion to her vocation is proverbial. It seems almost a pity to disturb her in it."

Again Mabel blushed.

"I'm sorry I ever laughed at her for being so good and unselfish. I shall never do so again; and I wish you would not remind me of it, Ralph. It is not pleasant to be kept in a chronic state of semi-abasement."

"I did not in the least mean to do so, Mabel. I have teased Dorothy many times myself over her love of duty. What I mean is this—that as Shag's Bay is such a pleasant spot, and as Dorothy, *vide* her letter, is evidently having such a pleasant time there with her little charges, it seems quite a pity to disturb them. After all, you know, as you have said before, this is a free country, and the place possesses an hotel. If Mr. Sopely and suite have not taken possession of it, there will be room for others to do so. There are games, you know, Mabel, at which more than one can play!"

CHAPTER XIV.—A SURPRISE.

"GOOD-MORNING, Dorothy!"

Dorothy looked up from her book with a start, and Wilfred scrambled to his feet with a shout of joyous welcome.

"Cousin Ralph! Cousin Ralph! Dolly, it's Cousin Ralph come!"

Dorothy did not need to be told that. She was on her feet now, and her eyes were shining with the welcome that her tongue seemed slow to speak, in this first moment of astonishment. Ralph held her hand between his, and looked down at her, the old humorous gleam she knew so well lighting the heavy grey eyes.

"Ralph! How did you come?"

"By rail and road, like yourselves, I presume. I've not yet set up a private balloon of my own, though I've thought of doing so sometimes."

"Your mother?"

"Is here too, at the hotel. I came down early on a voyage of discovery."

"Oh, Ralph, it is so pleasant to see a familiar face! I didn't think I should find the first fortnight so long—perhaps time will go quicker now. But whatever brought you here? You never said you were coming."

"No, we act on inspiration: that is to say, I do. I had an inspiration that sea-bathing was necessary to the re-establishment of my shattered constitution, also that peace and seclusion are matters of vital importance, after the wear and tear of a London season. My mother always agrees with me. She sees how much care I need; she brought me straight off here directly she found how necessary it was for me."

Dorothy laughed in the old light-hearted fashion. An immense weight seemed rolled off her heart.

"You talk as you did when I first saw you," she said, "when you tried to make me believe you an invalid. I think you pretended you were going into a decline then. Is that your complaint still?"

"I rather incline to believe that my heart is seriously affected now," answered Ralph equably, as he lay down full-length upon the sand beside Dorothy's encampment. "My mother has the same idea, I fancy, though of course it's not a subject we like to discuss openly. It's always painful, you know, when we do not know how things may turn. But naturally it makes her anxious to do all in her power for me. You will understand her if she talks rather pathetically about me. A mother always feels the idea of losing her only son."

Dorothy sat down again, eyeing Ralph keenly. She knew enough of his ways to accept any statement of such a nature with great reservation; yet there was nothing to be learned from the impassive gravity of his face.

"You have developed this new disease with great rapidity," she remarked, with a seriousness that rivalled his own.

"I believe it has been latent in the system for some time," he answered, meeting her scrutinising gaze with one of the calmest candour; "but it has been rapidly developed by recent circumstances. I hope great things, however, from this prospective visit. Sea-air may do wonders for me."

"I did not know sea-bathing cured heart-disease," remarked Dorothy, rather sceptically.

Ralph was looking down at the sand beneath him; for a moment his face was concealed, and only the top of his head visible to the girl's eyes.

"We will hope it has not amounted to disease yet; I only said that my heart was affected."

Something in his tone awoke Dorothy's latent suspicions of his good faith.

"I don't believe you know anything about it. I believe you only want another excuse for laziness, now that the old one will not serve you any longer."

"It is like you to say so. Women are proverbially hard-hearted. One of these days you will find out that I have spoken nothing but the unvarnished truth. I only hope you may not repent your hard words when repentance will be of no avail."

But Dorothy only laughed.

"You've talked like that before, Ralph; but nothing ever does come. You ought to have learned by this time that it does not pay to go on crying 'Wolf' too long."

Their eyes met then; hers were full of laughing light, for her heart was full of gladness, and she showed it in every look and gesture; his expressed something less easy of interpretation; but his words came in the old indolent, half-mocking way.

"There is something rather hopelessly practical and concrete about your mind, Dorothy: I noticed it from

the very first. One cannot inspire you with the vague hopes or fears that are meat and drink to the general run of girls. You always want chapter and verse for everything."

But before Dorothy could frame an answer, the children, summoned by Wilfred, had come rushing like a whirlwind upon them, and Ralph was smothered and altogether eclipsed for a considerable time by the pressing attentions and rapturous welcomes of this tribe of small cousins.

"Well, to judge by sight and sound and sense, I should say there was not much doubt as to the robustness of these young rascals," said Ralph, freeing himself at last from the bear-like embrace of Winnie and the garotting arms of Bernie. "Come, stand in a row, and let me look at you. Yes, I think you'll pass muster now. Why, Willie boy, is your place always under Dorothy's wing? You don't look quite such a gipsy as the rest; how is that?"

Wilfred said he didn't know, but he liked being with Dolly best; and Dorothy, in a few low-toned words, made Ralph understand that her anxieties were not entirely at an end yet.

"I am so very glad your mother is here. She will be able to tell me if I am needlessly timid, and advise me if there is anything I ought to do. How long are you going to stay?"

"About a week: until the second of next month, I believe. We have got a party at home coming on the tenth, and we must get back in time to put everything in trim for that. But at least we have a week of holiday before us, and who knows what may happen in a week?"

Dorothy felt immensely relieved.

"I am so very glad of that. You cannot think how pleasant it is to see friends in an out-of-the-way place like this. I had not the least idea I should see anyone I knew for two whole months."

"Your exile is to last all that time, is it?"

"If you call it an exile—I don't. If it were not that I cannot help being anxious about poor little Willie, I think I should enjoy it very much. I am sure I shall enjoy it whilst you and your mother are here."

"I hope you will. It is a pity, though, that you are so tied by those youngsters. Your father and sisters have promised us a week or two at Seymour Park. If you had not been so devoted to your vocation, you might have joined them there."

Dorothy's eyes shone with an eager, half-wistful light; she felt a great wave of longing sweep over her; but she held it resolutely in check, and braced her will to do the duty that lay nearest at hand, even at the cost of great personal sacrifice.

"How nice that will be for them," she said brightly. "I am sure they will enjoy it very much. Yes, I should have liked to join them; but you see, it is quite out of the question."

"Is it?"

"Yes; I could not leave the children. It would quite spoil their holiday; and Wilfred ought not to be left with no one but a servant."

"Not even for a week?"

Dorothy's eyes were bright with the light of her resolute determination; her answer was spoken in clear, emphatic fashion.

"Don't try and tempt me to do what I ought not."

"Would it be any use if I did?"

Dorothy laughed, looking straight at him in her frank, honest way.

"I hope not; but I don't want you to try. You have a terrible knack of getting your own way, Ralph, but I don't want it tried upon me."

"What will you bet I don't get it now?"

"I won't bet at all; but I don't *think* you will—not as far as I am concerned."

"You don't think you'll meet your father and sisters at our place next month?"

"No, I certainly do not."

"Well, we'll see;" and Ralph, rising to his feet, strolled leisurely away, to assist in the construction of a giant sand tower that was taxing the skill and energy of the children.

Dorothy looked after him with the same bright light in her eyes. She was keenly conscious of Ralph's power over her, and of the charm of his presence, but she did not mean to yield either to one or the other. She knew what her duty was, and she intended doing it at whatever cost to self.

"You won't leave us, Dolly dear?" said Wilfred softly, drawing her encircling arm closer round him. He had taken in the drift of Ralph's words, and saw a possible danger. "Cousin Ralph is very nice and very fond of you; but he can't want you as much as we do."

"No, Willie boy, you need not be afraid. I'm not going to leave you."

"Not if he wants you ever so much?"

"No, not for anything he can say."

Wilfred heaved a sigh of relief, but presently looked up to ask—

"Do you *want* to go, Dolly dear?"

"No, Wilfred, not really. I have no doubt it would be very pleasant to stay at Cousin Ralph's home; but I should not be happy a bit, if you were here wanting me, and I didn't know what was happening. When you get older you will understand better. It is not doing the pleasantest things that makes us happiest; it is doing the work we feel we ought to do, without stopping to think of ourselves at every turn. If we get selfish, always trying to please ourselves, it does not make us really happy."

Wilfred looked up in his earnest, thoughtful way. He liked to listen when Dorothy spoke in this fashion. She had got into the way of late of talking to him more seriously; but the child's face was a little bit troubled.

"Is it selfish of us to want you, Dolly dear?"

Dorothy laughed and kissed him.

"No, Willie boy, that is not selfish. I should be very sorry if you didn't want me."

"Even if you could go to Cousin Ralph's?"

"Yes, even if I could go there. A visit to Cousin Ralph's would not make amends for feeling that I had done my duty so badly here as not even to be missed."

"We should miss you, Dolly: we should miss you

dreadfully! It doesn't seem as if we had anybody but you."

She stooped and kissed him tenderly; that little confession sounded very pathetic in her ears.

"Don't be afraid, Willie. I'm not going to leave you—not for all the Cousin Ralphs in the world."

So Wilfred was pacified, and leaned against Dorothy's shoulder in placid contentment.

"You're not going to steal our Dolly away," he announced to Ralph, when he came back to them, after half an hour's play.

"And who says that, young man?"

"She does, herself. She won't go away with you. She belongs to us, and we belong to her. We haven't got anybody else, and she likes us best."

Ralph and Dorothy both laughed; the girl's colour flew up a little, in spite of herself. Ralph, on the other hand, was perfectly cool. He sat down on a fragment of rock, and drew Wilfred towards him.

"Don't you know, my boy, that it's a lady's special prerogative to say one thing and mean another?" he asked gravely.

Wilfred's eyes were round and rather indignant; he looked appealingly at Dorothy, as much as to say, "Is it?" and received for answer a shake of the head.

"She says it isn't. Dolly says so. She must know best."

"That does not follow at all. There are some things of which Dolly is even now painfully ignorant."

Wilfred looked indignant.

"It is quite true, my boy, though I am sorry to shake your faith in your oracle. Your good sister Dolly is curiously ignorant of that very primitive science of taking care of herself."

Wilfred's face was grave and puzzled.

"Dolly's grown-up; she doesn't want taking care of, does she?"

"Yes, she does; we all do, only most of us take particular care of ourselves, and, as I say, that is an art she has not learned yet."

"He's talking nonsense, Willie," interposed Dorothy; but Wilfred did not heed.

"Why doesn't someone teach her, then?"

"Some people get too old to learn. I doubt Dolly's capacity for assimilating such teaching."

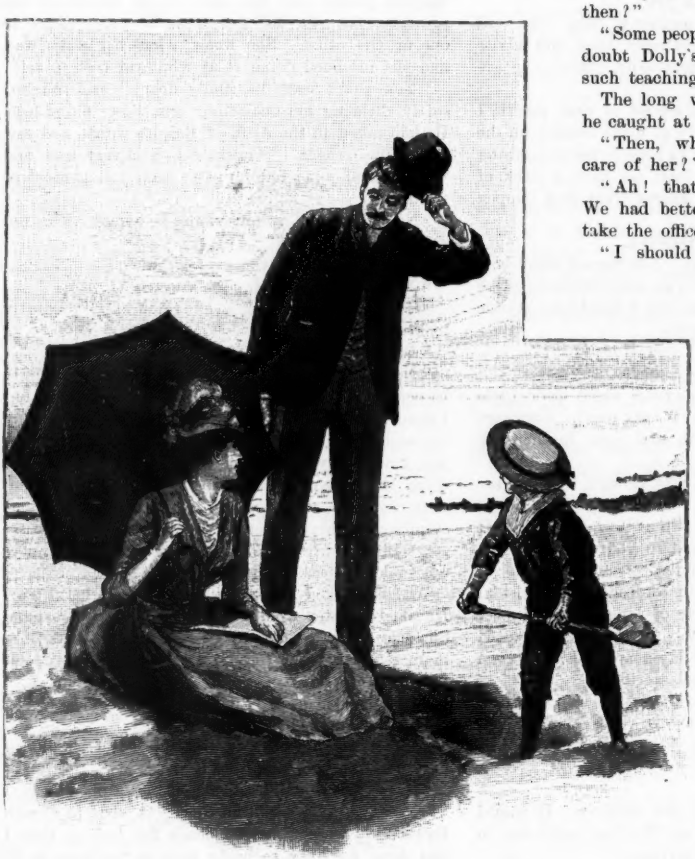
The long words puzzled Wilfred, but he caught at the leading idea.

"Then, why doesn't somebody take care of her?"

"Ah! that is a sensible suggestion. We had better find somebody to undertake the office, hadn't we?"

"I should think you would do for that," said Wilfred, eyeing him critically. "You're big enough to take care of Dolly."

"Now you mention it, I almost think I am. I must see if I cannot qualify myself for the office."



"Dorothy looked up from her book with a start."—*p.* 846.

CHAPTER XV.—RALPH'S DECISION.

"YES, mother, I have thought of all that. I have realised it as a possible obstacle in my way; but at the same time, despite her devotion to them, I think she is too true a woman to sacrifice me entirely to the children, even though she might be willing to sacrifice herself. If I can win her—and I believe that it will not be long before I do—I think we can get the other matter

settled, even to her satisfaction, without very much difficulty. With a man of Mr. Templeton's type I do not fancy we should have much trouble in arranging things our own way."

"And what is your way?"

"Well, one or two plans have come into my head. You see, those two elder boys should be going to some good preparatory school by this time, and I don't see that their father could do better than Mr. Cardwell's, in which case they would be near us, and we could keep an eye on them. As for the two little ones, if Dorothy were with us at the Park, they could have the separation broken by good long visits, and we would find some really nice, gentle, lady-like girl who would be glad to take the post of resident governess—not one of your merely certificated women, but someone who would really love the children, and care for them. If I go into Parliament, as I have half-decided to do if the people really wish it, we should be a good deal of our time in town, and Dorothy could give an eye to the children there. I don't think I am hard-hearted where those youngsters are concerned, and I don't think I take a light or superficial view of Dorothy's duty towards them; but I do say most emphatically that if she learns to love me, they shall not be allowed to stand in the way of her happiness and of her duty towards herself and me. One can generally adjust conflicting claims by a little patience, and foresight, and discrimination; but one thing is very plain to me—that the less must give way to the greater."



"'To Seymour Park, my dear.'"—*p.* 850.

Ralph spoke with great deliberation, and he looked as if he meant what he said, and had the power to carry it through. Mrs. Seymour bent her head in a quiet assent.

"Yes, Ralph, you are quite right. If you win Dorothy's heart, the rest can and must be settled in some fashion of that kind. No woman ought to do too great violence to her instincts of love, even from a sense of duty; and Dorothy is, as you say, too true a woman to take strained and morbid views of life, besides having too happy and elastic a nature. She shows that she is capable of doing the duty that stands first, at the cost of considerable self-sacrifice; but when you are her first duty, Ralph, she will show you in practical fashion how well that duty can be done—I am sure of it."

Ralph was looking straight out before him; a half-smile curved his lips.

"You talk as if there were no doubt at all as to the answer I am to get."

"If I think that, I suppose it is only because I have eyes in my head. I only wonder you have not got it all settled by this time."

The light was deepening in the young man's eyes.

"The fact is, I hardly ever see her alone; those everlasting children are always in the way. I'm not sure now that I shall not have to wait till we get to the Park. I can at least secure peace there. But I think she is at last beginning to understand me. It was a long time before she did, but I feel that the ice is broken now—and what is more, I do not think she herself is displeased."

Mother and son had been nearly a week at Shag's Bay, and most of their time had been passed with Dorothy and her little charges, to the great delight of the whole party. The relief to Dorothy had been great, and it seemed as if Mrs. Seymour's advice regarding little Wilfred had been of value, for the child seemed better and stronger, and Ralph's merry ways with the children roused him up, and induced him to try and join in games that had not tempted him before. Dorothy, for the first time since their acquaintance had begun, was a little shy of Ralph; and though his presence in her vicinity seemed one of the main elements of happiness in her life, she shrank from *tête-à-tête* interviews with him, and preferred to talk to him in the safe proximity of her little charges. She was keenly aware of the subtle change that had passed over him (or was it in herself that the change had taken place?), which gave something

altogether new and strangely sweet to the pleasant friendship that had hitherto been so easy and cousinly. These words would no longer describe it now, as she very well knew, and realised with a thrill of exquisite happiness. But she did not wish any sudden change yet. It was all so strange and sudden and unreal, that she wanted time to adjust her mind to a new focus. She felt Ralph's protecting presence sufficient as yet; she wished for nothing more.

Yet the day of their departure was at hand, little as she realised it. They were to return home within three days. Was that to be the end of this dream of unknown happiness? Dorothy's heart answered that question in the negative.

September had come in, as it sometimes does, with deluges of rain and a wild south-west wind. One wet day had already been passed, and another dawned as wild and tempestuous. To Dorothy's surprise, Mrs. Seymour appeared at the cottage almost immediately after breakfast, and from her alert and business-like air, she evidently came on some special errand.

"Now, Dorothy, my love, I think you know how to put your best foot foremost on occasion. It is hopeless to expect better weather the next few days, when south-west gales set in like this, so there is really nothing to detain us here; and the sooner Wilfred is moved to better indoor quarters, the better it will be for all. Can you get packed up and ready to start by the one o'clock coach? It takes us within twelve miles of home, and Ralph will telegraph for carriages to meet us. Set the nurses to work at once, and get settled up with your landlady. I think you will have time to manage all nicely, and I can stay and keep the children quiet by telling them stories of the place where they are going."

Dorothy was looking at her in mute surprise.

"But where are they going?"

"To Seymour Park, my dear. Did you not know?" Although Mrs. Seymour spoke gravely and innocently, there was a laughing light in her eyes that somewhat belied her. "All that was arranged before we left town. Your father and sisters will join us on the tenth; but we want to get back quickly, to have everything in readiness."

Dorothy was looking grave and perplexed.

"I knew they were going; but indeed I think there is some mistake about us. Claudia so distinctly told me that we were to remain the whole time at Shag's Bay. It is most kind of you to wish to be troubled with us all, but indeed I do not think I ought to move without writing first to Claudia."

Dorothy had an undefined conviction that this extraordinary *dénouement* was due to some plotting on the part of Ralph. She had not forgotten his enigmatic words and manner on the first day of his appearance. She very well knew his determination of purpose, and his talent for contriving to get his own way, and she suspected that this was some scheme of his for carrying them all off, in defiance of her family and of Claudia's commands. Much as she longed to go, she was not going to be outwitted like that. She had her own standard of what was due to herself and others.

"I must write and ask Claudia first," she said.

"Why so, my dear?"

"Because I have not got leave to move the children; and you know they do not actually belong to me, and I must not abuse my authority."

"But is not your father's consent sufficient?"

"Oh yes, of course: only he does not like to be troubled with arrangements. Claudia settles everything. I shall have to write to her before I could accept your most kind invitation. You understand what I mean, do you not? It would not do for me to take the children, and settle them anywhere else, without the knowledge of anyone. It would never do for father to come to Seymour Park and find us all there, when he knew nothing at all about it."

Mrs. Seymour was smiling placidly.

"But, my love, he knows everything about it. He has given cordial consent to the plan, and has authorised me to carry you all off at any time that suited me best."

Dorothy's eyes flashed with a new bright light, her face glowed with happiness; she clasped her hands tightly together.

"Oh, is that really so? It seems almost too good to be true! You are quite sure? It is not——"

"Some fiction on Ralph's part?" questioned Mrs. Seymour, with a smile. "I see you have your doubts as to the trustworthiness of that great boy of mine. No, Dorothy, my dear, there is nothing to be afraid of. Your father accepted the invitation for the whole family long ago, and just before I came here, when I met him at a friend's house, he gave me full leave to carry you all off at any time I judged best. He was quite of my opinion that rough, homely lodgings were hardly suitable for Wilfred when the summer began to wane. He knows all about it. He will expect to find you all there."

Dorothy doubted no longer; a joyous sense of gladness filled her heart. Only one question she could not refrain from putting—

"Does Claudia know?"

The inquiry was made with such ingenuous simplicity that Mrs. Seymour could hardly restrain a smile, but her answer was quietly spoken.

"Possibly not. We think that she might reasonably have raised an objection to bringing such a large party from one house, not understanding how great will be the pleasure of welcoming you, dear Dorothy, and the children to our home. As a mistress of a house, she might think it her duty to interpose and limit the numbers, and as we do not wish that, we said nothing to her on the subject. Indeed, Ralph was so cautious that he would not even let me name to you the plot we have been meditating all these weeks; and also he is anxious to prepare a little surprise for your sisters on their arrival; and I don't think he intends permitting you to inform them of your whereabouts. You know you wrote Claudia a long letter yesterday, so that she can wait for news of you now till she meets you at our house."

Dorothy's cheeks had flamed more than once during the course of this speech. She felt instinctively that Ralph and his mother read the jealous, selfish nature of her sister like an open book. They put the best face upon it that was possible, too kind and considerate to do otherwise, but very plainly they were not

hoodwinked; they estimated her character at its true value.

Dorothy was saved the embarrassment of a reply by a burst of joyous clamour from the next room.

"I suppose Ralph has been telling the children," remarked Mrs. Seymour. "He said he should follow me down."

Dorothy slipped away to give directions to the nurses, and to allow her heated cheeks to cool, and the joyous, excited flutter at her heart to subside. She kept out of the way for some time, and indeed she was busy enough up-stairs, packing, and sorting, and arranging; but at length she had to come down to see to the books and toys below in the parlour, and it was no very great surprise to find Ralph with the children, all more or less engaged in the task of putting up treasures in safety, and discarding mere rubbish that would not stand packing and moving.

"Ah! and here is Dorothy," said Ralph, leisurely disengaging himself from the crowd of satellites, and giving her his hand, whilst the old well-known gleam of mischief sparkled in his eyes. "So we are to prevail after all—you are not quite so strong as you boasted."

"I don't know what you mean," answered Dorothy, with a kind of merry defiance. She was so happy that she was almost afraid she should let it be seen too visibly.

"I thought you said no power on earth would ever bring you to Seymour Park?"

"I 'm sure I never said any such thing. I only said I could not leave the children."

"And your great intellect never saw that there was any possible solution of that difficulty?"

"My great intellect had no concern in the matter at all."

"Indeed! What charming independence of mind! Dorothy, will you speak the truth if I ask you a question?"

"Why should I speak anything else? Am I addicted to mendacity?"

"You are addicted to evasion sometimes, and evasion is trying. For my part, I am a plain man——"

"Yes, very."

"Don't interrupt. I am a straightforward man, and like a plain answer to a plain question. Are you glad to be coming home with us?"

They had both been laughing the minute before, but a sudden look of purpose akin to gravity had suddenly flashed into Ralph's eyes. Dorothy's glance fell before them.

"Yes, I am very glad," she answered truthfully, but in a much lower tone.

"You come willingly?"

"Yes."

He came and took one step nearer; they were standing very close together; the hubbub of the children around them no longer made itself heard.

"Dorothy," said Ralph, in very quiet, even tones, "I was at the Park a few days ago, and I made up my mind on one important point: it will never be like a home to me, until you have lived beneath its roof."

(*To be concluded.*)

THE LAND OF THE INQUISITION.

(A NEW BOOK OF MARTYRS.—VI.)

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E.

IT was in a very singular way that the Reformation got hold of Spain. The author of the "Historia Pontifical," a zealous Roman Catholic, tells us that the Catholic Princes of Spain—Charles V. and Philip II.—"out of the great affection which they had for England, Germany, and other heretical countries," were good enough to send thither some of their most learned men to arrest the progress of heresy; but such was their misfortune, that instead of giving light to others they became blind themselves. They got infected with the deadly heresy, and brought it, like a plague of small-pox or leprosy, into orthodox Spain!

And when it came, it came with a rush. Many members of noble and illustrious families fell under it. Before this time the victims of the Inquisition were a set of obscure wretches, hardly worth the burning. "But in these latter years," says the same author, "we have seen its prisons, scaffolds, and stakes filled with illustrious persons of noble families, and with others who to all outward appearance had great advantage over their neighbours as well for their learning as for their piety." The clergy, and some of them of high rank, furnished their quota of victims. Carranza, Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain, was for eighteen years a prisoner of the Inquisition, though he was not a Protestant, but a sort of Lutheran Catholic; and but for the high place he held, the service which he had done at the Council of Trent, and the influence he could command, he would have languished in its darkest dungeons, or, covered with a *sanbenito*, perished in its fires.

No country seemed more ready for the Reformation. Between 1550 and 1560 it looked as if the Spanish people would leave Rome *en masse*. Says the Inquisitor historian Paramus; "Had not the Inquisition taken care in time to put a stop to the Protestant preachers, the Protestant religion would have run through Spain like wildfire; people of all degrees, and of both sexes, having been wonderfully disposed to embrace it." And in the "Historia Pontifical"

we read, "All the prisoners in the Inquisitions of Valladolid, Seville, and Toledo were persons of very high quality. I shall here pass their names in silence, that I may not, by their bad fame, stain the honour of their ancestors, and the nobility of the several illustrious families which were infected with this poison. And as those prisoners were of so high quality, so their number was so great that had the stop which was put to that evil been delayed two or three months longer, I am persuaded all Spain would have been put in a flame by them."

But Spain had a handy implement, planned and perfected on her soil, which enabled her to deal in a way of her own with these learned, noble, but pernicious heretics. It was for the benefit of Jews and Mahometans that the Inquisition had been set up. In its earlier days it had done a large and successful business in them. Torquemada, the first Inquisitor-General, is said in sixteen years to have burned nine thousand. His successor, Diego Deza, was a less active man of business, for in eight years his murders were only sixteen hundred. But he induced Ferdinand and Isabella to expel the Moors as Torquemada had caused them to expel the Jews. Nearly two millions of their most industrious and able subjects were thus driven by these Sovereigns from their country; a blow was self-inflicted on Spain from which she has never recovered; indeed, the whole policy of the Inquisition was the means of dragging down Spain from the highest to the lowest place among the kingdoms of Europe.

Their highnesses of the Inquisition saw that to put down the rising spirit of Protestantism they must bend the whole resources of their institution, in the most merciless and relentless fashion, to stamp out, at once and for ever, every spark and vestige of heresy. And their resources were simply appalling. They had lately received a great extension of powers, and were practically able to arrest, confine, torture, convict, and burn whomsoever they pleased, and perpetrate upon them the most inhuman cruelties. Once within their clutches, their victims were practically helpless. Attempts have been made to show that it was otherwise, but historians of their own confirm what we have said. No doubt in their prisons there were cells that were fairly comfortable, but these were reserved for adulterers, pirates, smugglers, or political offenders who were not very dangerous to the Church. But for heretics the places of confinement were usually underground dungeons, dark, damp, and dreary, never warmed by the comfortable glow of a fire, hardly reached by a straggling sunbeam, uncleansed and putrid, breeding diseases that, perhaps in mercy, ended the life of many a prisoner before he was condemned to the fire. At the dead of night, the victim would be summoned to stand his trial in a dismal chamber, where his merciless judges would be found, while the "familiars of the Inquisition" moved about, executing their orders, their faces covered by garments with two holes opposite their eyes, as if to disguise their very humanity. If the accused person would not confess his guilt, or would not disclose the names of others whom he knew to be heretics, he was ordered the torture. The forms of torture were varied, but two obtained pre-eminence—the rack and the pulley. The rack was a hollow machine of wood, with no bottom, but a bar against which the body lay, while the limbs were fastened by tight cords that often cut through the flesh to the bone, and on the mouth a cloth was placed on which water slowly descended, causing a most irritating sensation, and a struggle for breath that often broke blood-vessels in the lungs. In the pulley, the victim had heavy weights attached to his feet, his arms were bound behind, he was hoisted by a rope to the roof, then by the slackening of the rope, allowed to drop with a jerk so violent that sometimes every joint was wrenched from its socket. If the first application of these instruments of torture was ineffectual, the victim was flung back into his horrible cell to digest his agony as he might, and called out, perhaps next day, to undergo a repetition of the process. Sometimes it would be repeated day after day for many days in succession; and sometimes years upon years would be spent in captivity, with an occasional touch of torture to break the monotony of the confinement.

Then there was the *auto-da-fé*—a sort of masterpiece of Inquisitorial terror. In a large square in some important city a platform was erected, covered with gorgeous tapestry and other luxurious appliances for the accommodation of the Inquisitors, and of such bishops, nobles, or members of the royal family as might desire to enjoy the spectacle. In front of the platform was a raised scaffold, on which the burning was to be done. An imposing procession of military with flowing banners first appeared, then the condemned, in single file, barefooted and ragged, their bodies seamed with the effect of tightened cords, or distorted by the pulley, each covered with a loose frock, called the *sanbenito*, bearing figures of devils, and busts consuming in the flames, to denote the destiny of the worst class of heretics. Following the prisoners, came the magistrates, the nobility, a crowd of ecclesiastics, and finally the Inquisitors, followed by the familiars. The next part of the performance was a sermon on the awful sins of heretics by some distinguished preacher. The Inquisitor then administered an oath binding all present to honour the Inquisition, and defend its privileges to the very uttermost. The offences of the heretics were next read out, and those who were prepared to recant, knelt down, confessing their most grievous and unnatural sin, and received absolution, accompanied probably with confiscation of all their goods, and perhaps imprisonment for life. Then came the men and women destined for the fire. No brutality of treatment could altogether destroy the bearing of God's children—the serene brow, the gleaming eye, the defiant look of men who feared not those that killed the body. In a little while they were fastened to their several stakes, the pile of faggots was kindled around them; the sudden cry of anguish was met with the exultant yells of the savage crowd, and those of whom the world was not worthy were wafted heavenward, to join the white-robed company before the throne of God.

It has been remarked that we have fewer "dying testimonies" from Spanish martyrs than from those

of any other country. But that is easily explained. The gag was a great favourite with the Inquisitors. After a time, whenever it was supposed that a man might desire to address the multitude, or feared that he might do so in an effective way, a gag was placed in his mouth, which added to the awkwardness of his appearance, as well as obliged him to be silent. The only circumstance in which the gag was removed was when it was supposed that he meant to confess. If that supposition turned out to be erroneous, and the opened lips of the martyr disclosed the secret of his hope, he would only be committed to the flames with an additional curse from the Inquisitor, provoked by his incurable obstinacy. The enthusiasm of Philip II. on behalf of the Inquisition greatly encouraged the monsters who worked it, and deepened the ineffaceable stain of infamy with which it blackened the history of the country.



"Again and again priests and Jesuits sought to draw her back."—*p.* 851.

The public burning of the martyrs, as we have said, usually took place when there was an *auto-da-fé*, while in other cases death was caused by the horrors of the imprisonment. Among the earliest victims of the Inquisition at Seville was a very learned and able man, Constantine Ponce de la Fuente. In a book published by royal authority some years before, he had been described as the greatest philosopher, the profoundest divine, and the most eloquent preacher whom Spain had known for many years. An accidental discovery of a manuscript book of his furnished the Inquisitors with plain evidence of his heresy. He made no attempt then to arrest their purpose. As Constantine had been a chaplain of Charles V., some consideration was shown for him till after that Emperor's death. He was not subjected either to the rack or to the pulley. Another species of torture more hard to bear was destined for him. He was thrust into a low, damp, and noisome vault, the horrors of which made him exclaim, "O my God, were there no Scythians, or cannibals, or pagans, still more savage, that Thou hast permitted me to fall into

the hands of these baptised fiends?" Dysentery and distress of mind—the one caused by the horrible dungeon and unwholesome food, the other by the ruin of the cause which he believed to be the cause of God, and to be freighted with blessings beyond price for his country—brought him to his end after a captivity of nearly two years.

The first *auto-da-fé* celebrated at Valladolid, in 1559, was remarkable for the number of titled and illustrious persons who were placed under the Inquisitorial ban. Among those dealt with was a learned and eloquent preacher, Dr. Augustine Cazalla. At the sight of the torture his courage failed him, and he promised to submit to his judges. Little did his timidity serve him, for his death was determined on, and the only favour his recantation obtained for him was to be strangled before his body was committed to the flames. Two Protestants were burned alive at the same time—his brother Francisco, and a lawyer named Herezuelo. Seeing his brother not at the stake with himself, but at the adjoining scaffold among the penitents, and being unable to speak for the gag, Francisco signified his sorrow by an expressive movement of his hands; afterwards he bore the fire without shrinking. Herezuelo had a similar trial; he saw his wife in the garb of a penitent, and his look, too, indicated that that was the hardest part of his trial. Dr. Augustine Cazalla entreated Herezuelo to recant; but "he threw upon him a glance of disdain which froze the words on his recreant lips." The author of the "Historia Pontifical" says:—"Herezuelo suffered himself to be burned alive with unparalleled hardihood. I stood so near him that I had a complete view of his person, and observed all his motions and gestures. He could not speak, for his mouth was gagged on account of the blasphemies which he had uttered; but his whole behaviour showed him to be a most resolute and hardened person, who, rather than yield to believe with his companions, was determined to die in the flames. Though I marked him narrowly, I could not observe the least symptom of fear, or expression of pain; only there was a sadness on his countenance beyond anything I had ever seen. It was frightful to look in his face, when one considered that in a moment he would be in hell with his associate and master, Luther." The combined expression of serenity and sadness which marked the face of this dying martyr was remarkable. The serenity showed how truly the promise had been fulfilled, even beyond its spiritual meaning—"When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." But the sadness; whence came it? No doubt at the sight of his young wife, who, having put her hand to the plough and turned back, seemed now to have lost the Kingdom of Heaven. It was hard to die with the sight of his best-beloved returning to the Sodom out of which she had seemed by God's mercy to escape!

But God had better things in store for the young wife. Leanor de Cisneros was but twenty-two when thrown into the dungeon, where she was separated from all communication with her husband, and perhaps deceived into the belief that he had become a penitent. But his parting look sank into her inmost soul; the thought of having torn his heart in his dying hour she could not banish, and with a firm resolution to be more steadfast, she renounced her recantation of the Lutheran faith. She was again committed to the secret dungeons of the Inquisition, languished in their horrid darkness for eight years, resisting every effort to induce her to give in, and at the end of that period was made to grace another *auto-da-fé*. The writer of the "Historia Pontifical" says of her behaviour: "She suffered herself to be burnt alive, notwithstanding the great and repeated exertions made to bring her to a conviction of her errors." Of her and her husband and another martyr, Don Carlos de Seso, the same writer says: "They endured being burnt alive as if they had been made of stone and not of flesh and blood."

It is said that when Domingo de Roxas, son of the Marquis de Posa, on his way to the fire, was passing the royal box where Philip II. was witnessing the *auto*, he made an appeal to his mercy. "Canst thou, sir, thus witness the tortures of thy subjects? Save us from so cruel a death."—"No," replied Philip sternly; "I would myself carry wood to burn my own son, were he such a wretch as thou." It would not have been easy for Philip to clear himself of the blood of his son; though his hatred to him had another cause.

Revolting as the punishment of death by fire is in the case of every human being, there is something peculiarly outrageous and infamous in its application to the gentler sex. Yet cases of this kind were quite common. At an *auto-da-fé* at Seville, four noble ladies suffered—Doña Isabel de Baena, Maria de Virves, Maria de Cornel, and Maria de Bohorques. Isabel was a wealthy matron who had held conventicles in her house. The others were young ladies of Seville, one of them a person of remarkable gifts and character. Doña Maria de Bohorques had but reached the age of twenty-one when she was committed to the dungeons. A good scholar, she could read Latin well, knew the Scriptures, and could reason well in favour of the Protestant faith. Again and again priests and Jesuits sought to draw her back, but all in vain. Much influence was exerted on her behalf, but she was so bold and uncompromising that nothing could save her. On the way to execution she comforted the other ladies, and led them in singing a suitable psalm till the gag was forced into her mouth. It was taken out after her sentence was read, in the hope that she would yield, but she firmly declared that she neither could nor would recant. A wavering Protestant who urged her to think twice before she said so, was upbraided by her for his cowardice. At the stake the magistrates, still thinking to save her, asked her to repeat the creed; she did so, but with a Lutheran commentary! This she was not allowed to finish; the executioner strangled her and flung her body into the fire.

But the climax of barbarity was the treatment of Doña Juana de Bohorques, sister of Maria de Bohorques, already referred to, and wife of the Baron of Higuera. Three months after her imprisonment a child was born to her. A week after, the child was taken from her, and she was thrust into a secret cell. Thereafter she was subjected to the torture with such

severity that the cords cut her arms and legs to the bone, and blood bursting from her lungs rushed from her mouth and nostrils. She was conveyed to her cell in a state of insensibility, and died in a few days.

And all this was done by the potentates of the Spanish nation, once so renowned for the lustre of its chivalry!

Did no prophet sound over the country the doom of Babylon? "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

What a merciful escape our country made, when, by the death of Mary, Philip II. lost his hold of England, and the terror of his name abated! And still more, when the Spanish Armada, that was to sweep away the liberties of England, was itself scattered and shattered by the winds! It was indeed a great deliverance, as these narratives of the Inquisition show, which the Lord wrought that day for England.

OLD LETTERS.

I TURN the pages one by one,
And scenes long vanished rise—
Days that for evermore are done—
Before my dew-wet eyes;
And places that were half forgot
Seem softly visioned here,
And faces that on earth are not
Again are lingering near.

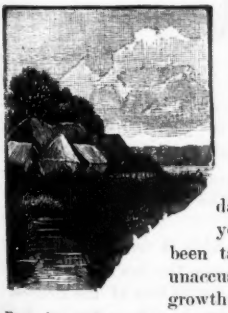
This faded letter whispers sweet
Of summer's golden glow,
Of flowers that sprang to bless my feet
Within the long-ago;
And *this* recalls a season fraught
With fears and trembling dire,—
O God, I thank Thee, Who hast brought
My life through flood and fire!

Oh, holy words of comfort true,
Oh, precious thoughts of love!
The hand that penned them quiet grew,
The dear one passed above:
And still through years of changes dim
The tender plea hath stood:
"*Beloved, put your trust in Him*;
The Lord your God is good."

Yea, tried and proved those words remain—
So much hath drifted far,
But, whatsoe'er may fade or wane,
God's mercies deathless are;
I mind me of the vanquished dread,
The help through shadowed ways,—
O Lord, so gently Thou hast led!
The past doth choir Thy praise.

MARGARET HAYCRAFT.

ROSY'S POSY.



IT was washing-day at 5, Palace Place. Rosy Norman was up to her elbows in soapsuds, and to her eyes in steam. Not that the steam had to rise very high to reach Rosy's eyes, for the little damsel was only eight years old, and would have been taken for five by anyone unaccustomed to the stunted growth of poor London children. But in spite of her size, Rosy was a "capital washer," as her mother proudly said, and had been kept away from school that morning purposely for a good scrub at the family linen.

And that was why Rosy's eyes were wet, not with steam, but with troublesome tears, which *would* fall, though she tried hard to wink them back again.

"To have to stay away from school to-day, of all days in the year!" thought poor Rosy with a sudden gush of anger, which made her give an extra rub to the garment she was washing, and produce an ugly rent in the worn calico. To-day the teacher was to have settled about Rosy going for a holiday in the country—a whole happy fortnight among the fields and the birds! Just think of it! Rosy had never been in the country in her life, for her mother could not spare her in previous summers to go with her class for the Sunday-school excursion. There were no "open spaces" near the network of courts and passages where Rosy lived, while going to the parks—as some of her friends did in holiday times—meant

money for tram or bus, and that was not to be had in the Norman family. As for hearing birds, all Rosy knew of them was from some poor prisoners, cramped up in tiny cages in the neighbours' windows.

But this spring a fairy vision had been shown to the town child. Her teacher at the Board-school had brought Rosy Norman's case before one of those blessed societies which send away sickly little Londoners for a fortnight's fresh air and good food. A long fortnight of country life, with nothing to do but enjoy herself, and plenty to eat—why, such a state of bliss could hardly be believed by the Normans, with whom meat was almost an unknown quantity, their usual diet consisting of bread with a scrape of dripping or treacle. However, to realise this vision a little money must be got together, as the rules of the society obliged the parents to contribute a small sum. For months past Mrs. Norman had been stinting and saving to hoard a few pence, a farthing and a halfpenny at a time. Rosy's next brother, Jack, whose head just reached the kitchen table, sometimes earned a "farden" by running "arrands" for the neighbours, and the little lad proudly contributed his gain to the hoard,



"A lot of pennies and small silver coins tumbled out on the table."—*p.* 858.

on the promise that if Rosy went this year, he should go next time. So the treasure grew, and was stowed away on a shelf between the leaves of a book—to hide it from Father.

There was the rub. To hide it from Father. If that unhappy parent had seen the few pence, they would have vanished in a twinkling at the nearest public-house. For Father drank. There was no disguising the fact. He was a carman, employed at a jam factory, and had been a steady, sober man when he married, with fair wages and a comfortable home.

But he fell amongst drinking companions, and being hard-worked in the hot sun, began to take a drop too much. His head was weak, the habit grew; and so the Normans slipped gradually from comfort into poverty. Seven children didn't mend matters—Rosy was the eldest, and the baby was a fortnight old—especially as when Father indulged in an extra drinking bout he got "mad" for a week or two, so Mrs. Norman politely put it, and fell out of work. Then he would stay in bed all day, and edify Palace Place in the night by half murdering his wife, till the neighbours came in to the rescue.

On these occasions the family support devolved solely on Mrs. Norman, who set up a sweetstuff shop. The houses in Palace Place are not very commodious, so the manufacture and sale of the sweetstuff went on side by side with domestic duties in the general living-room. Turning out of a narrow street, you may pass under an archway into the stuffy little court with its palatial title. Dilapidated cottages run each side of a flagged passage, with a convenient gutter in the centre. The door opens straight into the one ground-floor room, and on a warm summer day each threshold is generally ornamented by a baby in a clothes-basket, where the infant is considered to be out of harm's way. The effect of the rows of babies and clothes-baskets is peculiar. The Normans' door was adorned like its neighbours in this respect, while the windows showed a tempting array of sweets of dark and mysterious aspect, much appreciated by the flies. Overhead was the family bedroom, reached by a ladder, and just opposite the door was a tiny back yard, at present tenanted by Rosy and the wash-tub.

"Father's right mad to-day for a drop of something," said Mrs. Norman wearily, as she came down the ladder with her youngest-born on her arm, and stood watching her little daughter. "The children'll be back from school directly, and I haven't a bite for their dinner, nor a penny in the house. Nobody's been in this morning for so much as a farden's-worth of toffee."

Rosy gave a philosophic grunt of assent, as if this condition of affairs was too normal to be worth lamenting.

"I can't abide to do it, but I don't know that I shan't have to——"

Mrs. Norman broke off her enigmatic speech as three rough-headed, pale-faced mites tumbled in at the door, and fell over the ex-baby in the clothes-basket, who was pulling the hair of his predecessor, aged two years.

"Where's dinner, mother?" chorused the school trio at the top of their voices, Jackie adding eagerly, pointing to the youngest of his companions—

"Poppy couldn't do her lessons, 'cause she'd had no breakfast."

"You can't have no dinner to-day, children—leastways, unless——"

Loud howls rose from the children, and the babies lifted up their voices for company's sake, while rough tones from up-stairs were heard—

"Stop that row, can't you, Maria? and bring me what I told you."

Rosy washed on silently, with her heart sinking. Her mother looked at her irresolutely, and murmured—

"I don't see but what I must have fourpence out of your holiday money, Rosy, and get Father a drop of gin and the children a loaf. We'll make it up again, and you'll have to go a little later, that's all."

"And the money's just right; and teacher said it was getting so late in the year that I should lose my chance if I waited," pleaded poor Rosy.

Jackie caught the word "teacher," and rushed to his sister in such a hurry to speak that the words tumbled out of his mouth one over the other.

"Oh, Rosy! teacher says you *were* troublesome not to come to-day, and she's a good mind not to let you go. But she's coming to see mother, and you're to go on Saturday, and you'll live in a cottage with pigs and cows, and cocks and hens, and a garden, and play in the fields all day, and eat apples and bacon; and you'll have to ride in a train to get there."

The tempting picture was too much for Rosy. She dropped her washing, and stuck her soapy knuckles into her eyes.

"Maria, look sharp!" came from above, whence sundry bumps on the floor showed that Father was getting impatient.

"I don't care!" said Mrs. Norman, with sudden determination. "I'll not spoil your pleasure, Rosy, child, and you shall have your holiday. Father must go without, even if he does break a chair or two; and you chicks must wait for your dinner till tea-time. You wouldn't take poor Rosy's money, would you?"

"No, indeed!" cried Rosy's champion, Jack, stoutly; and "No—o—o" echoed the smaller fry in less assured accents, as they thought dolefully of the afternoon lessons on an empty stomach.

Rosy smiled lovingly on all around, and forgot that her eyes were stinging horribly with the soapsuds.

"But Father might give you the stick, mother. And suppose he hunted round himself and found the money—my! how he would whack us all!"

"*He* won't find it, Rosy, my girl!" There was a ring of triumph in the mother's voice. "I couldn't have thought of a safer hiding-place than in that big Bible. Father never looks into the Bible—not he."

The party were much too absorbed in their subject to notice a head peeping over the stairway. Father had been puzzled that his usually obedient wife paid no heed to his repeated calls, and guessed that his family must be "up to mischief." He stole quietly to the ladder and listened. His trouble was rewarded. The unsuspecting conspirators revealed their innocent plot to his eager ears, and Father crept back to bed chuckling.

"So that 's it, is it?" growled the half-tipsy man. "They 've been a hiding away money to send that lazy gal into the country, and starving me all the time. And me being told that her teacher was a-going to send her—oh, yes! and pay for her, of course! Here 's a pore sick man has to go without a drop o' drink to keep him alive, while his blessed brat is to feed on the fat o' the land. Not if I knows it! And leave her pore mother alone to do all the work. No, my gal; your father ain't going to allow mother to be put upon. Hidden it in the Bible, have yer?—mighty artful! But it won't stay there long, I reckon."

Mr. Norman had worked himself up to a white heat of virtuous indignation by this time. To relieve his feelings, he flung an empty jug by his side right across the room and smashed it. After that he felt better.

"Now, I 'll just make Maria bring me up that money. No, I won't, though!" with a thump of his fist on the bedstead. "They 're so jolly secret, I 'll pay 'em out in their own coin. I 'll bag the money quietly, and won't they be in a take-in when they find it gone!"

To carry out his plot well, Mr. Norman calmed himself down, and was unusually meek and mild when his wife came up in fear and trembling to explain that she had no money to get him anything.

"The children haven't had a sup of breakfast or dinner," she went on, humbly; "so I thought if you didn't mind being left this afternoon I 'd step round with a tray of toffee to Short's, the big sweetstuff shop, and sell it cheap. "Then I 'd bring you some spirits."

"Get along, then, for I 'm just sinking for something," was Mr. Norman's gracious reply.

"I 'll take Rosy with me to help carry the toffee. The babies are asleep, and the others won't be back from school, so it will be all quiet whilst I 'm gone."

Mr. Norman chuckled pleasantly under the bedclothes as he thought how neatly fortune was playing into his hands.

In a few minutes the door below shut gently, and all was still. Mr. Norman jumped out of bed with wonderful alacrity for a man in his "sinking" condition, slipped on his clothes, and ran down-stairs. There was nobody stirring, but the flies buzzing over the sweets. The baby and the ex-baby slumbered peacefully together in the clothes-basket, while two-year old Jim reposed equally quietly, wrapped up in a shawl on the kitchen table.

Mr. Norman made straight for the shelf and the big Bible. He lifted down the Book gingerly, then gave it a shake and indulged in a snort of satisfaction as a lot of pennies and small silver coins tumbled out on the table.

"Well, I'm—blest." Mr. Norman used a stronger expression. "Five whole shillings! Mean varmints, to keep all that money to themselves! But they'll never see it no more, not they."

Without a single prick of conscience, the heartless father poured the hard-earned coins into his own pocket.

"May I come in?" asked an apologetic voice at the door, just as the last coin disappeared.

The man started so violently that the money jingled cheerfully in his pocket. He hadn't the presence of mind to answer a word.

"Someone is at home, I hear," continued the owner of the voice, a pleasant-looking girl, coming in with perfect self-possession. "I suppose you are Mr. Norman, though I have never had the pleasure of meeting you before. I am your little Rosy's teacher, Miss Murray."

Mr. Norman cordially wished that the floor would open and swallow his visitor, but no such convenient miracle occurred.

"I am so glad Rosy will be able to go into the country on Saturday; she looks sadly white and delicate. The fresh air and country food will make another girl of her."

Mr. Norman tried to find his tongue, and managed to mumble, "Rosy and the missis ain't at home."

Struck by his awkwardness, Miss Murray looked round and spied the Bible open on the table. "He's ashamed at being caught reading the Bible," she thought; "he can't be such a bad man as I've heard." Putting her thoughts into words, she exclaimed, "You have been very ill and troubled, I hear, Mr. Norman; but I am glad you know how to seek for comfort in the right place"—with a glance at the open Bible.

If a blush could have shown on Mr. Norman's drink-reddened countenance, Miss Murray would certainly have seen one of the deepest dye. He seized the Bible, and flung it viciously on the shelf.

Miss Murray took no notice, but merely remarked, "If you don't mind, Mr. Norman, I will wait till your wife comes home. I must speak to her to-day about Rosy."

Mr. Norman vouchsafed no answer, but flung out of the door and sought the nearest public-house. He met a few of his mates on the road, and, being anxious to cast his bread upon the waters whence it might be returned to him in future hard-up times, he treated them so liberally that there was soon little left of Rosy's precious five shillings.

At home in Palace Place there was a happy business committee of three discussing the ways and means of Rosy's departure. Mrs. Norman and Rosy had sold their toffee profitably, so that the mother had a few pence to spare towards the child's wardrobe. The trio talked low, for Mrs. Norman purposely dropped her voice to avoid waking the husband whom she supposed to be comfortably sleeping up-stairs.

"I'd best give you the money at once, miss, and then it'll be safe and out of temptation's way. Often have I been tempted to break into it. My fingers fairly itched when we were all hungry. And I was

obliged to hide it away too, lest them should get it as wouldn't make a good use of it. Get it down, child."

Rosy lifted down the Bible gently, and placed it before Miss Murray. As she did so the governess turned pale, struck by a sudden recollection.

"Ain't you well, teacher?" Rosy looked up wonderingly.

"Yes, yes," Miss Murray answered hurriedly. "Do you keep your money there, Rosy? What a strange place!"

The child shook the Bible with a look of triumph, but nothing fell from the leaves. She shook it more forcibly, still the expected coins were not forthcoming—only a loose page dropped out. Then Mrs. Norman seized the Book from Rosy's hand, and fluttered all the leaves—there was nothing.

The money was gone!

"It can't be!" gasped the mother; "it was there this morning."

Tears welled up into Miss Murray's eyes. "I was afraid of this when I saw you shake the Bible, Mrs. Norman. When I came in this afternoon Mr. Norman was here, and the Bible was open on the table. I thought then he was reading it, but now——"

"Father's took my money!" shrieked Rosy. With a bound she was up to the room above and down again. "He ain't there! He's gone out! He'll drink it all up!" Her voice broke, and she dropped her head on the basket among the babies, in the bitterest sorrow she had yet known in her short life.

With some people despair stifles up both words and tears. Mrs. Norman said nothing—she simply collapsed into the nearest chair. All her slaving and screwing for the last few months had ended in this. Her husband had taken his own child's money, his children must look on him with contempt. He was disgraced before Miss Murray, who would tell everyone about it, and he would be drinking hard for the next week. And Rosy—poor Rosy must lose the holiday she had been looking forward to all through the long, drear winter. Poor Mrs. Norman felt turned to stone. Miss Murray's efforts at consolation were unheeded by both mother and child, so that she presently stole away, and left them to themselves.

Mr. Norman came home late that night, fairly soddened with drink. He was a little ashamed of himself, and his shame took the form of fury as he looked at Rosy, the person he had most injured. He burst into a torrent of reproaches against his wife and children for cheating him out of his money, and for being so deceitful as to hide it in a Bible. Staggering to the shelf, he picked up the offending volume, and flung it at Rosy's head. The missile reached its goal with such force as to knock the child down. In falling she struck her forehead against the corner of the table. The blood gushed out from an ugly wound, and Rosy lay prone and senseless on the floor.

"You've killed your own girl, you miserable drunkard!" cried Mrs. Norman, as she rushed to her child and laid Rosy's bleeding head on her knee.

A terrible horror of himself came over the half-tipsy man. "Not killed, Maria, not killed," he stammered, tottering up to his wife's side and trying to take the child in his arms. "I didn't mean to hurt her," he maundered on.

"If she isn't killed, it'll be no thanks to you," the mother answered bitterly. "Go for a doctor; it's all you can do."

Mr. Norman was not sufficiently sure of his own legs to walk so far as the doctor's, but the noise had roused some of the neighbours, who came flocking in with that ready sympathy ever present among the poor. There was a grand fuss and bustle in the little room. Everybody recommended a totally different remedy to restore Rosy, while such pleasant remarks as "nasty sot" and "drunken brute" assailed Mr. Norman's ears.

Rosy came to after a time, and seemed only bruised and shaken. "She will be all right after a night's rest," Mrs. Norman declared, eager to get her neighbours out of the way before another outburst from her husband.

She need not have feared his violence. The sight of his pale, bleeding child at his feet, the victim of his own intemperance, had touched even hardened, besotted Will Norman. He slunk away up to bed, afraid to look at his little one or his long-suffering wife. "I might have killed her," he kept whispering to himself through all that long dark night. "I should have swung for it. My Rosy! how proud I was when she were born!"

Still, his compunction did not lead him to get up next morning, nor to make any effort after work. To tell the truth, mother and children were glad enough for him to keep out of the way up-stairs till the five went off to school, Rosy looking somewhat ghastly with a bandage over her head.

Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. So Rosy Norman found. She rushed home after morning school, with an admiring tail of brothers, sisters, and friends streaming after her, and flung her arms round her mother's neck in speechless delight.

Mrs. Norman was stirring toffee over the fire, and nearly burnt her offspring with a hot spoon in the agitation of the moment.

"Sakes alive, Rosy! is the wound in your head sending you mad?"

"Mother, mother, Rosy is to go after all," chorused the excited family.

"Yes, mother, teacher's going to pay for me, 'cause we really had saved the money, though we lost it," and Rosy nearly throttled her mother in her joy.

Mrs. Norman left the toffee to burn at its own sweet will, and kissed Rosy and her family all round, so delighted was she. The story was discussed so loudly that Mr. Norman heard it up-stairs, and had the grace to feel thankful that his cruelty



"'I got that posy for your own self'"—*p.* 861.

was being repaired—if by somebody else. He even went so far as to be fairly amiable during the intervening days till that happy Saturday when Rosy went off.

How Rosy and fifteen other little ones enjoyed themselves may best be told by Rosy's own words in a long letter to her mother. The little maid had never written a real letter before, so her composition was a queer mixture of bad spelling, quaint bursts of natural remarks, and high-flown sentiments—evidently reminiscences of reading-books.

The epistle began according to the time-honoured formula, by hoping that her "honoured mother and family remained well, as this leaves me at present. Oh, mother, I never thought anything could be so beautiful as the country is. It's all green everywhere, except the sky, and the apples, and the poppies. We are out all day long, and we see the corn being cut. Mr. John Barker, where I and Molly Perkins live, he says that bread is made out of that corn, but I never saw those queer grains in our loaves, like an ear of wheat when I pulled it to pieces. I have pudding every day, and an egg for breakfast. And I can't sleep when it gets light in the morning, the birds make such a noise under my window. And there is such a dear pig, with a lot of babies. And we went in the Vicarage garden and had tea and cake, and the vicar's wife was such a grand young lady, in a white frock. And oh, mother, I had an adventure. I walked up to the top of a mountain" (it was a very mild hill, in reality), "and I slipped on a stone, and rolled to the bottom. And a kind man saw me roll and picked me up. And I was lifeless. And he carried me into his house, and bound up my wounds" (Rosy evidently had a Sunday-school reminiscence of the Good Samaritan), "and told me not to do it any more. And, mother, I don't want to come home any

more, only I want to see you and the babies. Tell Jack to save up his fardens to come next year." And so on.

It was a very different Rosy Norman who came back to Palace Place—a brown, plump little maiden, with eyes wide-opened by a glimpse of the world outside her narrow horizon of London courts, and a tongue never weary of describing country wonders, and the kindness of good Mr. and Mrs. Barker. A basket of apples and eggs accompanied Rosy, together with a huge bunch of flowers. The child guarded her bouquet carefully, and refused to give so much as a single sprig to the friends who came to meet her, though she was ready enough to distribute the apples. It was a regular country posy—pinks, cabbage-roses, the old-fashioned small fuchsia, pansies, sweet-smelling stocks and mignonette, southernwood, and many other simple old-world blossoms which grow in cottage gardens. Rosy held her bunch tight to her heart as she walked into 5, Palace Place, and saw her father sitting in the armchair.

"Well, lass, you look fine," said Mr. Norman half-sheepishly, as he kissed the forehead held out to him.

Rosy gave him her precious flowers. "Father, I got that posy for your own self. You used to live in the country when you were little."

Mr. Norman took the bunch, and sniffed up the scent with relish. What recollections those sweet country flowers brought to his mind—of the days gone by, when he was happy and steady, and wore a flower in his button-hole, ay, just such pinks and "old man," when he was courting Maria. He was sober and respectable then, had plenty of work, and enjoyed his holidays all the more. He never had to think twice about to-morrow's food or rent, he was well-clothed, had plenty of friends. The flowers seemed to nod their heads and say, "It's all your own fault, it's all the drink."

His little daughter fixed a pair of wistful eyes upon him.

"Father, ain't they lovely! Just as God made 'em; they ain't got spoiled one bit. And, Father——" (a pause) "they drink nothing but water!"

The child's faltering words sent home the lesson taught by the flowers, and ripened the seed of repentance which had been sown weeks before by Rosy's accident. Her father dropped his head and the posy on the table in genuine contrition, and made a steadfast resolution for the future.

"Yes, Rosy," he said, sitting upright again, his voice strong with a ring of manliness and affection long absent from Will Norman's shaky tones. "Yes, my girl, the flowers drink nothing but water, and no more will I—no, not never more, God helping me, however much I may be tempted."

Will Norman has kept his word, despite many a struggle and sore trial. Happiness entered the Norman household with Rosy's flowers. Once more sober and steady, Norman soon found regular work, and after a time the family left squalid Palace Place for a healthier, cleaner home, where Mrs. Norman no longer sold sweetstuff, and the seven children had enough to eat, and grew straight and well. Rosy is a tall, strong girl now, the right hand of her mother, who in her turn looks years younger. Not only Rosy, but the two next in age have been into the country since then, thanks to the father's savings; while both husband and wife took a day's holiday to see them.

But no subsequent holiday can ever be regarded with such veneration by the Normans as the memorable time when Rosy went away first.

"I'm a respectable man now," says Mr. Norman proudly, "and I reads my Bible regular, and goes to church on Sunday; but somehow none of the parsons ever preaches me such a good sermon as I got from *Rosy's posy.*"

K. Eugénie Joyce.

THE ECHO OF THE CENTURIES.

A SUPREME APPEAL.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR FINLAYSON, AUTHOR OF "EVANESCENT PHILOSOPHIES," "THE UNCHANGEABLENESS OF GOD," ETC.

"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."—St. John vi. 68.

SCIENCE and philosophy have wrought wonderful changes on the world of thought. But they do not deal with the domain of the heart. Hence, while man exists, religion is indestructible. When the soul, in face of the realities of life and the mystery of death, asks, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and how shall I appear in His presence?" the Christian revelation alone is found to adapt itself to all the deeper needs of human nature. The light for that life which is beyond science comes to us through the pages of Scripture. And in leaning on the character of God as manifested in Christ Jesus, we satisfy the instinctive, irrepressible cry of the human heart. For Augustine's great saying, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and we cannot rest until we rest in Thee," is but the supreme expression of the soul's relation to the God of love.

When the Lord Jesus trod this earth, multitudes

were tempted to follow Him for the sake of His miracles, for the greed of gain, or the gratification of natural curiosity. Among the crowds thronging Christ were many looking for an expected sign of His coming Kingdom, for some signal demonstration of His Messiahship, for some clear proof that the overthrow of the Roman yoke was at hand, and that the re-establishment of the Jewish monarchy was about to take place. Unlike Mahomet, who pandered to the desires of his devotees, our Lord emphatically reminds the multitudes of the difficulties besetting His followers. He tells them that to follow in the crowd is not sufficient. There must be a weaned heart, a soul separated from sin, from selfishness, and from all low and grovelling aims. There must be personal consecration, individual dedication. In a discourse which enunciated truths of the weightiest importance, the Lord Jesus laid down the foundation principle, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." Many of His hearers, perplexed with such teaching, felt this "a hard saying," and accordingly we read, "From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?" And Simon Peter, in the impetuosity of his nature and the fervour of his love, answers on behalf of the others with the pithy, pointed question, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

THE ECHO OF THE CENTURIES.

THE question of St. Peter and his sublime confession have found an echo in many a heart; and to-day, though well-nigh two thousand years have elapsed, and though we live in an age of boasted civilisation and scientific progress, we may take up the inquiry of St. Peter—"Lord, to whom shall we go?"—and find it as applicable to our altered circumstances, living in this nineteenth century, as it was when uttered by St. Peter on behalf of himself and his brother disciples. There are, indeed, some who would fain persuade us that the circumstances of to-day are so changed since the days of Christ that the inquiry of St. Peter must be limited to the past. With amazing effrontery we are even invited to believe that "the good Lord Jesus has had His day." Ah! Is that so? The writer who can pen such a sentence for one of the popular reviews has not the ghost of a chance in his attempt to make the human heart sceptical as to the supreme claims of Christ upon its allegiance. Voltaire, who died A.D. 1778, in a moment of madness ventured on the foolish prophecy—"In a hundred years the Bible will be a book only to be known and derided as an imposture!"

The hundred years have passed away. The writings of Voltaire are practically forgotten. The printing-press which printed his infidel books has been used to print many thousand copies of the Scriptures; and in 1878, the year of the last Paris Exhibition, the number of Bibles circulated was the largest ever known in France. At the Bible Society's house in London, nearly ten thousand copies are issued every day of the year, except Sunday, or an average of eight hundred and thirty-three every hour, and over thirteen every minute in a working day of twelve hours; or, taking the whole twenty-four hours, between six and seven every minute, day and night, all through the week. This is only the work of one out of many Bible Societies! When the New Testament revision was published a few years ago, the whole of the New Testament, from the first chapter of St. Matthew to the last of Revelation, was telegraphed from New York to Chicago, in order that it might appear in the Sunday's newspapers, and be obtained twelve hours before it was possible to obtain it by the agency of steam.

The assertion that "the good Lord Jesus has had His day" is more profane and more foolish than the ridiculous prophecy of Voltaire. The day of the Lord Jesus is not yet. But it is coming. Eternity is His day. He is rising as the sun on the edge of the horizon. As yet we see but the faint streak of dawn beginning to silver the darkness of night, yet waxing brighter and brighter—a presage of the noontide splendour, a herald of the dazzling vision eternal. It requires more credulity to reject Christ than faith to believe in Him. St. Peter bases his faith on rational conviction, and we do well at times to copy him, and ask the question—"Lord, to whom shall we go?" And although it may be impossible to make a profound inquiry—a luxury in these days permitted to a few—yet a little intelligence and common sense will prove an adequate guide on all practical subjects; and religion is pre-eminently practical. Living in a professedly Christian land, and surrounded by Christian privileges, we can hardly form an adequate idea of the real value of the Gospel of Christ. Yet, while avoiding all profound and learned inquiries, we may, by the exercise of a little intelligent reflection, become as adequate judges of the value of Christ and His Gospel as the most experienced lawyers, the most scientific thinkers, or the most learned theologians. Let us then, for our own fortification in the faith, ask the question of St. Peter—"Lord, to whom shall we go?"

PROGRESSIVE SCIENCE.

WE live in an age which has witnessed a stupendous advance of the experimental sciences; but this great scientific change does not affect our spiritual condition. While we gratefully acknowledge all that modern progress has really effected, let us be careful to remember that its results touch only that which is outward and

superficial. While, for instance, the art of printing has vastly multiplied the power of producing copies of a poem, the power of making poetry has not been increased; while the electric current can send tidings to remote regions in as many moments as it formerly took months, the essential character of the tidings is the same that it ever was—touching the same human feelings as before; while Science, to use the eloquent words of one of her greatest sons, "can triumph over the waves of the sea, she has no secret for calming the disquietudes of ambition;" and, therefore, because the deep cravings of the heart and the trials of the soul remain the same, we need the same Gospel which was wanted by our fathers, and those in the old time before them.

I see a great change outwardly in the present day. What wonderful inventions we have seen during the last few months for the mechanical reproduction of sounds! There is the "perfected phonograph" of Mr. Edison, the graphophone of Messrs. Bell and Tainter, and the gramophone of Mr. Emil Berliner. These are marvellous instruments, the practical value of which can only be seen hereafter. Science, engineering, education, have lifted man up, have ennobled him, have conferred upon him many wondrous gifts, given to him many advantages. But I do not see that all these advantages have wrought one single spiritual change upon his heart. They do not convict him of sin. They do not bring him a step nearer to God. The inward work is just as hard as ever. There is the same need of wrestling with sin; there is the same need of watchfulness against temptation; there is the same need of prayer for the Divine guidance. Logic cannot bind up the bleeding heart; science has no balm for the soul. And to-day, in spite of all our boasted advance in science and education, "if any man be in Christ Jesus," he is still "a *new* creature." Therefore, we reply with St. Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

THE MAZE OF SCEPTICISM.

SO long as the religion of Jesus Christ adapts itself to all the deepest needs of the human heart, sceptical science has not the ghost of a chance. Those distinguished masters of intellectual philosophy and science who have proposed to the world, as substitutes for Christianity, the "Worship of the Universe," as did Strauss; or the "Worship of Humanity," as did Comte; or the "Religion of Humanity," as did John Stuart Mill; or the "Religion of the Creative Faculties," as championed by Tyndall and Herbert Spencer; or, *longo intervallo*, the "Service of Man," as advocated by James Cotter Morison;—are never likely to be remembered as founders of religions, for their schemes can never possibly become religions of the heart; and it is by their hold of the heart that world-conquering religions grow and prosper and prevail. Therefore we may still reply with St. Peter—"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

A painful story is told of Hume's mother. Her son was her pride. Dazzled by his genius, she yielded to his persuasions, and, giving up her faith in Christ, she followed him into the maze of scepticism. But when she came to die she found the folly of her philosophy, and the frailty of the structure she had built upon the sand. From her dying-bed, with trembling hands, she penned a touching letter:—

"MY DEAR SON,—My health has failed me. I am in a deep decline. I cannot long survive. My philosophy affords me no comfort in my distress. I am left without the hopes and consolations of religion, and my mind is sinking into a state of despair. You can afford me some substitute for the loss of the hopes of religion. I pray you hasten home to console me, or at least write to me the consolations that philosophy affords at the dying hour."

Ah! what desolation of despair breathes in that plaintive appeal. As we read, we know not whom to pity most—the son or his mother. What could he say? Powerless to build, his only ambition was to destroy. He had taken from her that which was her help in life, which would have been a support to her in death, and a balm to himself in the hour of affliction.

Unbelief can only seem strong so long as it confines itself to heaping up objections against the faith. In other words, its success depends on its being destructive; as soon as it begins to be constructive it fails. No less than *eighty* theories hostile to Christianity, developed in the course of forty or fifty years, were brought before the Institute of France in 1806, and *not one* of them survives to this day. It would be difficult to mention a theory of denial that has survived the generation of its birth. These phantom philosophies are like so many impressions made on the sand—the first wave of sober scholarship washes them away. Amid the rise and fall of philosophical systems Christianity endures, because it is founded in Him who is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Hence we re-echo St. Peter's question, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

CREDULITY OF SCEPTICISM.

IT is instructive to notice the mutually destructive effects of purely philosophic rationalism. The naturalistic theory of Paulus, the mythical theory of Strauss, the tendency theory of Baur, and the legendary theory of Renan, destroy and neutralise one another as an alkali neutralises an acid. The Agnostic and Positivist are at "daggers drawn." Mr. Frederick Harrison tells Mr. Herbert Spencer that "the worship of the Unknowable is abhorrent to every genuine instinct of religion."

Professor Huxley, who seems anxious to credit himself with the invention of the term "agnostic," which is after all only the Greek equivalent of the Latin "ignoramus," is equally certain that Positivism will not succeed Christianity. The Professor, indeed, declares that when asked to worship "Humanity," he "could just as soon bow down and worship the generalised conception of a 'wilderness of apes.'" Thus, Christianity might almost be content to leave its vindication to its enemies, who, like equivalent quantities in an algebraic equation, neutralise each other. Marvellous are the credulities of the rejectors of the supernatural. Many a Christian man might say, "I believe because I am a rationalist." The faith of the Christian has nothing in common with credulity, and seeing that credulity and scepticism meet, the Christian may well turn to Jesus with the conviction, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

It is a mistake to suppose that the religion of Jesus is endangered in the nineteenth century, any more than it was at the first. It challenges and welcomes criticism. It invites the keenest scrutiny. There is nothing new in Agnosticism except the name, and the one great dogma which it controverts contains nothing that is superannuated. The denial of a man's right to believe that which he does not scientifically know is an arbitrary assumption which will not bear examination. No scientific analysis can discover the truths of God. The province of physics is one thing, the province of Revelation is another. The latter deals with problems absolutely beyond the jurisdiction of physics or philosophy. The domain of physical or chemical forces is one thing, the domain of moral and spiritual forces is another. It is as absurd to suppose that sublime and inscrutable spiritual truths are to be "demonstrated" like a problem of Euclid or a chemical combination, as it would be to expect Charles Darwin, the eminent scientist, to pass a verdict on Beethoven or Shakespeare, when he confessed that neither music nor the plays of Shakespeare had for him any charm. The soul cannot live on syllogisms. The limitations we encounter in science, in literature, in history, we also find in theology. The disciples of physical science, as well as the disciples of Christianity, are confronted with the incomprehensible and the mysterious. Browning in one of his later poems satirises

> "Man, with the narrow mind (who) must cram inside
> His finite God's infinitude,—earth's vault
> He bids comprise the heavenly far and wide,
> Since man may claim a right to understand
> What passes understanding!"

Let us frankly admit that behind the simple facts and phenomena of the spiritual world there are deep problems which we have not solved, mysteries we cannot fathom; let us remember that the key to the mystery is, perhaps, the imperfection of our own faculties; and let us rest on Infinite Love and Wisdom, with the plea, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

THE PERSONALITY OF CHRIST.

We need a creed, it must be sound; we require a Church, it must be orthodox; we want a system, it should be perfect. But the heart cannot live upon these. It requires a living personality to love and to worship. God is revealed in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The secret of life centres not in Church, creed, system, or principle, but in CHRIST, the Ever-living One; Christ *for* us, our justification: His Spirit *in* us, our sanctification. It may be that those who are unable to accept the truth as it is presented in current forms of belief may recognise it in the Person of Him who says, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." Thus all doubts may be made to vanish in the light which God has given to "lighten every man which cometh into the world." Carlyle says we grow more by contact of soul with soul than by all other causes united. Contemplations of Jesus are the death of sin, and in Him all speculations of the intellect and all desires of the heart find their fulfilment and their final result.

The character of Christ is the supreme evidence of Christianity. The entire question of Christianity may safely be staked upon the character of Christ. It requires God for its conception. As Rousseau said, "The inventor of it would be more astonishing than the hero." We have a personal life to love and imitate The power of Christ's Person and the holy relationships which He sets up in redeeming men from sin and consecrating them to holiness gives Christianity a dynamic power of which other systems know nothing.

Millions of hearts to-day vibrate at the echo of His voice—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" millions of souls rejoice in a sense of pardon and peace drawn from His voluntary shedding of blood, and the complete atonement He made by His death and life. Millions of lives are moulded, however feebly, on the model of His perfect life; and, amidst all the vicissitudes of life and the temptations of man's fallen nature, the supreme ideal of happiness is for millions of hearts founded on the constant inquiry, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Every day increases the number of disciples who re-echo the question of St. Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

THE VANISHING OPAL.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE MAN ON THE SLANT," ETC.

IN THREE PARTS.--PART II.

CHAPTER II.

THE eyes of Isaac Coloman glistened under their shaggy brows, as they devoured the beautiful gems which his brother Jew spread out before him.

Then he produced his own. They were not many, but they were all choice. There was the Odem and the Barabeth and Nopheth, and the Sapper and the Jahalom of the breastplate; the Sardius and Carbuncle and Emerald and Sapphire and Diamond of the jeweller's shop. "Blessed be they!" said Isaac Coloman, "for they shone in the breastplate of our high-priest. May the day soon come when they shall shine therein again!"

"I know not when that will be," said Ben Ezra; "my concern is as to where they shall shine now; and from these, friend Coloman, I think I can fit what is wanting of the chief stones in one or two of these cases;" and Ben Ezra picked out three diamonds, a sapphire, and a ruby. "And, now, are these all that thou hast got? Hast thou no opal? Coming from Hungary, how is it that thou hast no gem from what I might call the 'Home of Opals'?"

Isaac Coloman shifted uneasily on his chair, and stammered somewhat suspiciously in his speech, as he invented some reasons why he had none of his own country's precious stones.

Isaac had not gone very far, however, when eyes quite as keen as his own looked him through and through, and a hand was laid upon his thigh. "I conjure thee, by Abraham and Isaac and Jacob," said the Jew, "to hide nothing from me. May their blessing be upon thee as thou dealest faithfully with me! Thou hast yet something more—bring it forth!"

Isaac Coloman hesitated, and began to stammer again; but it was of no use: his host fixed his eyes, like those of a serpent, on him. "I would not curse thee under mine own roof," said Ben Ezra; "but if thou showest me not whatever thou hast in secret, I will deliver thee to Beelzebub. Why should we, who are brethren, not open our hearts to one another, seeing they have to be closed so fast to those with whom we live? I have that passing over me which makes me feel that thou hast something yet to show"—and Isaac Coloman's host fixed his two now terrible-looking eyes on his guest.

Coloman's heart was terror-stricken at the idea of being handed over formally to Beelzebub: for Ben Ezra's whole appearance was changed, and he looked as though he were capable of doing such a deed; so, slowly and deliberately, yet with very nervous fingers, he undid the bosom of his dress, and drew over his head a leathern thong, with a leather bag at the end. Here he paused.

"Proceed!" said Ben Ezra, in a voice which meant business of an unpleasant kind if Coloman hung back.

Then the unhappy man undid the bag, with a trembling hand, and from it took a small casket of gold.

"Open!" thundered Ben Ezra; and Coloman touched a spring, and revealed to the eager eyes of his terrible host the opal of Czernowitza.

The gem was a mass of imprisoned fire—fire of



"The gem was a mass of imprisoned fire."

every hue: distinct, and not distinct—now blazing, now gleaming, now shading colour into colour, and hue into hue; it was music changed to colour—softly sinking, softly swelling: and it had its effect on Ben Ezra. The Jew sat spell-bound before the gem—it had conquered him; and for a long time he did not speak. Isaac Coloman plucked up courage when he saw that his terrible friend was thus subdued.

"Hast ever seen the like of that?" asked Coloman. "Few eyes have beheld it save those of the one I got it from, and those of the one by whom it has been cut."

"The man who owns that stone is to be blessed," said Ben Ezra. "Peace be to thee evermore!" Then the Jew moved the stone to and fro for a moment, shading his eyes with one of his hands. "If precious stones have their kings, after the manner of men," continued Ben Ezra, "then is this stone the monarch of all opals. They say that gems are male and female—the deeper colour being the male, and the lighter the female; but this is king and queen in itself: it hath colours deep as colours can be—it hath colours light as colours can be; so tender are they that it seems as though that stone could feel. Speak! my guest; and if one might speak of money in connection with so rare a gem—hath it any price?"

"Nay, friend; there is the spell of an ancient prophecy upon that stone. It is priceless to me."

Ben Ezra sank for a few moments into a deep reverie; then looked peculiarly at his guest, and bade him cover up the stone again.

"And now, friend," said Ben Ezra, "as thou hast shown me, I verily believe, all thou hast—and I confess that, in the possession of that stone, thou hast wealth that I did not credit thee with—I will show thee some opals which I have. They are for a royal necklace, and I have agents in many parts of the world, endeavouring, at any cost, to enable me to complete it. It wants but two stones; and when they are got, it will be wealth to me and to those who have sunk their money in it with me. Moreover, I will show thee the Bezoar, which thou hast never seen, and which is a curiosity which few see now. It came to me from the treasures of the Grand Turk."

Then Ben Ezra groped in the far back of his safe, and drew forth a case similar to the others which Coloman had seen, and also a little box, of some dark wood, carved with some curious figures. They were hieroglyphics, and probably of some cabalistic nature.

The case of opals at once riveted the attention of Coloman. They were indeed of the very first class—excellent in size, and symmetry, and fire—but far inferior to the stone which he himself possessed. Isaac Coloman admired them, and gave his opinion of each of them, and they were duly returned to the case; not, however, without Coloman's observing, with some uneasiness, that the host declared that, at one time, he had almost despaired of completing the set before he died, but that he had hopes—he felt fresh courage—since he had seen his friend's gem; and so the opals were put away—away into the safe—but, nevertheless, not out of Isaac Coloman's mind, or of Ben Ezra's either.

Ben Ezra saw in Isaac Coloman's opal the completion of the royal necklace, provided only he could get the one stone which was missing; and Isaac Coloman saw a flashing red light in his opal, such as he had never seen before. Three times he shut his eyes, and moved it to and fro, and then suddenly looked at the first colour which presented itself; and on each occasion it was red—a danger-signal, if his grandmother's words were true. And Isaac did not sleep the sleep of the just that night, but spent its hours in falling down precipices of opal, and in being stoned with opals, after having been cast out of synagogues; and in being starved, and choked with opals, seeing that evil angels set them before him when he was hungry, instead of bread.

"What have I done?" thought Isaac Coloman, during such parts of the night as he lay awake; "I have put mine hand under Ben Ezra's thigh; I have sworn to him that he shall have any stone of mine which he may need to make up his sets; what if he find the wanted stone for that opal necklace, which lacks but that one for its completion? what if he come to me for my most precious gem? But the stone he wants to match is good, very good; he may never get its like, and so never come for mine; and then there is the price—he can never pay the price, although he hath so many in company with him that I know not how great are the sums at his command; and he may die, and there is no written bond—then shall I be clear of mine oath."

On the other hand, Ben Ezra's dreams may, in comparison with poor Isaac Coloman's, be said to have been hilarious. He saw the necklace completed and hung round the neck of a queen; he saw Isaac Coloman's opal the cynosure of the whole Court; he heard himself spoken of as the jeweller who alone could produce such sets of stones; he found himself deluged with orders of extraordinary magnitude; and, finally, he discovered a mountain of opal—all precious, all noble opal—all as beautiful as Isaac Coloman's choice gem; and from this he had only to clip off as much as he wanted; and, best of all, no one could ever find out where it was but himself.

It is high time for us to inquire what has become of Isaac Coloman's son, Sigismund.

As soon as Isaac had time to look about him, he sought a good opening for his son. He himself dealt only in large stones, stones in which it would be perilous indeed to make a mistake; let Sigismund begin with smaller fry, and by-and-bye he would be fit for larger operations.

Sigismund was accordingly set up as a jeweller in a general way, and in process of time began to do

remarkably well. Every evening, for a long time after the shop was shut, he came to his father's to report progress, to get advice, and to get himself generally kept up to the mark. Young men, in a general way, do not care to be kept up to the mark; they are their own mark, and they seem to themselves to be always up to that; but Sigismund had a profound veneration for his father's judgment in precious stones; and he would not buy, if he could help it, even a turquoise without his opinion on it.

Time passed on, and Sigismund prospered in the world. Even after he paid his father ten per cent. interest—the very lowest the old man would take—on the stock purchased, and money generally advanced, he was not only able to pay his way, but also to put something by. A little quiet pawnbroking business in the way of taking in jewellery on pledge, also helped him on; and he was a young man who might be pronounced to be doing remarkably well.

But Sigismund did not tell anyone of this. One of the lessons which he had learned from his old father was, to "Keep his mouth shut, and his ears and his eyes open:" "Two ears, my son, for hearing, and two eyes, my son, for seeing, and but one mouth—one mouth, my son, for speaking. Remember, my son, the Proverbs of Solomon, and how often he speaketh of the peril of the tongue."

And, in truth, Isaac Coloman had practised as he preached. He had not spent over-many words, even on his only son. If Isaac spake much to himself, having his audience within, where no one could see it, he spoke very little to the world without. "He who speaks little is thought to know a great deal," was one of the proverbs that Isaac manufactured for himself, and his own guidance; and he would not have been averse to giving Solomon a turn out of it, or the loan of it at ten per cent. on what he made out of it, if only he were alive and proverb-making now.

Isaac Coloman's son Sigismund had often longed to hear something of his mother, Hedvige, but his father gave him very little information about her. All he could gather was that she was a woman of a gentle spirit; and that, having been heard to say that the gentleness of the Nazarene was of heaven, she had been cursed by his father, though she had never wandered from the Jewish faith.

From Isaac Coloman, the son Sigismund inherited no soft spot, but from the mother Hedvige he did; and hence, perhaps, it came to pass that he could not for all his life long make himself completely happy with only precious stones. The young man's father gave him from time to time various admonitions on the subject—

"Precious stones, my son, neither eat nor drink, nor do they want fine clothes, as women do."

"Precious stones, my son, do not jangle and wrangle, as women often do."

"Precious stones, my son, will not say 'Nay' when thou sayest 'Yea,' or 'Yea' when thou sayest 'Nay,' as the perverse woman will."

"Precious stones will not be bright to-day and dull to-morrow, but are ever bright; they are cheerful companions which trouble thee not with talk."

"They need no doctor, my son; they do not go out of their own accord, and whither thou dost not know; and if thou sendest them, and for thine own purpose requirest them not back, they will not come. As thou knowest, I have one precious stone which is as a wife to me. I find its companionship enough; it is unto me as the one ewe lamb which lay in the poor man's bosom; and though thou canst not have one supreme object of affections, as I have, until I die, if even then"—(for Coloman had not yet quite given up the idea of being buried with his opal)—"still thou canst divide thine affections amongst many; and thou knowest there is a proverb that 'in a multitude there is safety.' Here thou hast Odem and Pitdah, and Barabeth and Nopheth, and Sapper and Jahalom, and Lishem and Shebo, Aclamah and Tharshish, and Stroham and Jaseph with thee—all that were in the breastplate thou hast here—spend thine admiration, and I may say thy love, on them. A heart divided amongst many is a safe heart, my son; but the heart that trusts in one is in peril—from—from—who knows from how many people, how many things?"

For a while, all this seemed very good to Sigismund, and he became a real admirer, and almost lover, of precious stones. He could find true pleasure in looking at them, and sorting them, and experimenting with various lights upon their refulgent properties; but Sigismund was young, and in addition to various hearts, some of gold and some of precious stones, in the glass cases, he had one made of something else—who can tell what?—in his own breast; and whilst the young man's head was quite satisfied with the stone-theory of his father, his heart could not be thus satisfied at all.

How is it that we cannot get these heads and hearts always to work together? How is it that the head refuses sometimes to find reasons for the heart, and that the heart will dispense with "reasons," and be content with feelings in their place? Know, good reader, if you know it not already, that love is an instinct, and instinct requires no reasons. Sigismund did not love anyone; and yet, unknown to himself, he wanted to love someone, and to have someone to love.

It is related of the eccentric Prince Potemkin that, in his latter days, tired of a life of dissipation and turbulence, he would sit alone in the long winter evenings, before a table covered with black velvet. Then having his diamonds brought, of which he had a prodigious quantity, he would continue for hours amusing himself like a child in placing them one after another in the form of circles, crosses, and fanciful figures, considering each before he placed it, and then admiring the situation of it, or removing it to another. On one of these evenings the thought occurred to him to weigh the diamonds; they were

found to amount to several pounds. The most remarkable were what composed an epaulette of brilliants to the value of 850,000 roubles; another of coloured stones of 300,000 roubles, perfect rubies, weighing from 35 to 36 carats, of inestimable value—the picture of the Empress Catherine II. pendent to yellow and black diamonds, in imitation of the ribbon of the Order of St. George. He frequently amused himself by pouring the diamonds out of one hand into another, as children play with little stones.

Like Potemkin, Sigismund set out his gems in this form and that; but he could not make eyes at an emerald, or soft-sawder a topaz, or pay a compliment, which would be appreciated, to a pearl; he could not go to tea with a turquoise, nor invite it in pale blue to accompany him in an evening stroll. Imagine *it's* saying, "Ask mamma." After all, stones were stones, and nothing more; even as hearts are hearts, and nothing less.

There were many evenings when Sigismund did not go to his father's, and these he spent for the most part at home, in the little parlour behind the shop; and there he often looked into the fire, and thought of the cold black stones which he put on it being turned into glowing light, flaming, blazing like his own gems, and doing what they could not do—warming. Heat came forth from them as it did not from diamond, ruby, emerald, or pearl. "The fire does it," said the young man, spreading his hands before the glowing coals; "*it* is the transformer, and I bask in its heat. What are flashes, what are gleams, what are sparkles, what are any of them without heat?"

Sigismund, my friend, Sigismund! Those who love heat are often burnt at the fire. Is it well, Sigismund, even to be singed? is it well to boil over even a little? Beware, Sigismund! Baked, or fried, or boiled, or broiled, or subjected too much to the action of heat, thou mayest come away badly from the fire. But Sigismund did not give heed to any such voices, and, lamentable as it is to have to record such fatuity, he actually did wish to be baked, or to be fried, or to be boiled, or broiled; or, if I might express myself in so low a way, I should say "cooked" in some way or other; and he did—O strange fatuity!—wish to be overdone; and he did wish for the right person to come; and (forgive me, good reader, for the vulgarity of the simile; for after all it is only a simile) he did wish—practically wish—to be overdone.



"Now was Sigismund's chance."—*p.* 869.

Well, all these were only premonitory symptoms of what was coming on. "Coming events," as we are told, "cast their shadows before them." There is some cooking, you may depend upon it, always before him who desires to be cooked; and there is the cook too.

Sigismund's cook was in existence, and the fates were about to bring her to Sigismund himself.

* * * * *

Leopoldine Gratz, are all your people fond of precious stones? More or less, they are. And, Leopoldine, so are you. You do not love them in order that they may shine in your ears, and on your neck, and round your wrist, and, if such were allowable in the country in which you lived, hanging in a ring from your nose. You do not particularly care even to have them as a ring on your fingers. A plain gold one, I do you the justice to believe, you, in common with some of the simpler of your sex, would have much preferred. But you were fond of the pretty things, and you often stopped to look at them in Sigismund's window.



"'Look!'"—*p.* 871.

And, Leopoldine, Sigismund often looked at you, and as he looked (though he didn't know it) he was getting himself ready to be cooked; and though you didn't know it, you were to be cook.

But how were the two to be brought together? Week after week Sigismund thought that surely the beautiful Jewess—for he could see plainly enough to what faith she belonged—would come in and, at any rate, ask the price of something, as many a one did, who did not want to buy at all. But she contented herself with simply looking in.

At last, one day she appeared with a young female friend, and the two stood looking a long time at a new bracelet which Sigismund had hung up in a conspicuous position. It was labelled "An Amulet," and the curiosity of the young girls was evidently aroused about it.

Now was Sigismund's chance. There were two of them, so there could be no harm in asking them in, just in the way of business. Accordingly, the jeweller came to the door, and asked them "if they would not walk in."

"We have no money to buy," said the girls.

"No matter; you need not buy; you need only look. I'll show you anything I have without your buying."

"Well, we are curious," said Miriam Levvy, "to know what that bracelet or amulet is; perhaps it would not take you too long to tell us about it, and we shall be very much obliged. Come in, Leopoldine; we have more than half an hour to spare." So in the two young people went, and the jeweller took the amulet out of the window.

"This jewel," said Sigismund, "is not to be sold; it is an order. There is no price, you will have observed, on it, as on most of the other things. Every stone in it is sacred to a particular month; they are called zodiac stones, and they are set together so as to be sure to have the one in connection with, or corresponding to, the particular sign or month of the year. The first you see is a garnet, a jacinth—that is for January, or the sign Aquarius; and the next is an amethyst—that is for February, or the sign Pisces—a very good sign for that month, for it is always so wet—here, anyhow. There is the bloodstone—that goes to Aries the ram, or the month of March; and here is this blue stone, the sapphire, for April—it belongs to the sign Taurus, the bull. I don't quite like that, for a bull is a rushing beast, and one never thinks of him except as getting up a tree, or something of that sort, from his horns; and the sapphire is a calm and heavenly-looking stone, blue like the sky above; it used to be said that it helped to make people sleep.* May

* Sir John Mandeville, in describing the frame of Prester John's bed, says that it was of fine sapphires blended with gold, to make him sleep well.

has the agate, and June the emerald, and July the onyx, and August the cornelian, and September the chrysolite, and October the aquamarine, and November the topaz, and last, not least, December, the ruby.

"This is for an old lady who I suppose does a bit of conjuring with herself. Perhaps she finds out by some of these stones how she is going to be; for some folk believe that if gems become dull they foretell illness or danger; and if they look colourless, then you must prepare for the worst. But," added the jeweller gallantly, "there's nothing bad coming to any of us; perhaps there's something very good, for I don't think I ever saw these stones look so bright as since you have looked into them." Sigismund did not think of saying that "perhaps the ladies had left the reflection of their eyes in them." He was only now being trussed for the fire—nay, he was only being caught, and his feathers were not even plucked; by-and-bye, when he had been partly cooked, and was twisting merrily round upon the spit, he would probably have said this, and a great deal more.

The girls had now to go; but not before the jeweller had told them that, if they would honour him by looking in another day, and he hoped soon, he would show them another string of stones—a curiosity that he had bought a little while before—and which if he could not get a customer for in certain quarters, he would break up.

We often become what we wish to be; and so was it with Sigismund, the jeweller. Unknown to himself, when he felt the insufficiency of the precious stones to bring any light or warmth into his heart, he wished for, or felt that he wanted, something that would—he wanted to be in love; or, if you like to put it in another form, he wanted to love and to be loved. Hitherto, no opportunity had come to him; it had come now. And so, when in due time Leopoldine Gratz and her friend turned up again to see the jeweller's curiosities, he was in a very fitting state to look upon Leopoldine as a very precious stone indeed. Yes, as better than any precious stone; for he had had some days in which to become the victim of his imagination; and imagination will do a great deal in a very short time when a single lady or gentleman is concerned.

Well, the jeweller showed Leopoldine and her friend the curiosity, which was a bracelet of stones. "Now, guess what these are," said he. So the girls guessed one thing and another; and then, with infinite scorn, the jeweller told them what it was. "It belongs to the Christians," said he; "to the people of the Nazarene. Here are the twelve Apostles, as they are called. You see the name of each engraved at the back. 'Peter' is on this jasper, and 'Andrew' on this sapphire, and 'James' on this chalcedony. There, read them for yourself; and look at that last one—there is 'Matthias' on that amethyst. A pity they did not put a bloodstone in there, and call it Judas. Hah!" said the jeweller, with bitterest scorn, "he was the best of them, for he put an end to the Nazarene."

"True!" said Leopoldine Gratz's companion. Leopoldine herself did not say anything, but she winced at the jeweller's remark. Leopoldine was of a gentle disposition; perhaps she winced at the word "blood." Her religion taught her that "the blood was the life thereof;" perhaps she thought of what blood it was, for she believed the Nazarene to have been a good man. She was sorry her people had killed Him; she would not have hurt a hair of His head herself. She had a Testament at home; it was hidden in her little room, and she often read it; and she wondered whether if she had lived in those old times she would have been glad to have sat at His feet at Bethany; or to have attended Him with much service; or to have broken an alabaster box of ointment, very precious, and to have anointed Him. If she had stood beside the cross, would she have gone very early in the morning, while it was yet dark, to the tomb? She did not believe in Him. She did not understand anything of what St. Paul said of Him; but her common woman's heart went out to Him; and sometimes she felt as though beyond the foreground of this there was some long perspective which she could not penetrate, but she always thought it was a way of sunshine and shadow, with a great light at the end.

Well, to come back to the jeweller and his gems: the young girls came oftener and oftener, and now and again Leopoldine came with an older person—in fact, the aunt with whom she lived, for she was an orphan girl—and between ourselves, good reader, the poor old soul was brought there that the jeweller might be inspected with a view to eventualities, the possibility of which began to shadow itself forth in Leopoldine's breast. The old lady was brought to look at this and that, only three or four times; the fact was (though one rather shrinks from dwelling on it), she was not wanted one bit for herself; indeed (though I don't like to say it), she was rather in the way than otherwise. As she expressed a favourable opinion of the jeweller, and had invited him to her house to tea (this owing to her happy apprehension of a suggestion offered to her by her niece), she was not brought out in the cold any more. Dear old creature! why should she be? We all of us find ourselves in life obliged to just "serve a turn." Happy are we if we can make ourselves contented with looking ornamental, like an old cracked china teapot on a shelf. "Turn me up, good friend; I am Crown-Derby still, blue-marked though cracked; look at the mark, and not the crack. Think of the tea I have brewed, though I can brew no more; think of the gossips I have assisted at, though no one wants me now." Never mind, dear old creature! we have both had our day, and we are both, so to speak, however cracked, genuine Crown-Derby still.

Some roasts are soon done, and some take a long time to do; a good deal depends upon the fire.

Imagine to yourself a chicken full of enthusiasm to be done, and itself helping the spit to go round and round: it won't take long in the cooking, will it? I suppose in this case the fire was good and the fowl was willing, for the jeweller began to look over his rings to see which would be the best for an engagement one; and he also put away a few other things out of his stock, which he thought would become Leopoldine very much. But then, there was old Isaac to be taken into account. Papas often have to count for something, even on the man's side; and this papa was of particular importance, because, in point of fact and law, he was the real owner of all the jeweller's stock; moreover, he was the possessor of those special stones, of which his son was the natural heir, and, above all, of the precious, the noble opal which would doubtless come to him, though when it should so do, he felt he should not know what to do with it.

"So thou art bent on marriage, my son," said old Isaac Coloman to his son, when the latter visited him to know his mind on the subject. "I have lived very well without thy mother for many years; why canst thou not live by thyself? True! I have my precious, my noble one to keep me company, but thou hast plenty of gems too, though none like that."

Then Sigismund told his father all about Leopoldine's charms, and how she had a little dower of her own, which he would throw into the business—a stroke of generalship which helped to gain the day.

"I see, my son," said the old Jew, "that thou art sick even unto death. After all, why shouldst thou be better than Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, thy forefathers? Yet, also, remember Job. But let us see, let us see!"

Then Isaac Coloman took a large circle of rock crystal, almost like a diamond itself, so colourless, so bright. This he fixed in a frame not unlike that of a looking-glass, so that the crystal could be easily moved.

The old Jew had kept his precious opal to himself ever since he got possession of it; even his son Sigismund knew very little about it; and as to the use he made of it he was quite a stranger. He looked on, therefore, with curiosity, and not altogether with comfort, at what was taking place.

"Fear not, my son," said the old man; "thou shalt hear no voice, and whatsoever colour thou seest, it will be a vision of beauty." Then Coloman fixed a thread of silk to a hook in the ceiling, and opened a little window, through which streamed in the rays of a brilliant sun. Then with great ceremony, and almost with a kind of reverence, he produced the precious opal from its hiding-place, and fixed it securely to the end of the hanging silk. It was never known what the old Jew said, but he whispered to the stone just as if it could hear, and then said to his son, "Thou seest that that crystal focuses the light from heaven, and thou seest that the focus is at the end of this silken thread. Now, this precious opal will go forth in search of truth, and it will tell thee whether this marriage, if it be undertaken, will be for thy good or not. Thou must sit with closed eyes at the other side from the crystal; the rays from the sun will fall direct upon the gem when it is at rest; then when I tell thee to open thine eyes, mark well the colour thou first seest, and, according to that, we will settle how this matter is to be."

As soon as Sigismund was placed in position, his father swung the gem gently to and fro, like the pendulum of a clock, and then left it to itself. Gradually its oscillations became less and less, until at last, just as he was getting somewhat impatient, the young man heard a quick, sharp word, "Look!" and he opened his eyes and fixed them upon the stone. A blue blaze of fire met his eye, blue as the heavens, bright as the sun in those heavens.

"What seest thou, my son?" cried out the old man, in evident agitation. "Speak! Quick!"

"Blue—only blue—blue like the heavens above; like the heavens, with the sun setting them on fire."

"Good, my son, good," said the superstitious old man, as he sank down exhausted from excitement; "the gem hath been gracious unto thee; thou mayest marry, and that when thou wilt. But," said the young man's father, sidling up to him, "didst thou not see some yellow, my son? I would that thou hadst seen some yellow, my son; yellow belongs to our race; when there is no yellow, it seems as though the interpretation would lead to some breach in our race. But that must pass; what is, is, and cannot be forced or changed; we must not inquire twice, for that would savour of discontent, or doubt. I did it once, my son, and the gem became clouded, and told me naught. Thou hast seen blue. Hadst thou seen yellow, it would have been gold; hadst thou seen red, it would have been danger; in either case thou couldest not have married this maiden. Thou must have married someone like Miriam Levvy—who, though she halteth on both her feet, and hath a glass eye, and is favoured not in the region of the nose, hath £50,000—if thou hadst seen yellow; or not have married at all if thou hadst seen red. The first would have been money, the second danger. But thou hast seen blue—

> "'Prize above all its heavenly hue;
> It guides to what is just and true.'

I dare put no interpretation on it but this, that thou wilt find in the wife thou art about to take what is just and true. She will not deceive thee; she will be what a wife ought to be, and that is saying much, my son. But I need not tell thee about this, only I would that thou hadst seen some yellow. Art thou sure, my son, that thou didst not see it, just a little shade—a little tinge? Well, it was in the stone, at any rate; that is a comfort, and perhaps thou wilt see it another time. Now go thy way; I may not gainsay what the gem hath said; and I am expecting someone here on business for whom I must prepare;" and so Sigismund was dismissed, happy in the thought that there was no obstacle between him and his love.

(To be concluded.)

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN.

IN the variety of subjects with which a writer may be called upon to deal, affecting the public interest and welfare, none can come home more intimately to "men's business and bosoms" than the subject of children. We have all been children ourselves; many of us are the parents of children; we have rejoiced at the birth which gave them to our arms, and but too often wept at the death which took them from our side. Companionship with them and responsibility for them have made up the chief features of the home life of every one amongst us. There can be no question, therefore, as to the universal interest of the subject, in its general sense.

But we are to speak of the *treatment* of children, and if we went into detail, this has its divisions. There is, first, the way in which children ought to be treated, then the way in which they ought *not* to be treated, and, generally, the way in which they *are* treated.

What more delightfully fascinating than childhood?—its naturalness, its innocence, its grace; the charms which even bachelor painters have made immortal on their canvas, as Reynolds and Landseer, for example. What happiness to make a child happy! and, on the contrary, what—— But no! that will come in afterwards, and then quite soon enough. We will not anticipate.

It was recorded in classic phrase, as a duty, many generations ago, that great reverence is due to the young. The same truth was even more tersely expressed, in simple Anglo-Saxon, to the writer in his early manhood by a cultured American, and he has never forgotten it. The lips which spoke it have long been silent, but the saying is worth remembering and worth repeating. "It is a sin," said the good man, "to rob a child of his childhood." There is a far-seeing and a far-reaching wisdom in the words. The children who are robbed of their childhood are found in every stage of growth and every rank of life. The child is as truly robbed of his childhood who is spoiled, pampered, or forced into a precocity beyond his years, as is the poor and puny victim of terrors, oaths, and blows which make his life a burden.

Then this duty of reverence for the young receives the sanction of an awful emphasis when we remember how much is latent in the young. A "young Turk" who played practical jokes and revelled in mischief, in Warwickshire, in the days of "good Queen Bess," was Will Shakespeare. The grave-looking lad who spent his leisure at Grantham School in making windmills, kites, and lanterns, with which he frightened the country people, was Isaac Newton. And the sickly Norfolk stripling whom his sailor uncle thought could "never rough it at sea," but who wanted to know from his grandmother "what fear was, for he had never seen it," was the hero of the Nile and Trafalgar—Horatio Nelson.

Every reader of the daily papers, observing the common incidents of our ordinary life, must have been struck by the frequent details of cruelty to children which come to light, and which serve now to mark the habitual course of English life. There is something shocking and unnatural in such an offence under any circumstances, but the ingenuity of torture which seems to mark the later developments of this horrible crime fairly takes the breath away of anyone in whom the feeling of humanity is not extinct. Five years ago a special organisation was set on foot to grapple with this offence, and to prevent cruelty by punishing it. For that is the only present remedy. There is no other way of reaching the savage than by treating him with severity. To treat the brute as a brute is the only way to get at so much of the capacity of feeling as may be left in him. In most cases either he never had any to appeal to, or what he had he has sinned away.

To appeal to any moral sense in such a creature were as idle as to appeal to the blind man's sense of sight. When the special Society to which we have referred was set on foot—that, namely, for the "Prevention of Cruelty to Children," it had to run the gauntlet of numerous objections, some of which were of the ordinary type, such as always start up in the path of any work of benevolence; while others were better founded and required answering. That answer they have received. The four or five years' success of the Society is a triumphant answer. But it was held then that no such society was necessary.

Indeed, both then and since it has been held, and declared by local magnates—mayors and magistrates, bishops and clergymen—that however other places might need looking after, their own favoured locality needed no such defenders. If it did—"there were the police!" *They* could do everything that was necessary: they could keep down the cruelty by their presence, or bring it up for punishment if it *did* break out. We now know better than this, as will presently be seen. Even in London it was thought, and conscientiously believed, by some who were well acquainted with such matters, that the ground for philanthropic effort was so fully occupied that there was no need and no room for any additional society with a purpose separate and distinct from those already in existence. Yet this very Society, entering upon a new work peculiar to itself, has, by the character of that work and the urgent plea of the necessities which it has discovered, won from the community at large an amount of sympathy and support entirely exceptional, if not, within the time, altogether unprecedented.

The reports of the Society unfortunately abound with the most convincing and awful proofs of the commonness in almost every corner of the land—in the lonely country cottage as well as in the squalid garret of the crowded town—of this "most foul and most unnatural" crime.

Let us point out before we go further what is understood to be included under the title of "Cruelty to Children." It includes the cruel treatment, wrongful neglect, or improper employment of children; also all conduct by which life, or limb, or health is wrongfully endangered or sacrificed, or by which morals are imperilled or depraved. This is a copious programme, but it is one from which not a single item can be omitted, if the work is to be done thoroughly—traced out, that is, followed up, dragged to light, exposed and punished. We ventured to say just now that these crimes too commonly "mark the habitual course of English life." And we meant it. It was no *façon de parler* put in to balance a sentence or round a period, or to describe the work with a final flourish. Dainty diction is dreadfully out of place here. The want of love for children—the complement of that vile and selfish sensuality which marks their parentage—is, unhappily, to be found in various ranks of life. The creature who takes charge of another woman's children for hire, and under the phrase "insuring their lives," insures their death after as short an interval as is consistent with decency, under circumstances cleverly enough contrived to escape suspicion: the actual parents of children so treated—so dealt with and so disposed of when they come unwelcomely fast, become too many on the ground, and cost money which curtails the weekly drinking-bout: the irascible fiend whose dignity must not be disturbed by a child's laugh or cry, and who snatches up the nearest weapon—a poker or a toasting-fork, to strike with, or the nearest missile, a bottle or a knife, to throw—these are not the only nor the worst offenders against that law in the soul which forbids cruelty to children. These types are numerous, but they are not all.

They are bad enough, too, in all conscience; but if we estimate guilt by the comparison of temptation and of opportunity, it would be hard to say that they are the worst of the cases which the printed documents before us make us acquainted with. Besides these offenders of the baser sort, there are Women of gentle birth, delicately nurtured, trained in the surroundings of refinement and cultivation; Men of the professions to which humanity owes so much in the relief of pain, the assuaging of sorrow, the suggestion of the highest consolation under the sufferings of this life by holding out the blessed hopes and promises of the life to come—all these are amongst the branded breakers of the same Divine law, spurners of the Divine command which welcomed children to the Saviour's arms. How is this? The question has been frequently asked, and claims an answer, for the fact is a staggering one. How is it, we are asked, that professional, cultured men, on whom the advantages of high education have been exhausted, are guilty of these enormities? In the superior grades of society just referred to we should, *à priori*, think such crimes impossible. But they do actually exist there—cannot be ignored, and must be accounted for; and this can only be by assuming that passion and vice, working restlessly, rub off with horrible friction the enamel of social cultivation, leaving exposed, in all its deformity and hideousness, the bare animalism of the lowest natures. If, as we are told, the bravest are the sons and daughters of the brave, what in the future which is coming upon us will the sons and daughters of the cruel be?

Thus the work of this Society amply justifies its existence, and shows that its mission of mercy was not begun an hour too soon. It was established in July, 1884. The original idea was American; thence it was transferred to Liverpool in 1883, and in the following year was brought to London. In November, 1884, the Shelter of the Society, in Harpur Street, Bloomsbury, was formally opened, where the children placed in its charge are temporarily received, pending settled arrangements, and where the Society's business is carried on. Its growth may be inferred from the following summary, taken from the annual reports published in 1885-6-7-8, and setting forth the total of its operations under the heads given:—

	1st Year.	2nd Year.	3rd Year.	4th Year.	Total.
Number of cases undertaken	95	147	258	284	784
Total convictions for cruelty	9	16	29	54	108
Nights' lodgings—Children in Shelter	779	1,768	2,906	3,017	8,470
Meals to Children in Shelter	2,294	5,010	8,834	7,936	24,074
	£	£	£	£	
Annual Subscriptions ...	109	299	651	883	...
Donations and other receipts	794	781	935	1,303	...
Total income	903	1,080	1,586	2,186	...
Number of contributors ...	225	420	953	1,250	...

These items will all exhibit a very large increase in every particular when the next annual returns come to be published. It is already reported that 1,070 is the number of cases dealt with since the foundation of the Society.

Where remonstrance or warning of a private character will apparently suffice, no more drastic treatment of the culprit is at first resorted to. But some of the offences are of such a heinous character that they can only be dealt with by process of law. At the Central Criminal Court, in Courts of Assize, of Quarter and Petty Sessions, and of Summary Jurisdiction, cases in which the Society prosecuted have been quite numerous; and now that Aid Committees have been established in many of the large provincial towns, and the country has become thoroughly awakened to the necessity and advantage of these operations, they are certain to become much more general. Fines have been inflicted in the slighter cases, recognisances required in others, and various terms of imprisonment and penal servitude inflicted, even to the severest known to the law—for the term of the natural life. It may now be asked again, as at first, is not this work for the police? What is that special need for the Society's action, which was asked for, by way of objection, at the outset? The answer is commendatory of the police, but experience has now abundantly proved that for a special work there is needed a special agency. For dealing with children, and eliciting their simple story, legal questioning and court examinations are out of place: not helpful but harmful; not educing the truth but driving it in, and defeating its ends. For such patient, tedious work as this, special fitness is required which is only to be found in patient men and women who do not think it

tedious. The ordinary policeman is not trained for this, and his other duties leave him no time to acquire it. The time, resource, and special training which *are* needful can only be provided by special agencies such as we have here described.

This description has been general, in order that as much might be brought under the notice of the reader as the space at our disposal would permit. To enter into details would be only too easy, but all of them are deeply painful, and some are too utterly revolting for repetition here. The publications of the Society are freely distributed to those who wish to have them, and additions to the funds are always wanted and always welcome. It is also a subject for thankfulness that all possible influence should have been brought to bear upon the Legislature, to promote the passing of the Bill for the Better Prevention of Cruelty to Children. In this Bill the experience which the Society has gained has furnished the foundation for enactments of proved necessity, if we would, as men, Englishmen, and Christians, escape from the guilt of tolerating with our eyes open the enormities which the Society has brought to light. Good men of all political parties in the House of Commons have been found acting together to effect these objects. Let all good men and women throughout the country unite to help them, and to see the provisions of the Bill carried out when it has become law.

DAVID BUXTON.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

QUESTIONS.

121. What words of Jesus show that His risen body was real, and not a spirit-form?

122. What two qualifications of Saul and Jonathan are specially mentioned by David in his lamentation at their death?

123. What was the first wilful act of disobedience to God's commands of which King Saul was guilty?

124. Whence come the well-known words, "The memory of the just is blessed"?

125. St. Peter says, "Charity shall cover the multitude of sins." Quote Proverb which sets forth the same truth.

126. In what way did the children of Israel manifest at Mizpeh their sorrow for the sin of idolatry?

127. Quote some words of St. Paul in which he speaks of suffering as a special sign of God's love.

128. What words of St. Paul show the value he set upon intercessory prayer?

129. What was one of the first acts of David after he became king of all Israel?

130. Why did God command Moses to make the Ark?

131. From what passage do we learn that King Saul never used the Ark as a means of communicating with God?

132. In what way does Job speak of secret love of gold or wealth?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 794.

109. Their want of sincerity in their religious services. (Isaiah i. 13, 14; Jer. vii. 5, 6.)

110. Romans xiii. 1.

111. Ps. li. 17.

112. Because of Saul's disobedience to God's commands. (1 Sam. xv. 23.)

113. Against the Ammonites. (Judges xi. 12—17.)

114. Eliab, the eldest. (1 Sam. xvi. 6, 7.)

115. 1 Tim. vi. 13.

116. Judges xv. 19.

117. A great victory over the Ammonites and Moabites, in which the Jews had nothing to do, for their enemies killed each other. (2 Chron. xx. 22, 23.)

118. Gedeon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah and Samuel. (Heb. xi. 32.)

119. 1 Sam. xxiv. 12.

120. Proverbs xvii. 14.

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

ON SUNLIT SANDS.

HUNDREDS of children are leagued together by the Children's Scripture Union. In the homes of the well-to-do, and those in humble circumstances, our boys and girls, to the number of more than two hundred and fifty thousand, are daily reading their Scripture portions, and the branches of this fruitful work have spread all over the world. Information as to its operations, and the Schoolboys' Scripture Union, can be obtained from Mr. J. B. Bishop, 48, Paternoster Row. THE QUIVER has its own Bible-reading selections, and many societies exist to unite Christian hearts in the study of Scripture; but there is room and need for all. Not one of us, treading life's daily pathway, can afford to do without "this Lamp from off the Everlasting Throne." It is said that to address children acceptably is a task requiring special gifts and aptitude. The speakers of the Children's Special Service Mission are not above sharing their games and fun, and they believe in the Socratic method of asking questions during their instructions, so that the bright eyes do not grow

sleepy, nor the active limbs become afflicted with heaviness and cramp. Ere long the spirits of the juveniles will cease to be so impressible. It is a wise and holy work to meet them amid their holiday-joy on rocks and sands with words of eternal helpfulness and inspiration, to tell them of the children's Lord who taught beside the shore, and to show them how happiness can be deepened and immortalised in the service of Christ alone.

may not all be able to give practical shape to their appreciation of loving and faithful work, by invitations to tea or the like; but let them not withhold the word or letter of cheer, which, at times, they may have meditated. To know that our labour is not in vain, and that we are indeed some help to other hearts and lives, will make the strongest among us stronger still, and inspire us to press onward with new faith and zeal and courage.



A TEA FOR THE TEACHERS.

"THE CUP THAT CHEERS."

Many have been the festive occasions when Sunday-school teachers have decked the tea-table for the parents of their scholars, and exchanged observations concerning John's growth, and possibly Charley's truant propensities, amid the steam of the cup devoted to social joys. This summer our Leicester friends acted the other way round. The parents of Melbourne Hall school surprised the teachers by an invitation to tea, made everything bright and comfortable, and waited on their appreciative guests. A very helpful evening succeeded, and the idea is certainly a good one, suggestive of the many pleasing ways in which those benefited by Christian effort might sometimes communicate good things to those who are spending time, thought, and strength to do them good. Human nature is ever the better and mightier for encouragement, of which many a worker seems to get too little here below. The parents of Sunday scholars, the congregations listening to the preacher's earnest voice, the members of adult classes,

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Probably no braver class of men could be found than the English fishermen in the North Sea. Their avocation is not only a hard one, but it is full of danger to life and limb—a danger that is often increased largely by the absence of proper hospital and surgical attendance. To plead for the supply of this want is the object of "A Dream of the North Sea," by James Runciman, which has just been published by Messrs. Nisbet. Mr. Runciman writes from intimate knowledge of the North Sea fishermen and their great needs, and we trust that his appeal will soon be answered. In itself his story is so interesting that it ought to arouse the sympathy of readers who have hitherto neglected to help the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen.—It is a far cry from the North Sea to Equatorial Africa, from the storm-swept German Ocean to the tropical shores of the Victoria Nyanza, where is laid the scene of the next book we take up from our table, which is the Rev. R. P. Ashe's "Two Kings of Uganda" (Sampson Low

and Co.). We have not seen, for a long time, a more remarkable record of missionary zeal and enterprise than this volume presents. Mr. Ashe was one of the same band as the martyred Bishop Hannington, and spent some six years in Uganda (or Buganda, as the natives call it), first under the notorious King Mutesa, and latterly under Mwanga. That a large measure of success resulted from the teaching of the missionaries there can be no doubt, or that their work was often thwarted and, in part, undone by the crafty Arabs. These Arabs crowd into Buganda with the sole idea of carrying on their nefarious trade in slaves, and as they rightly regard the Christian missionaries as opposed to this practice, they do their utmost to make their work difficult and their position untenable. But there are signs that a brighter day is dawning for Buganda, and we hope that, in God's good time, it may be possible to take up the work again, so that all these Baganda—our African brothers—may hear of the Christ for whom many of their countrymen, and such noble Englishmen, have already been called to lay down their lives in this land. The wonderful story that Mr. Ashe tells of the constitution and customs of Buganda, shows that the people of the country are anything but mere savages, and that they are well fitted to receive the instruction that it is the aim of Mr. Ashe and his brother missionaries to give to them.—A subject that is at present justly attracting the attention of all Christians is the due observance of the Sabbath, so we are glad to welcome the fifth edition of the Archdeacon of Middlesex's Bampton Lectures on "Sunday" (Cassell). Nearly thirty years have passed since these able lectures were first given to the world, and it is a matter of deep regret that the conditions of our social life should be such as to make it necessary to draw forcible attention to so obviously Christian a duty as the observance of God's holy day. In the present consideration of the question, it is to be hoped that Archdeacon Hessey's book will do signal service.

CHRISTIAN WORK IN JHANSI.

With reference to our note "White for Harvest," in the June number of THE QUIVER, a correspondent well acquainted with the place informs us that Jhansi possesses an English church, and, in addition, the railway authorities are erecting a place of worship for their vast staff, and will provide a chaplain. All interested in religious progress in India will be thankful to know of these spiritual privileges, present and proposed, while, at the same time, sympathising with those mentioned in our recent "Short Arrow" as anxious yet further to extend evangelistic effort in this increasingly important district.

THE MASTER'S PRAYER.

It has been beautifully said that friendship is the sun of the soul, and spirits know little of true growth that isolate themselves from their fellow-Christians, or set themselves to oppose those beneath the same banner, because of varying sect, name, or party. Within a few brief hours of Calvary, the Lord of all prayed concerning His disciples "that they all may be one;" why should any of us act and live as though our Master's petition had been just the contrary? We have no time to waste in picking flaws in the methods of our fellow-workers, or indulging heart-burnings concerning their successes and popularity. What we have to think about is the glory of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and this can only be accomplished by our recognising *evil* as the foe to be attacked, rather than the fellow-Christian who sees not with us eye to eye. In our own sphere, each of us may fulfil the Master's prayer. It may cost an effort to repress the witty jest at a fellow-worker's expense, the hard word in response to opposition where least merited and expected; but every slander hushed, every soft answer turning away wrath, every effort put forth to help on Christian triumphs, even though not accomplished as we would personally have arranged them, will help to bring about the answer to the Master's farewell pleading, "that they also may be one in us." Some time ago we heard of a beautiful Christian spirit that always read a certain text with the suggestive emphasis, "As much as lieth in *you*, live peaceably with all men." (Rom. xii. 18.)

WOMAN AND HER POWER.

The following has been communicated to us by Mr. E. H. Blakeney, Trinity College, Cambridge:—Do you know, I think the power of sympathy to be one of a woman's fairest and most goodly endowments. A delicate perception of where pain lies, and a readiness to heal its smart; a quickness to tell where soul and heart are troubled, and a tender anxiety to minister to their relief; an instant feeling to know where the mind is vaguely distressed and weary, and a sweet desire to refresh and gladden it. Talk of what girls are to do! Ah! did they but know where their truest power was hidden, and their strongest help needed most; were they only more willing to serve the cause of suffering humanity in those lesser and unobtrusive acts of daily charity, binding up the wounds of the sorrowful, and ministering to the needs of the careworn, what might they not yet effect! A woman's compassion! Pause a while, and think of all that is contained in these few words. Do we quite realise what is meant by compassion, or sympathy? They are one and the same word, meaning one and the same thing—"*suffering along with:*" not the callous or formal expression of regrets, often not felt; but the living, active evidence of the best feelings implanted in our hearts. And then, mark you, it is not only "compassion," but "a woman's compassion;" all truth, and purity, and honour; all tender and noble womanliness; all cheerfulness to the doubting and support to the weak

ones; thoughts of peaceful homes, and happy, because they are useful, days; this—and this is not all—is bound up together in those simple words, "woman's compassion." You are queens and rulers, women of England, in a truer sense than temporal Sovereign or earthly potentate; queens, not of armies in the camp, or of councillors in State chamber, but of the affections of all sincere and faithful men; ruling, not with the rod of empire, but with the gentle, yet surely not less mighty, sway of kindness and of love. O you women, you women, when all around you is travailing together in pain and distress and sin until now, and crying aloud, "Come over and help us," will you suffer the very stones by the wayside to lift up their voices in mute appeal, and call unto you in vain? Whether in the crowded streets of your cities, or amid the lowly dwellings of the hill-side, there are those who daily mourn unpitied, and go down into the silence of their nameless graves unwept. Will you stop your ears to their voiceless entreaty, and pass by, unheeding, on the other side? Or will you not, with your tears of gentleness and pity, water the ground, and so make glad the solitary place, till the light again shine upon the earth, making the trees and flowers rejoice together on every side, as of old they did in Eden, that Paradise of God, when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago?



BETHESDA HOSPITAL FOR CRIPPLED CHILDREN, MANCHESTER.

HOUSES OF MERCY.

A new link has been added to the chain of good works carried on by the committee of the Strangeways Institutions, Manchester. They have now undertaken a Home for crippled and incurable children, and propose to care for forty little ones whose feeble and maimed condition may need special nursing, nourishment, and helpful appliances. A little cripple, well clad, and wheeled in a luxurious chair, while brothers and sisters romp around him, is a sad sight enough; but many afflicted in a similar way have no means of getting good food and good air and prolonged treatment, so that the need for such a "Bethesda" is plainly evident. The managers hope by skilful care to render their little patients busy and useful where possible, and to introduce school-life when mental training may seem a desirable adjunct to the treatment. A former resident in Manchester has interested herself in procuring the massage system of cure; and the very best scientific appliances will be sought for the relief of these maimed little lambs in the Good Shepherd's flock.—A lady correspondent draws our attention to 90, Harley Street, W., as a Home for invalid gentlewomen, who shrink from noise and publicity, yet cannot afford the expense of private treatment. For a small weekly payment they here receive good nursing and the best of medical aid. This work has gone on for thirty-eight years, and has called forth many expressions of gratitude from the inmates. Miss Meyrick, the superintendent, will welcome any who might like to inspect the arrangements, and would gladly receive increased help towards the expenses of carrying on the Home.

THE EPISTLES OF ST. JOHN.

One noteworthy feature of the Bishop of Derry's "Exposition of the Epistles of St. John" (Hodder and Stoughton) is the parallel quotation of the Greek, Latin, and English versions of each section—a point

of great importance to the theological student, and indeed, a matter of interest to most readers. As to the expository work, it is impossible to give an adequate account of it within the few lines of space at our disposal. The Bishop's style (as our readers well know from his contributions to these pages) is so fascinating that one is carried on almost too quickly at first for the purposes of deliberate study, but that can well be left for further perusal. So rich with suggestion is this moderate-sized volume, that portions of it should be read again and again, as one would read a favourite poem. Preachers and teachers will find in the Bishop's exposition a valuable treasury from which to draw golden material for their own work.

"THEN SHALL THEY CRY."

Amidst the loud applause of a crowded audience, an infidel lecturer was labouring to prove the folly of believing in a living God, an atonement for sin, a judgment for sinners, an eternal future. When he ceased, one of his listeners, an aged man, stepped forward and narrated how he had once witnessed, from a river's bank, a boat borne down the current towards a rapid. In her was a man struggling desperately with one oar—his other being broken—to check her course, or bring her to land. All his efforts failing, frantically he cast the oar away, threw himself on his knees, and cried to God for mercy. Marvellously he was rescued from the very brink of death. "And," added the speaker, "that was the man who is now before you, attempting to prove there is neither God nor eternity, neither judgment nor need of salvation!" Pale and speechless, the pretended infidel withdrew, while in solemn silence the assembly dispersed.

"THE SISTERS OF THE PEOPLE."

The Revs. Mark Guy Pearse and Hugh Price Hughes have now, in connection with the Wesleyan West End Mission, an order of deaconesses working among the poor, banded together under the gentle title of "The Sisters of the People." Every Sister takes charge of a district in the slums of Oxford Street and Shaftesbury Avenue, and their work seems to comprise every form of Christian charity, such as caring for the sick, mothers' meetings, a club for girls, reading-classes, temperance efforts, and "the playground," where little ones are treated to swings and orderly games three afternoons a week. The lives of some of the bedridden old women in workhouse infirmaries have been cheered by the kindness of the Sisters. One, who was over ninety years of age, had been in bed for a year, unvisited by any friend, but her bright spot is now the visit of the Sister, whose hand she has often kissed in her pleasure and gratitude. "Sister Cecilia," who tends the sick, records touching cases of the affection and refinement of feeling she has found even among the poorest. Some of our readers may not be aware that a similar work, carried on by Evangelical deaconesses, exists at 403, Mile End Road, in connection with Dr. Barnardo's work. Hundreds of families are thus visited, classes for young and old are regularly carried on, food and clothing distributed, and many a thrilling experience is encountered which only Christian heroism could undergo. One of these deaconesses was asked by a lady to pilot her among some real East End homes, but a cry of alarm rang out on the dark staircase—the visitor had fallen over a goose which was calmly straying about amid the shadows. The deaconesses are accustomed to all kinds of strange surprises; but the people themselves welcome them eagerly as a rule, often offering them part of their tea or some of the fish they are curing. To visit the London poor, however, is by no means the same thing as dropping into a clean, rose-wreathed country cottage. All honour to the Christian ladies who realise all they have to put up with, yet take the interests of the dwellers in the slums into their personal keeping, for His sake who had not where to lay His head!

SET FREE FROM BONDAGE.

An intemperate man is hard enough to reclaim: an intemperate woman would, to our human ideas, seem almost hopeless, but there is nothing too hard for the Lord. A London City Missionary told of a striking case that may put new heart into those growing discouraged because of present failure. He knew of a woman whose craving for drink had conquered all sense of respectability, though she was able if she chose to earn a good living. She was repeatedly visited, and dealt with earnestly, and by God's grace she became changed in heart and life. What seemed once but a bundle of rags became a godly woman, influencing those around her, the friend and adviser of the neighbourhood. A lady went to call upon her once, and was astonished by the unusual response, "Come in; anyone is welcome in this room in the name of the Lord." The visitor was not so peaceful and happy in heart as this poor woman, who bore simple witness to the power of God's grace. They prayed together, and parted warm friends. Afterwards other ladies came, asking to know something of the experience that had led the woman into the joyful rest of faith. "I have no greater help," says the missionary, "than this woman whom God has graciously saved, and who is thus seeking to serve Him."

A HOSPITAL IN JERUSALEM.

Dr. Wheeler, chief medical officer of this institution in Jerusalem, sends us some particulars of the urgent need for a new building in a more healthy situation. The sanitary condition of the present hospital is unsatisfactory, and it is too small for the work it represents. Many patients come from distances, and look upon the hospital staff as their friends and benefactors, for this institution is a favourite one with the

needy, though the European Jews have now provided similar aid for their co-religionists inside and outside the city. The medical mission does not interfere with the customs enjoined upon the Jewish patients by their religion, but all have the opportunity of hearing Christian truth. A weekly service is held; Christian ladies visit them, and, in their respective languages, each finds by the bedside a Bible and prayer-book. An English lady-visitor was so much impressed by the work, and its need of development in healthier surroundings, that she sent two deaconesses to help, and gave £1,000 towards a new hospital. Those interested in the welfare of our Jewish brethren, and desirous of benefiting their bodies and their souls, could help by sending contributions either direct to Dr. Wheeler, or to the Secretary of the London Jews' Society, 16, Lincoln's Inn Fields (*for the Hospital Fund*).

SOME MORE NEW BOOKS.

Like some masterpiece of art in which new study reveals beauties new to us, there are some passages of Scripture that seem to possess almost unfathomable depths of meaning, and boundless treasures of blessed teaching. Notably is this the case with the twenty-third Psalm, "the Shepherd Psalm," as the Rev. F. B. Meyer calls his little work upon it, which has recently been published by Messrs. Morgan and Scott. Mr. Meyer's writing is full as ever of suggestive and profitable thought, that should serve to cheer the downcast and comfort the troubled. —"Toilers in London" (Hodder and Stoughton) is a rather painful record of an investigation into the condition of the working girls of London and their wages and modes of life. Despite all that has been done in recent years for these girls, there is evidently a wide field still left for work, into which the perusal of this volume may well summon labourers.—Without accepting the responsibility for all the views that Dr. George MacDonald expresses in the third series of "Unspoken Sermons" (Longmans), we may well commend the volume to ministers and experienced teachers, who will value its beautiful thought, and the no less beautiful language in which it is clothed.—From the same publishers we have received another little volume of a very different character, "Strength: How to get Strong and keep Strong," by the late Richard A. Proctor. Chatty and varied in style, it is full of hints all but invaluable, and that deserve careful attention. We should hear of far fewer "break-downs" if Mr. Proctor's advice were generally accepted and acted upon. The chapter on "Swimming" ought to be in the hands of every teacher of a class of boys.—It is with great regret that we are obliged to leave unnoticed some of the books which have reached us since our last "Short Arrows" were written. But the pressure on our limited space is so great that we are compelled to restrict ourselves to a few words on the most important works which reach us each month.



THE SHAFTESBURY INSTITUTE: A SEWING CLASS.

WORK AMONG THE MASSES.

Miss Meredith Brown is honorary secretary of the Shaftesbury Institute for Girls, Harrow Street, Lisson Grove, where materials for making-up, wool, texts drawn for painting, cast-off clothing, and any gift that could gladden or profitably occupy the factory-girls, would be most acceptable. So wild were these lasses at first, that for the first six months the greatest difficulty was found in keeping order; and when a girl deliberately struck a valued helper, even in front of a policeman, it was felt that, for the sake of all future discipline, she must be given in charge. Later on, a lady went to the police-station, and asked to take the girl's place in the cell, and, on this being refused, the girl was bailed out. Next day the charge was withdrawn, but the girl and the whole class had been impressed, especially by the fact that the innocent had asked to take the place of the guilty. "I could not bear for you to be punished for me, miss," said the offender (who has since figured as a prize-winner); "how could you think on doing such a thing?" Then the opportunity was taken to speak of the great Law-maker Himself, who took the place of the law-breaker in His infinite love and compassion. "Oh, miss!" cried the softened girl, "I never thought of what Jesus had done; I never understood what it meant before!" The evening's

programme at the Institute begins with musical drill or games, and then at a quarter-past eight the girls divide off into quieter pursuits, assembling at half-past nine for singing, prayers, and a short Bible-talk. There are also Bible-class nights and Sunday meet-



GIRLS AT THE SHAFTESBURY INSTITUTE.

ings; and we are told that to many of these girls the Bible seems quite a new book, so that they will listen to Scripture stories with far more zest than those who have had greater religious advantages. The Training Home is for girls in special need of such a shelter. "They gets a chance to be different here," said one of the girls. "If you could know what an apron-girl's life is, you would never rest for trying of helpin' 'em!" The work is now stretching out its influence to the lads of Lisson Grove. "Miss, can't you let us in? Ain't *we* as good as the girls?" was the cry of the boys hanging about the streets; and a club for such has been opened, which, it is hoped, may develop into an important "Working Lads' Institute," should friends be moved to help in this matter as they have helped the greatly blessed work among the girls.

THE MISSION TO ARSENAL MEN.

Increased accommodation is now required for the prosperous work of the Cage Lane Mission, Plumstead. In 1882 Miss Russell, 1, Thames View Terrace, Plumstead, purchased a public-house and transformed it into a mission-hall, where crowded services are held, so that the workers are now endeavouring to arrange for a building to accommodate about eight hundred. The neighbourhood is poor, being mostly composed of labourers and artisans in the Woolwich Arsenal. The services are undenominational, and have been fruitful in blessing to many: the Evangelisation Society has helped by supplying earnest speakers, and large audiences have gathered in the week to instructive lectures on various helpful subjects. In this region of hard work such efforts of Christian love must be of inestimable value, and cannot be widened without a rich fruitage accruing of eternal good. We cannot have too much of the Christian socialism that meets the hard-worker amid his struggling toil, and helps him bodily and spiritually, and leads him to understand that amid earthly differences all sorts and conditions of men are alike in the love of God—in the Father's heart.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE-READING SOCIETY.

BIBLE PASSAGES TO OCTOBER 13.

(Bearing on the International Lessons.)

SEPTEMBER.	MORNING.	EVENING.
9.	1 Peter iii. 8—17; 1 Thessalonians v., from ver. 14.	Matthew xviii., from ver. 21.
10.	Psalm xxxv. 10—24.	Luke vi. 27—38.
11.	Job xxxi. 16—30.	Proverbs xxv. 8—22.
12.	Leviticus xix., to ver. 18.	Deuteronomy xxxii. 29—40.
13.	Acts vi., from ver. 8; vii., from ver. 51.	Matthew v., from ver. 38.
14.	Luke xxiii. 32—46.	Romans xii., from ver. 9.
15.	1 Samuel xxiv. 1—17.	1 Samuel xxxi. 1—13.
16.	1 Chronicles x.	2 Samuel i., to ver. 12.
17.	2 Samuel i., from ver. 17.	Psalm xxxvii., to ver. 15.
18.	1 Samuel xiii., to ver. 14.	1 Samuel xv. 16—29.
19.	1 Samuel xxviii. 6—19.	Matthew vii., from ver. 18.
20.	Amos ix.	Psalm xxxvii., from ver. 27.
21.	Proverbs x., to ver. 17.	Psalm xxxiv.
22.	1 Samuel xxxi. 1—13.	Proverbs iii., to ver. 17.
23.	1 Samuel iii. 1—14.	1 Samuel iv. 1—18.
24.	1 Samuel vii. 1—17.	1 Samuel viii. 4—20.
25.	1 Samuel ix. 15—27.	1 Samuel xii. 1—15.
26.	1 Samuel xv. 10—31.	1 Samuel xvi. 1—13.
27.	1 Samuel xvii. 32—51.	1 Samuel xx. 1—13.
28.	1 Samuel xxiv. 1—17.	1 Samuel xxxi. 1—13.
29.	*Review Sunday.* Matthew ii., to ver. 11.	2 Samuel v. 1—12.
30.	Psalms cxxxiii. and cxxxv.	1 Samuel xviii., to ver. 16.
OCTOBER.		
1.	Philippians i., from ver. 27; ii. to ver. 4; iv. to ver. 8.	Isaiah xl., to ver. 11.
2.	1 Corinthians i., to ver. 13.	1 Chronicles xl., to ver. 9. Isaiah lv., to ver. 7.
3.	Colossians i., from ver. 18.	1 Peter ii., to ver. 10.
4.	1 Corinthians xii., to ver. 13.	1 Corinthians xii., from ver. 14.
5.	Ephesians iv., to ver. 16.	John xvii., from ver. 11.
6.	2 Samuel v. 1—12.	2 Samuel vi. 1—12.
7.	Exodus xxv., to ver. 22.	Exodus xxxvii., to ver. 11.
8.	Joshua iii.	1 Samuel iv., to ver. 13.
9.	1 Samuel v.	1 Samuel vi., to ver. 15.
10.	1 Chronicles xiii.	2 Chronicles v.
11.	Psalm cxxxii.	2 Chronicles vi., 1—11, and from ver. 39.
12.	Hebrews ix., to ver. 12.	Zephaniah iii., from ver. 12.
13.	2 Samuel vi. 1—12.	2 Samuel vii. 18—29.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

List of contributions received from June 15th up to and including July 23rd, 1889. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month:—

P. M. A., Copthall, £1 10s.; J. J. E., Govan (twenty-first donation), 5s.; G. S. S., Enfield, 5s.; M. E. G., Eastbourne, 1s.

The Editor has also to acknowledge the receipt, from F. B. (Tipton), of 10s., which has been handed to Miss Wardell as requested.





MOTHERLESS.

See p. 893.

A LITTLE CORNER OF THE VINEYARD.



A KITCHEN MEETING.

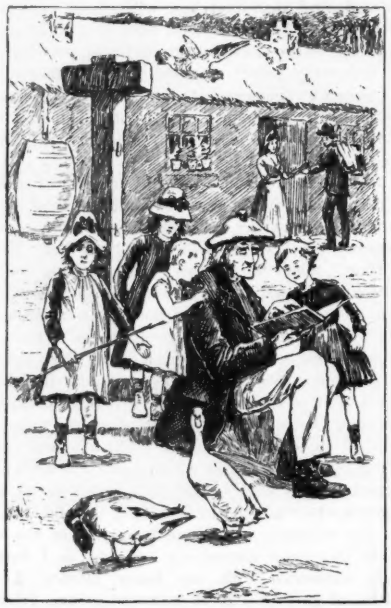


THE FIRST REPULSE.

IN relating some of my experiences as a colporteur, my object is to give a plain and unvarnished account, in the belief that truth, though unadorned, tells its own tale, and comes home to the consciences and bosoms of all. It is now more than ten years since I entered upon my arduous, yet encouraging, work as a subordinate labourer in the vineyard of the Lord. The district which was assigned to me by my superiors lies in the south of Scotland, and was personally unknown to me. I was, indeed, in one sense acquainted with it; for who is not familiar with the famous Border-land, the land of romance and poetry, the land which clusters with memories of an historical and legendary kind, and which is consecrated by the genius of the mighty minstrel? But if the writings of Sir Walter Scott had made me somewhat familiar with the Border country, I was wholly unacquainted with the moral and religious condition of its inhabitants. I knew that it was part of Bible-reading Scotland, and that churches, with their various departments of Christian work, abounded in it; but I have long since learned that spiritual privileges do not necessarily imply spiritual life, and that a man may perish at the very gates of heaven. My field of labour being unknown to me, I entered upon it with an unprejudiced mind, and with mingled feelings of hope and fear.

I took up my residence with my wife and family in a little town which was as nearly as possible in the centre of my district. I remember the day when I commenced my work. It was in "the leafy month of June," when all nature was rejoicing in the exuberance of her life. I rose with the sun. The birds were pouring forth a flood of song from the trees that surrounded my dwelling, as if meant to encourage me in the prosecution of the day's labours. I packed my case with books and periodicals, and adjusting it on my back, set off on my journey. My intention was to go to a village about six miles distant, and in order to reach it I had to travel over a wild moorland district in which there was no road or footpath of any kind. Happily, I met with an aged shepherd who was tending his sheep in a lonely glen, and who willingly accompanied me part of the way. As the day grew excessively hot, and as I became nearly exhausted with my heavy burden, I was wishful of getting a little rest under some friendly roof. This, however, I did not obtain for some

time. In almost the first house I called at I got a somewhat indifferent reception. The door was standing ajar, and as I knocked at it an old woman made her appearance, to whom I announced myself as the colporteur of the district. She was busy scrubbing the floor, had a slatternly appearance, and was evidently not inclined to have any dealings with me. "What dae ye sae?" she inquired, in answer to me.—"I am," I repeated, "the colporteur of the district, and have come to see what I can do for you."—"Ye can do naething for me, especially the likes o' you; we hae oor ain minister, and that's enough," she answered, and directed towards me a suspicious glance.—"All that may be the case," I said, "but if you can afford me a little time you may come to see that I am more your friend than your enemy." And with these words I began to unpack my case, with a view of showing her my books.—"Ye may save yersel' the trouble of bringing oot yer books to me; I'll hae naething to do with them." It was in vain that I explained to her the nature and object of my work. She was determined to have nothing to do with me; so bidding her good-bye, and expressing a hope that I should see her again, I left, when she shut the door with a heavy bang behind me. The reception which I got in this poor woman's house is by no means to be regarded as a sample of all my experiences during the day. In some of the houses I met with Christian people, from whom I received the greatest encouragement, while in many others I was at least treated with civility and kindness. My experiences during the day were, however, of a varied character, and I returned home wearied and footsore, and with very mixed feelings regarding the religious condition of the people, and the success of my work amongst them.



A VILLAGE VISIT.

My experiences next day—and, indeed, for a considerable time—were much in keeping with those of the first day. Speaking generally, I should say that for the first six months the people manifested towards me a feeling of coldness and reserve which somewhat damped my spirits and marred the success of my work. This feeling on the part of the people I was willing to attribute partly to the fact that I was a stranger amongst them, and partly to the caution and reserve which characterise the Scottish nation. Yet though this feeling wore away, I often got the door slammed in my face, as if I had been an intruder bent upon some unworthy errand. Had I been an ordinary hawker, selling my books and other publications for the sake of a livelihood, doubtless I should have received a much more favourable reception than I did. I was not, however, disposed to grumble, ever bearing in mind the experience and example of my Master, who, although He came with a message of mercy to mankind, was treated as an alien and an impostor.

What may be the case in other parts of the country I cannot tell; but in my district I found that the moral and religious tone was low. Notwithstanding the fact that the great majority of the people were members of churches, and had all other necessary means of good, religion had never penetrated to their hearts, or changed in any degree the complexion of their lives. An entire indifference to the subject of personal religion, absence from the church, Sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, and other sins of an equally open and glaring character, disfigured the lives of many. Lord Macaulay long ago declared that in the very midst of churches and colleges, and libraries, and museums, there was as much vice and ignorance as could sweep civilisation from off the face of the earth, as the flood before had swept away mankind; and it may be asserted with equal truth that in many of our rural districts there are elements at work which, but for the laws of the country and the restraining grace of God, would eventually turn the land into a hideous moral wilderness. The sin of drunkenness is prevalent to an alarming degree in our rural districts. Again, the sin of Sabbath-breaking exists to a lamentable extent among our rural population. There are many people who not only absent themselves from church, but spend the day in loose conversation, and frequently in drinking. As an example of the godlessness that characterises many in our rural districts, I may mention the following incident. One Communion-Sabbath afternoon, my wife and I strolled a little out of town, with a view of calling upon some sick persons, when our ears were attracted by some unusual and unseemly sounds. Suspecting the cause of these, we proceeded in the direction from which they came, and, as we expected, we found a company of young men and boys amusing themselves. Some were sitting, some standing, some rolling on the grass; while others, again, were engaged in a game. As we approached the motley company, we beheld, to our

utter amazement and horror, some of them passing bottles of wine from one to another, in imitation of the practice at the Communion! I expostulated with them on their fearful sin, but my admonitions were only met with opprobrious epithets and foul language, which left no alternative but that of leaving them to continue their blasphemous and wicked conduct.

It has often been made a matter of complaint against evangelical preachers, that in their discourses they have given too little prominence to the ordinary principles and practices of morality. Why should certain specific virtues and duties, as John Foster long ago pointed out, not form the subject of occasional addresses from the pulpit? Why should *sins*, and not merely *sin*, not be denounced? Why should *virtues*, and not merely *virtue*, not be enforced by preachers? It is not enough to say, as the above writer remarks, "Once get men to believe in Christ, and they will abandon their besetting sins." This is true; but one effective means of bringing them to Christ is by pointing out their sins and the fearful consequences of these. Make them fully sensible of the disease, and they will seek the remedy.

The principal means which the colporteur has of doing good are, of course, the publications he sells. Speaking generally, there is great and growing necessity for such pure and wholesome literature as he offers for sale, as a counteractive to the light and pernicious literature which is so much in vogue at the present day. It is not merely in our large cities and towns where such reading is indulged in; it prevails proportionally to as large an extent in our rural districts, and is productive of the same baneful effects. In the sequestered village, in the house by the way, in the lonely cottage among the mountains, you will find young and old poring over their shilling novel or "penny dreadful" with the same avidity as you will find people doing who have easy access to such publications. These are one of the chief curses of the land, a fruitful source of both mental and moral dissipation, and ought to engage the attention of Christians more than they do. I am happy to be able to say that I have been the humble instrument of banishing these publications from many a home, and of introducing literature of a very different kind. There are many people, who at one time would have looked with disdain upon a religious book, who now read such literature with the keenest relish, and with the most evident profit. The sensational novel and the "penny dreadful" have given place to publications of a wholesome and elevating character. People look forward to the time when their magazines arrive, with the same joyful expectancy as they did to the postman with his penny papers, or to the arrival of a new novel from the circulating library. Moreover, I have found that amongst the Christian portion of the community magazine literature of a religious kind is by far the most popular and widely read. Where at one time you would have found Boston's works, the "Pilgrim's Progress," and the sermons of the old divines, you will now find THE QUIVER and other religious periodical literature.



"'Weeping and praying, and dreading my return.'"—*p.* 886.

The good effects of such reading are everywhere apparent. A purer taste is created, a higher cast of thought is produced, a deeper sense of the importance of religion is awakened, and a decided improvement in the life takes place. As a matter of course, stories are by far the most popular kind of reading among all classes. There are many who talk against the religious story as if it were a spurious kind of literature, not worthy of being placed in the category of books. Whatever may be said about the religious story from the purely artistic point of view, one thing is undeniable—that, considered as a vehicle of religious instruction, it is to be welcomed as a new and powerful ally to the professedly religious book. With reference to the religious story, or to any other means of conveying religious truth, every Christian can say in the spirit of St. Paul's words: "What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

I could give many instances of the good results accruing from the perusal of religious stories, but one will suffice. Calling one day on a young couple who had recently been married, I offered some of my publications for sale. I knew the wife to be a God-fearing person, though I am sorry that I could not, at that time, say the same of her husband. "I'll take a tale from you," he said; "that is the kind of book for me."—"Very well," I said; "I can supply you with a good one;" and I thereupon handed him Miss Swan's "Divided House," expressing a hope that he would read it carefully. He promised to do so, little thinking that it would prove the turning-point of his career. About three months afterwards I called upon the worthy couple, when I received a hearty welcome from them. "Ah, Mr. ——," cried he, and grasping me warmly by the hand, "I'm glad to see you. How did you know that we were a 'divided house?'"—"I thought so," I said, "and that was the reason I gave you the story of the 'Divided House.'"—"You were right," he said, "in thinking that. My wife," he continued, "has been a Christian for many years, while up to a short time ago I had lived a careless, godless life, spending my nights in the public-house, in playing cards, and doing the devil's work. Many a time has my wife prayed for me, that I might abandon my evil habits, and give myself to the Lord, while I endeavoured to laugh her to scorn. But now all is changed. She no longer requires to sit up for me at night, weeping and praying, and dreading my return. Blessed be God, I am a new man, and we are no longer a divided house, but are yoked in the blessed bonds of Christian fellowship."—"I'm glad," I said, "to hear you say so."—"Yes," he said; and lifting the story of the "Divided House" from the table, he held it up, and said, "That is the book that has been the means of my conversion. God bless you," he said, with evident marks of joyful excitement, while his wife stood by, and appeared to be filled with thoughts too deep for tears or for utterance. I could only say "Amen" to his prayer, and utter the same for them.

The selling of books and other publications, though it is the chief employment of the colporteur, is not the only means he has of doing good. Accordingly, I have endeavoured to combine as much as possible the evangelistic and missionary element with my own special work as a seller of books. This has always appeared to me to be the natural and proper complement of the colporteur's work, and to be in strict keeping with its spirit and aims. My practice has, accordingly, always been to occasionally hold kitchen meetings in several of the districts which I visit. These meetings have been productive of incalculable good to many. They are of a very homely, yet of pleasing, and somewhat romantic character. The people assemble in the most commodious house that can be found. Chairs are procured from different houses for the accommodation of the people, but the principal seats consist of rough boards or planks, which are placed in regular rows across the kitchen floor. It sometimes happens, when the gathering is unusually large, that several people are under the necessity of sitting on the front of beds and on window-sills, while some of the younger portion of the audience are content to sit on the knees of their elders. The company is a motley one. There you will see the rosy-faced infant rolling on his mother's lap, the young man and maiden with health blooming on their countenances, the sturdy and weather-beaten shepherd with his plaid lying across his knees, and the old man with hoary locks leaning upon his staff and listening eagerly to the homely address. Earnestness and reverence are depicted on every countenance; and if, as it sometimes happens, the order and decorum of the meeting are broken by the barking of a dog, a word from his master is sufficient to quiet it. For dogs invariably form part of these audiences, and as they have no room to stir about or loll at random, they occasionally signify by a loud bark their disapproval of their enforced confinement, which is doubtless to them an incomprehensible situation. Such meetings as these serve the double purpose of reaching many of the "lapsed masses" in our country districts, and of affording to such old people as are not able to attend the church an opportunity of hearing the Gospel. Were the practice of holding kitchen meetings more extensive than it is, and people dealt with face to face on the subject of personal religion, the cause of vital godliness would prosper much more than it does, and the empty benches in many churches would be filled with reverent and devout worshippers.

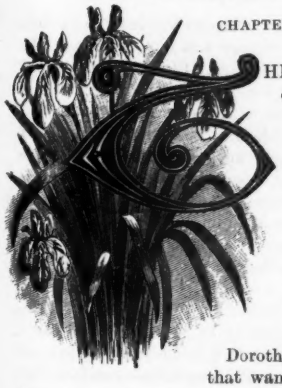
Generally speaking, the colporteur works too much alone and unaided. Were ministers and Christians generally to identify themselves with him more than they are accustomed to do, and to give him encouragement, the results of his work would be much more satisfactory than they are. He has their full sympathy, but not, at times, their hearty co-operation; and the consequence is, that he feels himself to a great extent isolated, and a single-handed combatant in the spiritual warfare. Although his work is entirely undenominational and unsectarian, yet many good Christian people stand aloof from him, or at the most give him a passing word of sympathy and

encouragement. There are many who are not influenced in any such way, who conform to a higher ideal of religion, and devote their energies and time to the practical work of the Gospel; but the great majority of professing Christians are fettered by tradition and custom, and confine their efforts to their own denomination, or even to their own congregation.

Altogether, however, when looking back on my ten years' service, I have no reason to complain of the want of success. Ignorance, carelessness, and ungodliness still abound, and call for continued effort on the part of all Christians; but the cause of true and vital godliness is making sensible progress throughout our country districts. Great as my discouragements have been, my encouragements have been greater. The testimonies which I have repeatedly received of the good which our work has been the means of accomplishing have a cheering effect upon me, and are a pledge and a promise of still greater things. The good seed which has been sown may not all spring up at once. It has to wait till the dews of God's grace and other heavenly influences give vitality to it. The word of God will not return unto Him void, but will accomplish His divine and gracious purposes in the conversion of sinners, in the spiritual welfare of saints, and in the spread of vital godliness throughout the land.

DOROTHY'S VOCATION.

BY EVELYN EVERETT GREEN, AUTHOR OF "MONICA," "OLIVER LANGTON'S WARD," ETC. ETC.



CHAPTER XVI.—A VOCATION FOUND.

"THIS is my home, Dorothy."

"It is a lovely old place, Ralph. No wonder you are fond of it! I think the house is just perfect."

"It is not quite perfect in my eyes yet, but I hope shortly to supply the one thing it lacks."

Dorothy did not ask what that want was, as she would have done a week ago. The treacherous colour rose in her face, and she felt it, and knew that Ralph observed it. Indeed, she began to be aware that there were very few things with regard to herself that Ralph did not observe.

It was the hour immediately following a wild September sunset, which Ralph and Dorothy had stepped out upon the terrace to watch. The rain that had poured down ceaselessly all day had ceased now, and the great banks of cloud in the west were burning with intense tints of purple, orange, and crimson. An inky bar behind denoted the approach of another hurricane, but meantime the air was still and almost warm, the leaves of the trees were wet and glistening, and the birds were singing their mellow evening song.

It was two hours since the travellers had reached their destination, and already Dorothy felt curiously at home in the deliciously quaint old house. Such comfort and luxury without ostentation, such treasures of literature and art, such perfect blending of home comfort with every refinement of wealth, Dorothy had never met with in any other place. It seemed to her fancy an ideal place, and Mrs. Seymour was undoubtedly to her an ideal presiding genius.

The children had been absolutely enchanted with their nurseries, and indeed they would have been hard to please had it been otherwise, for the suite of low, quaint-looking, panelled rooms, with their deep recesses, funny corner cupboards, doors of communication, and queer little steps and passages, would have charmed the most discontented of occupants, and threw the already delighted children into fresh paroxysms of joy. There was a battered old rocking-horse and a dilapidated doll's house, as well as a variety of new toys and books, and it was no wonder if the little ones felt as if they had stepped, if not into fairy-land itself, at least into some place quite as good.

Dorothy, freed from the burden of responsibility and sole charge that had weighed upon her so long—weighed upon her, indeed, even more than she knew—felt like one relieved of a heavy burden of care, and the rebound brought with it a joyousness of spirit beyond anything she had ever before experienced.

Her happy face, as she stood upon the terrace with Ralph, was in itself a picture, and one moreover which that young gentleman seemed to have every disposition to study.

"We have got one week of freedom before us, Dorothy, and then all the world and his wife will be upon us. We must make the most of our opportunities whilst they are ours."

She smiled, but did not look at him.

"Why do you ask all the world and his wife, if you do not want the trouble of entertaining them?"

"One must do one's duty by society, you see, even

at the cost of some personal sacrifice. You ought to know that without any prompting, Dorothy—you who are so great at a vocation."

"Now, don't you begin to tease me like that too, Ralph," pleaded Dorothy, with her own bright laugh. "If you only knew how often my life has been made a burden to me on account of my unlucky fancy for a vocation!"

"No, but, seriously, I think you should have one," answered Ralph, speaking in his most deliberate way. He was leaning back against the wide stone balustrade of the terrace, with his head outlined in clear relief against the background of the stormy sunset sky. The glowing light shone full on Dorothy's face as she turned it up towards him, and light of laughter in her dark eyes, a mutinous look upon her lips. "Some women are cut out for a vocation, and it seems to me that you are just one of that kind."

His mother would have understood the meaning of that peculiar lowness of tone and deliberation of manner better than Dorothy did. To her it seemed as if Ralph had simply fallen into one of his ordinary teasing moods. She could look him in the face now with her own ready, mischievous smiles. As for his face, it was somewhat in shadow, but the fine outline of his features was very clear, and looked to Dorothy as if it had undergone some imperceptible change of an accentuating, emphasising character. She was struck as perhaps she had never been before with the fact that he was an unusually handsome man.

Yet almost before her eyes had had time to take in this much, her lips had framed a laughing retort.

"You had better find me one, then!"

"That is exactly what I purpose doing. Dorothy, I assert that your vocation is found—is waiting for you. It is only for you to say whether you accept it or not."

This unexpected attack silenced her instantly. Again the glow of the western sky seemed reflected in her cheek. There was no mistaking the purport of these last words; her eyes fell beneath the glance they met. He took her hands, and drew her a little nearer to him, and she did not resist.

"Dorothy, your vocation is before you now. Will you take it?"

* * * * * *

Mrs. Seymour, sitting alone in the sweet old-fashioned drawing-room, fragrant with the scent of roses, warm with the dancing light cast by the blaze of the wood fire lighted in honour of their arrival, was thinking of summoning in the two wanderers, who had been for half an hour standing about or pacing up and down the wide terrace in front of the windows. She had seen nothing at all of them for the last ten minutes, and was half disposed to call to them, for Dorothy had only a light shawl over her shoulders, and after the rain the air was chill. On the whole, however, she thought she had better leave them to their own devices. Ralph was to be trusted to take care of his companion, and Dorothy was no tender hot-house plant. When at last they did appear, she felt rewarded for her discretion. Ralph entered by the glass door, and she knew by the light in his eyes and by the strong, sharp lines in which his features were set, that he had some news for her. His companion was a few paces behind.

"Mother," he began, in his most quiet and impassive way, "I am afraid we have left you rather long alone, but the fact is we got into a somewhat absorbing discussion. We were determining upon a suitable vocation for Dorothy, and I almost think we have hit upon the right thing at last. Can you guess what it is, by chance?"

Then Mrs. Seymour for answer opened her arms, and Dorothy went straight into them.

* * * * * *

Certainly the days that followed were golden days for Dorothy. She seemed to live in a new world—a world which contained none but the beings most dear to her. Ralph was, of course, the centre-figure, but his mother took only a secondary place. That new relationship was so very sweet to the motherless girl, that it seemed to fill to the brim her cup of happiness. Mrs. Seymour accepted her as a veritable daughter, and lavished upon her a perfect wealth of love; and Dorothy was the more grateful for this from the knowledge that some mothers, idolising an only son as this kinswoman of hers did, would by no means welcome a daughter-in-law with so much tenderness and content.

But then Mrs. Seymour was an absolutely unselfish woman, and her son's welfare and happiness took the foremost place in her thoughts. She had long looked forward to the day when he should bring home a wife to share the home with them, and such was her sense of sympathy with him, and comprehension of his nature, that she had never been troubled by the fear of his making an unsuitable marriage, or of his loving anyone who was not fully worthy of love.

She had loved Dorothy from the first, both for her own sake, and in remembrance of the mother she so closely resembled, who had been a dear friend of Mrs. Seymour's before her marriage. When she saw how matters were going with her son she rejoiced sincerely, and now her cup of happiness seemed full.

And for the first time in her life Dorothy enjoyed unfettered communion with people who really understood her. She was not laughed at when she spoke of the children and of her duties to them. The matter was not pooh-poohed as if she had no longer any concern with old ties after having assumed new ones. Both Ralph and his mother let her understand that she had their sympathy and comprehension; and she saw very plainly, too, that they would help her out of any future difficulties, assist her in adjusting various or conflicting claims, and that she would never be called upon to act towards the clinging, dependent little ones in a fashion that might seem harsh or unkind to them.

This confidence seemed like the crowning point to Dorothy's happiness. She knew that it had been the sterling merit in the character of the Seymours which had attracted her so strongly towards them. Hers was a nature that could not really love where it could not entirely respect—one that put in the foremost place attributes that are sometimes liable to be little considered, or may even be held in

contempt. She would never, of her own choice, link her outer life with those who did not share her innermost beliefs and aspirations. It was the sense of sympathy and help in these that riveted the bonds which bound her heart to Ralph's. That he felt the same she very well knew; they were as one in the best and truest sense of the word.

To no one in the outside world could Dorothy communicate the intelligence of what had befallen her. Ralph was wishful that, for these first few days, it should remain a secret, and she had no option but to consent, for she did not know the present address of her father and sisters, and until they arrived at the Park it was not likely that she would be able to communicate with them. To tell the truth, she was not sorry for this. In the first flush of her happiness, silence was sweeter than any words.



"'This is my home, Dorothy.'"—*p.* 887.

On the first day when the sun shone with anything like vigour, Ralph informed Dorothy that the horses would be round in half an hour, and also that her habit had been sent from town.

"You must see something of the surroundings of your future home, you know, and I flatter myself that you will see them best under my escort and on horseback. I want you to try the paces of Firefly, and see if he suits you. I've got him for a week on trial. I think he ought to turn out well. He is very well bred and very good-tempered. You don't mind a high spirit, I suppose? He has that, for he is young, and flighty in his mind; but I never like to have any but young things for saddle-work. One knows that they have all their work in them then."

Dorothy's face glowed as she ran to dress for her ride. This calm selection of things for her use was still strange enough to be half embarrassing, though it was intoxicatingly sweet; the girl found it hard to realise her own happiness.

But she could enjoy without reasoning about it, as she very soon discovered, when she found herself cantering through the wet leaves or galloping across smooth green pasture-land with Ralph by her side. Riding was always a keen pleasure to Dorothy, although, thanks to the selfishness of her sisters, one not often enjoyed, and it seemed to her the very poetry of motion to-day, as the two spirited, high-mettled horses swept tirelessly over the ground that breezy September morning, with the firm, elastic tread that bespoke their excellent breeding and perfect condition.

When at last they drew rein, the colour was deep in Dorothy's face, and the light in her eyes was

intense. Her companion watched her in silence from his more elevated position; there was something very charming, to him at least, in the childish power of enjoyment peculiarly characteristic of this girl. She took life so gladly and simply, and withal so earnestly. Her heart was like a flower opening gratefully in the warmth and brightness of the sun.

"You liked that, Dolly?"

"Ah, did I not!" Then with a quick look at him, half arch, half solicitous, she asked—

"It did not hurt you, Ralph? I'm afraid I forgot—I am sorry."

"Forgot what?"

"Why, that you are not quite strong yet—that you are not allowed to exert yourself much."

"But I am allowed now. I am quite strong. I got leave to do exactly as I pleased again before ever I left town."

The anxious glance was merged now in one wholly arch and merry.

"Then pray why did you come down to Shag's Bay with such a gloomy story about yourself?"

"Did I? I don't remember." His face was impassively grave, with the gravity that always implied mischief.

"You do remember—don't tell stories. You came down to try and pass as the interesting invalid, and win a sympathy and consideration you little deserved! Don't you remember telling me that you had got heart-disease? I'm glad I didn't believe it. I knew you just a little too well, you see."

"My dearest Dorothy, I wish you could learn to be a shade more accurate. It is the failing of your sex, to be sure, to be loose and inexact; but you, at least, in having such exceptional advantages from your intercourse with me, should try and conquer that defect. If you will carry your memory back, you will find that I did not say a word about disease; I merely told you that my heart was seriously affected, which was quite true."

"It's all the same," asserted Dorothy recklessly. "What did you tell me once about people who insisted on making a distinction without a difference! What are you doing yourself now?"

"Nothing at all of that kind. At least, not in my own opinion. Of course I don't know what your definition of disease may be."

"I don't see that I have anything to do with it," cried Dorothy.

"Only this much—that you cured it."

"Cured what?"

"Why that affection of the heart, that had been bothering me the last three months. You cured it very quickly, out on the terrace the other night."

"Oh," answered Dorothy, with a little defiant turn of the head, and the light of laughter in her eyes, "then in *that* case let us have another gallop. The exertion is not likely to hurt you."

CHAPTER XVII.—GUESTS AT SEYMOUR PARK.

"A VERY fine country—a very fine country indeed," remarked Mr. Templeton, as, seated in an open landau opposite to his two daughters, he looked about him with approbation as they were driven rapidly towards the Park. "It was a strange thing I never chanced to hear the good fortune that fell to Seymour's lot some fifteen years ago, in the acquisition of this property—a strange thing, and most untoward. Why, we might have ranked amongst their intimate friends by this time, if we had only known. A most unfortunate thing; but after your mother's death I entirely dropped all communication with the family. It did not appear to be a connection likely to be of the smallest value. We live in an odd world. One never knows what will turn up next."

"It has been most unfortunate, certainly, in this case," answered Claudia. "However, we must do our best to make up for lost time. So far, I do not think things have turned out amiss."

"Not at all, not at all. Selina has been most friendly. This invitation in itself proves that she desires to establish a sort of intimacy. I wonder, now——" But this speculation was cut short by an exclamation from Mabel.

"Surely that is Ralph riding across that meadow over there—one can't mistake even his back—those are surely his broad shoulders, and that must be he from the carriage of his head. He looks well on horseback, too. I wonder who is with him. Have they been out hunting and lost the hounds, I wonder?"

"It's a little too early for hunting," remarked Mr. Templeton, "and too late in the day for the cubs. I suppose they are out for a ride. Nice weather for riding—soft under foot and fine overhead."

Mabel half smiled. She had leaped to a sudden conclusion of her own, but looked a little surprised. Ralph's companion was evidently a girl, and it was rather a marked thing for him to be riding out alone with her like that; and the Seymours did not as a rule do eccentric things.

Yet it was certainly Ralph; as Mabel truly said, he was not a man to be easily mistaken. Claudia caught at the most consoling thing she could think of.

"Probably it is a riding-party. We know there are other people at the house. Very likely they have got up something to amuse their guests."

"I think Ralph might have been at home to meet us when we arrived," remarked Claudia with some temper, and Mabel said "Yes" with an appearance of sharing the sentiment.

"When did you last hear from Dorothy?" asked the father, as the carriage passed the lodge gates. "Will she have got here before us, or when will she come?"

"Oh, didn't I tell you before, papa? I decided for Dorothy and the children to remain at Shag's Bay. I thought it was all understood. You see, we really couldn't, in common decency, overrun Mrs. Seymour's house in such a fashion. Fancy coming, a party of ten, to a house where there was other company as well! It was very kind of her to suggest such a thing, but of course no hostess would expect an invitation like that to be accepted. When I wrote the day before yesterday to announce our coming, I just mentioned that the seaside party would remain where they were. I am sure she never really expected us to come in full force."

"Oh, well, if you have arranged it all with Selina, I have nothing more to say," answered Mr. Templeton; "though I do think it's rather hard poor Dolly should be cut out of everything, especially as she took all the nursing of the children upon herself. But when Selina spoke to me about it she seemed very much bent on getting the children here with Dorothy. I don't remember exactly what passed, but I know I got an impression that they might get here before ourselves."

Claudia smiled indulgently.

"Oh dear no! they are down at the sea, and it is much best that they should remain there. It is not good for children to be always moving about, and visiting always spoils them. As for Dorothy, she is little more than a child herself, and is a very suitable companion for the little ones."

"Well, well, have it your own way," answered Mr. Templeton, who never could sustain an argument with Claudia. "Only I must say that I think it would be only a kindly and sisterly thing for one of you girls to go and relieve guard down there in a few days' time, and let Dorothy come here. She likes the Seymours, and they like her, and the poor girl has not had a bit of fun all the summer."

"We will think about it," answered Claudia in her quiet way, and looked at Mabel, the expression of whose face she did not entirely understand.

The beauty of the broad lime avenue now attracted Mr. Templeton's attention, and no more passed on the unwelcome theme of Dorothy or her little charges. The beauty of the mediæval old house, and the harmony of all its appointments, at once struck Mr. Templeton and his daughters as a further evidence of the wealth and social status of these once despised kinsfolk. They might have been in grander houses before, but certainly in none that indicated such refinement and culture on the part of its owners. Why had they been so unfortunate as to remain so long in ignorance of these delightful relations?

They were shown into the drawing-room, where Mrs. Seymour received them with great friendliness. There were two or three more ladies in the room, guests in the house, and the tea equipage was already there, for it was five o'clock, and the newcomers, who had not travelled far to-day, sat down to enjoy a cup of tea before retiring to their rooms.

One bright-faced girl, the youngest of the company, whom Mrs. Seymour addressed as Beatrix, devoted herself to the task of entertaining Claudia and Mabel, to whom she had been introduced. These last were in very gracious mood, and it was no effort to make the conversation flow. Something was said at last about Ralph, and Claudia asked after him.

"Oh, he is very well—remarkably well, in fact. He said he should be in before this, but, poor fellow! one must make allowances for him. I don't suppose he has the least idea of the flight of time. His thoughts are otherwise occupied."

Remembering the glimpse they had caught of him, Claudia felt a little uneasy, but Mabel asked, with praiseworthy self-possession—

"What does all that mean?"

"Why, you see, he is out riding with his *fiancée*," was the gay reply; "and as it is rather a new pleasure, one must expect it to be slightly engrossing."

"Do you mean that he is engaged?" asked Claudia. "I had not heard."

"No, it is quite a new thing. Indeed, I am not sure if it is quite proper of me to talk so openly about it; but I have known Ralph all his life, and we are great friends, and I am so pleased he has found such a charming wife for himself. I'm sure you will admire his choice when you see her. I think she is perfectly delicious. Surely that is Ralph's step in the hall; now you will see for yourself!"

A merry gleam of mischief was in Beatrix's eyes. She had not the least notion of any jealousy between the sisters, and she thought that it was delightful for one to have got engaged in such a romantic fashion in the absence of the others, and then to take them quite by surprise. She and her mother had been intimate with the Seymours for very many years, and knew a great deal about them and the circumstances of Ralph's engagement, but not a word had ever been allowed to pass that could appear in the very least to cast a reflection upon Dorothy's father or sisters.

Claudia and Mabel waited for Ralph's entrance with intense subdued impatience and excitement. They were not kept waiting long, yet when the door opened they were both disposed to believe that they were the victims of an optical illusion. The slim, graceful girl in the dark habit looked like a sort of glorified effigy of Dorothy. Glorified is perhaps a strong word to use, yet nothing so well expresses the extreme radiancy of happiness that shone in her eyes and transfigured her whole face, and that deep, rich, fluctuating colour which plainly testified to the emotion called up by the prospective meeting with her relatives. But she did not really shrink from it—she was too brave and glad in the strength of her great happiness to have room for much trepidation; and then, was not Ralph close behind? How could she fear in his presence?

Nor was there any reason why she should. Her father had been quietly prepared for what he was to expect, during the brief *tête-à-tête* with his hostess that had followed his entrance, and naturally he was proud and delighted at the news. It was a fine thing that one of his daughters was to be the mistress of an establishment like this; and if Claudia had more experience and dignity, at least his little Dorothy did not lack for mother-wit, and would doubtless soon learn to fill the position to which she had been called. He had sometimes felt vague qualms as to the way in which his youngest grown-up daughter was set aside and ignored, though he never had had the energy to speak his mind, or dispute Claudia's judgments. It was, therefore, a source of relief and satisfaction to find that no harm had been done to her by the system hitherto pursued.

So when she appeared, with Ralph in close attendance, his heart warmed towards her with a gush of unwonted paternal love.

"My little Dorothy! Is this really so? My dearest child, I wish you joy with all my heart! You have indeed prepared a very happy surprise for us.—Ralph, my lad, what am I to say to you, stealing a march

upon us like this? I suppose it is no use expecting you to sue for *my* consent? You young people seem to have taken the law into your own hands."

"Well, sir, we couldn't have taken a better thing into our hands in these lawless days, could we? Besides, circumstances obliged us to act for ourselves. I felt sure you couldn't object to such a harmless fellow as myself for a son-in-law. My mother will give me an excellent character, I assure you; and who should know better than a mother? I'll make her happy, I promise you that—I don't think you want anything more."

And Ralph, who had now wrung his future father-in-law warmly by the hand, turned to Claudia and Mabel with a kind of easy brotherly cordiality. They had by this time kissed Dorothy, and Claudia was doing her utmost to cover her surprise and confusion, and not to betray any annoyance.

"Well, how are you both? We are very glad to welcome you here; all the more glad from the double tie that binds us together now. I don't flatter myself I deceived two such clever people as *you*. If women have half the sharpness they are credited with, you must have been pretty well prepared. Our carefully prepared surprise has fallen rather flat, I fear."

Mabel laughed; Claudia answered graciously that, "of course, they had seen and suspected something," and before very long, at Mrs. Seymour's suggestion, Dorothy took her sisters up-stairs to show them their rooms.



"'We always will be friends now, Mabel.'"

If it was a bitter pill for the elder sister to swallow—seeing the youngest preferred before her—yet she resolved she would accept the inevitable with good grace; and Mabel, who had been for some weeks expecting a *dénouement* of the kind, was quite prepared to be kind and cordial. Dorothy knew that Mabel's attitude towards her had altered—she had heard that much from Ralph. Claudia, whose instincts were not fine, had not been aware of this change, for Mabel had never spoken of it or allowed her to see that her opinions had modified. We all of us have a kind of shrinking from announcing any sudden alteration in our mental attitude, and Mabel had kept her own counsel until the right moment had come.

She considered that now this moment had arrived; and after Claudia had kissed Dorothy with as much cordiality as she could assume, and had spoken a few words of congratulation, the younger sisters let her shut the door of her room upon herself, and then turned to each other with beaming smiles.

"Dear Mabel," said Dorothy, for the first time since her childhood throwing her arms round her sister's neck, "Ralph has told me how good and kind you were! You do not know how much obliged I am to you for not being vexed or angry."

Mabel returned the embrace warmly.

"You are a little sly puss, all the same, Dolly; and all your grand ideas culminate at last in marrying a rich man, and settling down to a life of ease and luxury. But as you are giving us a charming brother in Ralph, I will not be the one to scold."

"I am so glad you like one another; he likes you very much, Mabel, and has done so ever since the day you went down the weir together. It is so nice to have one of my own sisters for a real friend. We always will be friends now, Mabel, won't we?"

"I hope so, indeed, my dear. It will be all to my advantage to 'keep in' with the Lady of the Manor. What a charming house this is, Dolly! I hope you will succeed in living up to it."

"I hope so, indeed," answered Dorothy, laughing, as she kissed Mabel again before leaving her. "In every way, you know," she added, with a touch of sweet gravity, as she vanished down the corridor.

Mabel was not in the least jealous of her sister's happiness. Indeed, she had a feeling that her own fate was soon to be sealed. She had met Mr. Harold Sopely at one of the houses they had been visiting; and, as the object of his first admiration appeared unattainable, he had, as it seemed, transferred his admiration and devotion intact to her sister. He was a good-hearted youth, not in the least intellectual, but easy-going, kindly, and desirous of living up to the position to which his great wealth seemed to entitle him. A nice wife was all he needed to turn into a very passable subject; and in many ways Mabel appeared admirably suited to him. She was clever in a superficial way, yet did not feel his lack of intellectual power, and she had excellent spirits, and a strong love of the good things that wealth could buy.



"'I think cousin Ralph can generally do what he has a mind to,' answered Dorothy gravely.

Nothing of a public nature had been stated as yet; but the girl felt certain of an assured future, and did not envy her younger sister the brilliant prospect before her. She began to see very plainly that she and Ralph would never have suited one another, and almost wondered how she had ever believed that a marriage with him would have brought happiness. She watched him that evening with some intentness of scrutiny. She did not know that he observed her; but presently he came up, and asked with his cool, nonchalant air of mastery—

"Well, Mabel, what is the conclusion?"

"The conclusion of what?"

"Of this persistent stock-taking. What do you make of your future brother?"

"I think he could be something of a tyrant."

"Very good. I've a natural weakness towards an autocratic government, provided always that the autocrat is myself. Anything else?"

"I'm wondering, when it comes to a tussle of will, who will get the mastery."

"Mentally pitting us one against the other. You think that Dorothy too has a will of her own?"

"Don't you?"

"I reserve my judgment. I have nothing to complain of so far. So this move on our part did not take you quite by surprise?"

"Not quite."

"And you are pleased?"

"Very pleased," and she gave him her hand frankly and freely.

"You ought to be, for you aided and abetted!"

"Did I?"

"Yes, for it was you who first put it into my head seriously to go down to Shag's Bay. After that the rest was easy."

"It seems to me, Ralph, that you did not need any great amount of assistance. You seem quite strong enough to fight your own battles unaided. I think I will back you when the tussle comes; but it is an amusing end to Dorothy and her vocation."

"An end? A beginning, you mean. All this time she has been vaguely hunting about for a proper field in which to exercise her many talents. Now she has found what she has long been searching for, and will settle to it with a hearty good-will. It is Dorothy's Vocation to be my wife; and that will be a lifelong task from which there can be no possible shrinking."

CHAPTER XVIII.—CONCLUSION.

"Oh! Dolly dear, please tell us what it is—we don't understand! Cousin Ralph says he won't be 'cousin Ralph' much longer, but 'brother Ralph.' He said he was going to turn into a brother, and we don't know how he can. Wilfred thinks he was in fun, but he said he wasn't. Do tell us, Dolly—*can* he turn into a brother?"

Dorothy laughed at Winnie's eager questions, and at the look upon the fond, puzzled faces turned towards her, and she sat down beside the cheerful log fire, lifting Bernie up on her lap.

"Do tell us, Dolly—can he?"

"I think cousin Ralph can generally do what he has a mind to," answered Dorothy gravely.

"But why does he want to be our brother?" questioned Winnie. "I don't see what difference it will make to him."

Dorothy laughed a little low laugh of amusement at that way of putting the matter, and a light of inspiration seemed to fall upon Bertie, the eldest of the quartette.

"I know!" he suddenly exclaimed.

"What do you know?" asked his brothers and sister in a breath.

"I know how cousin Ralph can turn into our brother."

"How?"

"Why, by marrying Dolly, to be sure—because she's our sister."

Three pairs of eyes round with surprise were fixed hard on Dorothy's face; but Wilfred struck in with another idea—

"But he would be our brother, too, if he married Claudia or Mabel."

"Of course he would," answered Bertie; adding, however, with a comical intonation of contempt, "but as if cousin Ralph would be such a stupid as that!"

"Oh! Dolly," cried Winnie, in a voice half dolorous, half delighted, "are you really, *really* going to marry cousin Ralph?"

"Yes, really, pussy-cat, by-and-bye. Don't you think it's very nice of me to give you such a kind big brother?"

"I don't 'spect you will give him to us," said solemn Bernie; "I 'spect you will keep him all yourself."

"Not all," laughed Dorothy; "you shall have a little share sometimes. You see, he is so big that we shall manage to divide him.—Well, Winnie, what do you want to know?"

"Shall you wear a white frock and a white thing over your head, and a big lot of white flowers, like the ladies in the weddings nurse takes us to see in the big church near home?" asked the child, who, in her own small way, was a true daughter of Eve; "shall you, Dolly?"

"Oh, yes! I dare say. We will settle all that when the time comes."

"And may I have a white frock, too? And may I hold your flowers for you when 'ring-time' comes?" persisted Winnie, who seemed remarkably well up in the details of the marriage ceremony.

Dorothy laughed and kissed her, and said, "Yes."

But Wilfred's face had grown grave and troubled.

"But if Dolly marries cousin Ralph, she'll go away with him; people always do when they're married, you know; and we shan't have her any longer.—Oh! Dolly, don't go; we can't spare you! We shall all be miserable if you go away and leave us;" and Wilfred's lip quivered, whilst Bernie broke into an unpremeditated howl, feeling it incumbent to make some kind of a protest, although he had only very vague ideas as to what it was all about.

But Dorothy was prepared for a scene of this kind, and forewarned is forearmed.

"Now listen to me, children," she said, "for I've got something very nice to tell you. You like staying in this house, don't you?" A chorus of assent was the answer. "Well, then, cousin Ralph likes having you here, and so does Mrs. Seymour; and when it is my home, you may be quite sure I shall like it too. Do you know that all of you are invited to stay on a good many weeks here? and so am I; and when we go back to London, cousin Ralph and Mrs. Seymour will come too. Then next year you two boys, Bertie and Willie, are to go to school, if Willie is quite strong again; and the school we have chosen is only five miles away from this house, so I shall often come and see you, and when you have half-holidays, you will be able to come here to spend them. As for you two mites, you will often come here on a visit, and I shall often be in London; and I am going to find such a nice kind lady to live with you and take care of you, instead of Miss Mansell, that you will hardly miss Dolly at all." And with great tact and knowledge of children's feelings and thoughts she talked on, painting it all in such bright, attractive colours that the little faces soon broke into eager smiles, and the plaintive ring passed out of the childish voices. After all, they agreed, it would be better to have a new brother in cousin Ralph, and a sort of fairy godmother in Dolly, than to go back to the old routine of nursery life, without the prospect of these many delightful changes and surprises.

"Well, I'm glad that is all so satisfactorily settled," said a voice out of the dim shadows of the room; and Wilfred sprang forward, exclaiming—

"Oh! cousin Ralph, we didn't know you were there!"

"Listeners never ought to hear any good of themselves," said Dorothy. "I'm half afraid you did not meet your deserts."

"At least, I heard good of somebody else," he said, standing behind her chair, and laying his hands upon her shoulders.—"So, children, you are willing to let me have Dolly, and to take me for a brother to make up?"

"You must be very good to her," said Wilfred judicially, "because, you know, she's very good to everybody, and she doesn't think much about herself."

"So you have found that out, too, have you, youngster? Well, take care that you keep it in mind as you grow up, and try to emulate it as much as you can. Yes, I will take care of Dorothy when she is mine, and you shall all come very often to see her, and satisfy yourselves that I am doing it properly. We'll have some fine times together yet, all of us together, and you shan't find that you are losers in the long run for letting me have Dorothy peaceably and cheerfully. Will that satisfy you? You know I always keep my promises, don't you? There, then, don't pull me in pieces, but off with you all. It's high time you were in bed—and I want Dorothy."

"Dear little things!" said Dorothy softly, after silence had followed their somewhat vociferous good-nights. "They are so good and reasonable—so much more unselfish than most children."

"They have had an example before their eye, you see, and have not been blind to it."

She laid her hand laughingly upon his lips, as they stood together in the ruddy firelight of the dusky room.

"You must not say things like that, Ralph. I shall not know you if you begin to praise."

He put his arm about her as she stood, drawing her more closely to himself.

"You see, it comes natural to me to praise myself; and now that you belong to me, you come under the category of things to be praised."

She leaned her head back against his shoulder, so that she could look up at him. She was not now afraid to meet that light in his eyes, half tender, half mocking, that she knew so well.

"Ralph, you are a bad boy, and I shall not praise you, though I know how dearly you love it. It will have to be my vocation now to keep your pride in check."

"It will be your vocation, Dorothy, to make me and all around you happy," he said, in his slow, quiet way; "and that is a vocation you will not be able to escape. You will have to fulfil it, whether you like it or not, for you will not be able to help yourself. Such is life, my child. Women with vocations always do end, you know, by doing something they never contemplated in the least at starting."

THE END.

MOTHERLESS.

LIKE climbing plant is she, from whose embrace
The upholding stem round which it twined is torn:
Instead of springing life and fresh young grace,
Are leaves and tendrils drooping and forlorn.

A mute appeal for love is in her eyes—
Love, the sweet element in which she grew,
Which was as sunshine, as the summer skies,
As soft west breezes and the morning dew.

Dear climbing plant! thy tendrils must embrace
The Strength which most avails in weakest hour,
And upward springing in new life and grace,
Love shall be evermore thy bounteous dower.

MARY BEIGHTON.

ST. PAUL'S CHARACTER AND MISSION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MACDUFF, D.D.

(PREACHED ON BOARD THE *PERA*, IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, ON THE WAY TO PALESTINE.)

"Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."—ACTS ix. 15.

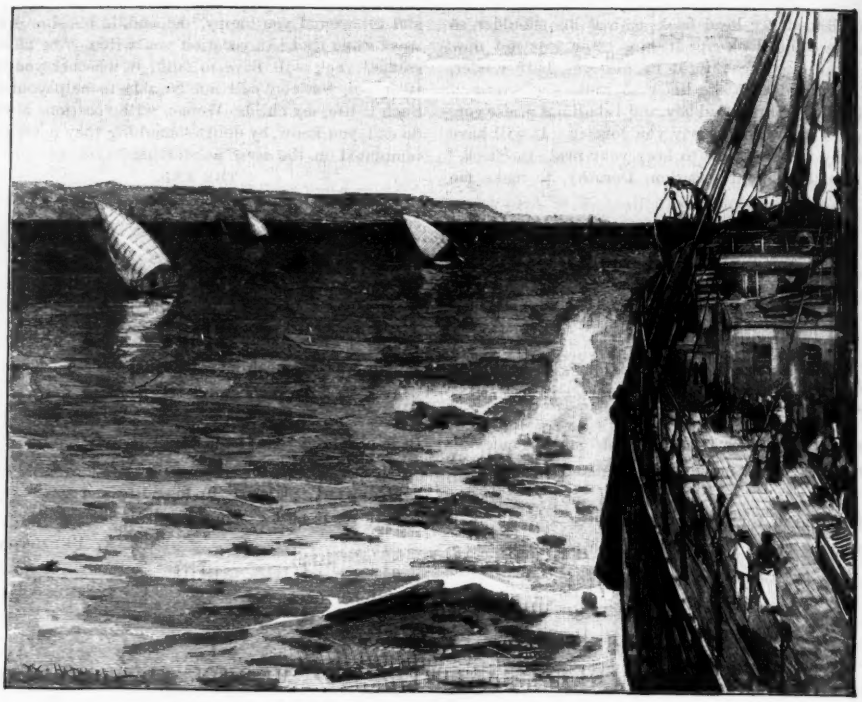
I HAVE selected this text because some of us here present have, this last week, for the first time in our lives, been in the footsteps of the glorious company of the apostles, and the noble army of martyrs. We have stood in the ruined amphitheatres of Southern France: seen the arenas where God's faithful servants were torn by wild beasts, or the catacombs which for eighteen centuries have held their honoured dust.

Since then, we have been for several days on the track of the Prince of apostles and martyrs in this "great and wide sea"—the sea whose waves wash the shores of his birthplace in distant Asia Minor—the sea which forms the scene or margin of his future life and labours. In one sense, indeed, the Mediterranean may be called "the diocese of St. Paul." These same ships of Tarshish, recently familiar to us, were familiar to him. We have touched the island of his shipwreck, which has received from his presence and deeds an imperishable interest; and we have thought of the thousands on thousands morally shipwrecked, who have, through his glowing utterances and deeds, been brought to a better haven.

These words I have now read form the commencement and inauguration of that mighty career. Let us ponder them, with some feeble desire to imbibe his spirit, that we may at last participate with him in his glorious reward.

I need not pause to connect the passage with the preceding context, where we have the account of Paul's conversion. The Lord Jesus had appeared to him on his way to Damascus, in a glory above the brightness of the sun, and arrested him for His service. The whole current of the persecutor's thoughts is changed. He can no longer fight against God. The Captain of the Lord's Host had stood before a moral Jericho with the sword drawn in His hand. The vast citadel of Pharisaic pride is in a moment laid in ruins. The lion has been transformed into the lamb: the furious bigot becomes the lowly disciple. All old things have passed away, and all things have become new. Let me, with God's blessing, direct your thoughts to these two points here brought before us:—St. Paul as *the Chosen believer*, and as the *Consecrated missionary*.

I. We have his honourable designation, set



A MEDITERRANEAN VOYAGE.

forth by God Himself in the text, as A CHOSEN VESSEL.

The separate words are suggestive.

1. He is *chosen*.

Here we have the grace of God, and the wondrous sovereignty and freeness of that grace. Although He owns and honours human instrumentality, yet He sometimes wishes to show His independence of human means and human agency; that He works when, and where, and how He pleases—"found of them that sought Him not;"—that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Nay, that He can work, when He sees meet, even *contrary* to means. It was so in the case of St. Paul, where all the mightier moral and spiritual elements were in a state of conflict and antagonism. In that bosom there was everything one would have thought incompatible with the lowly spirit of the Gospel: inveterate hatred, sectarian bigotry, educational prejudice, the pride of intellect, and, worse than all, the pride of self-righteousness.

But "what is this great mountain before Zerubbabel? It shall become a plain!" Grace (the grace of God) shall level it. "He hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty . . . that no flesh should glory in His presence."

Brethren, after this, who shall despair? That persecutor, breathing out his blasphemies, stands forth to every sinner and to all time as a monumental trophy and triumph of Divine irresistible power. He tells us himself, this was the great end his God had in view. "For *this cause* I obtained mercy, that in me first" (not first in point of *time*, but first in point of *guilt*), "in me first Jesus might show a pattern" (to look at and copy) "to them who should hereafter believe to life everlasting." Who among us, if such there be, who have been sinning against grace, striving against convictions, scorning mercy, fighting against God, need despair? The Holy Ghost records this as a *pattern*—a glorious testimony to the free grace and mercy of Him whose "ways are not as man's ways, and whose thoughts are not as man's thoughts." Here is apparently one of those vessels of wrath He elsewhere speaks of, fitted for destruction. God transmutes it by a touch into a vessel of gold, "fitted," as an old writer expresses it, "for the high palace of His glory." And what is the secret of that marvellous transformation? "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

2. But this chosen believer is further spoken of as "*a vessel*." "He is a chosen *vessel*." With what is the vessel filled? In other words, what are some

of the new elements in St. Paul's character; some of his new-born spiritual attainments? Let us select two out of many.

Mark how he is filled with HUMILITY! He, indeed, combined more than any living contemporary the wealth of intellect, and the wealth of Christian experience—in the one, Gamaliel's pupil, the acute thinker, the profound reasoner, who could stand amid Athenian philosophers, or in the dwellings of Imperial Rome, or amid the merchant princes of Corinth, pleading the injured cause of his Lord and Master; or, in point of spiritual attainment, "counting not his life dear unto him that he might finish his course with joy." What a claim, one would have said, had this great servant of the Most High to the possession of an archangel's throne! He might well be entitled to share the eagle symbol of his brother Apostle, and soar to the highest peaks of the Alps of God, his own abounding merits the perches in his flight. The breast of no earthly hero assuredly might have been more thickly studded with star and insignia than he. If the fame of the Roman conqueror had been his ambition, which it was not, he might have had his triumphal procession along a truer *via sacra;* aye, and amid a host more glorious than earth's fickle multitudes. Yet in the prospect of martyrdom, when he is just grasping his crown, he takes care to avow that every jewel there sparkles with a lustre not its own. With self-renouncing lowliness he casts it at the feet of his Lord, saying—"Not unto me, not unto me, but unto God be all the glory. By the grace of God I am what I am!" As we read his Epistles, the key to his inner life, every doctrine and precept, and duty and promise, seems to tend towards one grand point: "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things." He takes to himself all the blame of what was blameworthy, and gives to God all the praise of what was praiseworthy. "O wretched man that *I* am! I *thank God*, through Jesus Christ our Lord!" Yet, again, when he speaks of his labours in the cause of truth, and with honest sincerity of heart and humble gratitude exclaims: "I laboured more abundantly than they all!" he checks the forbidden thought. Laying self in the dust, he appends the explanatory words—"Not I; but the grace of God which was with me!" Golden vessel as he was, he has but one designation for himself, which embraces past and present: "I WAS a persecutor; I AM the chief of sinners!"

I observe, once more, this chosen vessel was filled with LOVE. The love of God in Christ had captured and subdued him. And that love, in its turn, was responsive, and acted with a constraining power. It became the paramount force in his new-born nature. Being forgiven much, he seemed to love all the more. There had been no place for the love of God; it could have no existence so long as he was the proud, self-righteous Pharisee, and made it his boast that, touching the righteousness which is of the law, he was blameless. We cannot love a God to whom we owe nothing. We love Him. Why? Because He first loved us. The self-righteous man cannot love the Being with regard to whom it is his constant struggle to be independent, and to whom it is his habitual feeling—or desire, at least, to feel—that he is not indebted. We hear of "breathing sculpture." Even the noblest productions of the chisel, although few can fail to *admire*, none can be said to *love* them. However noble the symmetry, however graceful the proportions, however godlike the dumb expression, we cannot *love* the cold marble. There can be no interchange between it and the human heart. Even so GOD: the self-righteous man may *admire*, in a certain sense; His *holiness* may awe him, His *power* may overwhelm him, but he cannot *love* the Being from whom he has received no love. To him that Being is little better than the block of marble, possessing a number of abstract qualities and attributes, but with none of which he stands personally connected, and therefore which cannot elicit his gratitude or obedience or moral esteem.

That principle can be evoked only from a sense of God's pardoning mercy. The first spark of that new affection was kindled in St. Paul's bosom on the way to Damascus. From that hour it seemed to increase and brighten in intensity, until he came to bathe in the floods of infinite love before the Throne. In the familiar words of the Christian poet—

> "From then each mild and winning note
> (Like pulses that round harp-strings float
> When the full strain is o'er)
> Left lingering on his inward ear
> Music that taught, as death drew near,
> Love's lesson more and more."

Nor must we omit to add that it was not only love to God which formed a reigning passion in his regenerated heart. This was further manifested in its complement of love to *man*. The furious and narrow-minded zealot became the large-hearted Christian. He once trusted in himself that he was righteous, and, as a consequence, despised others. See him now, the fervent philanthropist, with a glow of sympathetic interest in the wide family of believers, drinking deep at the fountain-head of Divine love. He calls on divided Christians and divided churches—"Dearly beloved, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Brethren, the deeper the love of God is in our hearts, the wider will be the sweep and circumference of our Christian affections. It is because we are far from the central Sun that we are often moving in such frigid and distant orbits. Christians and Christian churches have often been compared to the pools of water on the rocky shore, each standing separate and apart. It only needs, in its glorious fulness, the mighty tide of a Saviour's love to sweep over them that they may be commingled, and that His own valedictory prayer may have its blessed and triumphant fulfilment—"That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee."

II. Let us pass now very briefly to consider St. Paul's great and important work as the *devoted Missionary*

—"To bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

The great Apostle was a living comment on the words of Christ to St. Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

No sooner had the chosen Vessel been set apart for the Master's use, then he who persecuted in times past, now preached the faith which he once destroyed. This noble and gifted spirit had for long, like a ship, lain stranded on the shore; but no sooner did the tide of grace, of which we have been speaking, come rolling from the ocean of God's eternal love, than not only was it set floating on the waters, but with every sail hoisted to the breeze, we see it borne from port to port and from shore to shore, freighted with the unsearchable riches of Christ. And the same humility, tenderness, and love which characterised him as the Apostle distinguished him as the Apostle-missionary. Though resolute in every danger, boldly confronting the perils of an unknown wilderness, the angry surges of the Mediterranean and the Adriatic, unflinchingly sending his message to the courtiers of Cæsar's palace, and himself standing in Cæsar's presence, speaking God's word before kings and not being moved: yet mark his sensitive tenderness over scorners of Divine mercy, and his importunate earnestness for man's salvation. Though dungeons and chains, and watchings and fastings, and death itself could move him not, in delivering these tidings of salvation to sinners, he tells us, he did it "night and day with tears."

What a life of self-abnegation and self-surrender! As we see him bounding over these same waves now around us, or traversing the shores they lave, which were hereafter to be his home, his own motto was no vain boast—"This *one* thing I do." His eye was single, not double. He looked only at "*this one* thing" as he pursued his Christian course, and therefore his whole body was full of light.

Is there no lesson for us from St. Paul's great and unceasing labours? Every member of the Church of Christ who has, like him, felt the regenerating power of Divine grace, must, as a necessary result, have been brought under the influence of the same expansive spirit. If there be only a few Aholiabs and Bezaleels who are qualified for the costlier and more arduous work in the tabernacle, yet the humblest may do something. Each, as a chosen vessel, has something to bear—aye, and something to *give out* to others, whether it be in the shape of money, or influence, or example. Remember, the great Lord of the Temple requires in His sacred courts vessels of small as well as of great quantity—"vessels of *cups*" as well as "vessels of *flagons*." And the question on the Great Day will be, not what the size of the vessel was, not how many or how brilliant our talents have been, but has the vessel, such as it was, not only been kept full, but a dispenser of blessings? Have the talents, such as they were, not only been carefully husbanded, but diligently employed, and traded on, and blessed for the well-being of others?

St. Paul, as a signally honoured vessel, had a wider and grander mission, an altogether unique and specific work to which he is here designated—"to bear My name before *the Gentiles*." It is this, I repeat, which vividly associates him with the sea on which we are now borne to Eastern lands. We know that he always felt strongly the claims of his fellow-countrymen. "To the Jew first," were the marching orders of this good soldier of Christ. His patriot spirit was not likely to overlook "the Israelites, to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God and the promises." But pleading voices had reached him from a hundred heathen shores, "Come over and help us!" If he had listened to some modern arguments occasionally urged, he might have toiled only within the walls of Jerusalem, or his footsteps lingered around the Sea of Galilee. But the shores of this Mediterranean are henceforth to be his home. And when we see him, with his life in his hand, bounding over its waves, his own impassioned appeal seems sounding in our ears—"Is He the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." Had his been a narrow and less expansive spirit and outlook, our own island home would not have been, as it now is, the sanctuary of truth and peace, the holy influences of St. Paul's character and St. Paul's Gospel radiating from it to earth's circumference.

And now, my brethren and fellow-voyagers, I close. I am a stranger to you all. We have met for the first time; we never may, we never can, meet again, till the solemn day when this ocean around us shall surrender its trust—its teeming sepulchres give up their dead. Let us give heed to the solemn question which formed the keynote of our devotions and meditations this morning, "*Where art thou?*" * God says, "Call the sinner! let him be cited before My righteous tribunal." "Where art thou?" There is no reply! The Divine voice summons the thunders to rend the rocks and the mountains, the dens and caves of the earth, to discover if he have taken shelter there. Still there is no reply! The same Omnipotent voice commissions the lightning to sweep these caverns of the deep. Still there is no reply! At last the accents ascend—"I heard Thy voice, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."—"Hid thyself—where?"—"Hid myself in Christ; hid myself in the clefts of the Rock of Ages."

It is enough! The Judge asks no more. The Books are closed; the inquiry is hushed.

"Rock of Ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"*The Lord grant unto us that we may find mercy of the Lord on that day!*"

* The text of the discourse of the Bishop of Calcutta, a worshipper at the present service when on his way to India.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

October 20. David's Thanksgiving Prayer.

To read—2 *Sam. vii.* 18—29. *Golden Text*—1 *Thess. v.* 18.

DAVID'S WISH. Last lesson told of Ark on its way to Zion. Stayed three months in house of Obed-edom (vi. 11); then taken up to Jerusalem with great joy (vi. 12). Now David is at rest. Describe the state of the country—

(*a*) *Enemies* subdued all round.

(*b*) *Jerusalem* established as the capital.

(*c*) *David* at peace in his own palace. (Ver. 1.)

(*d*) The Ark set up in Jerusalem.

(*e*) Regular daily and weekly services arranged. (1 Chron. xvi.)

But something was wanting.

The king had a palace—the Ark was only in a tent. (Ver. 2.)

Therefore David desired to build a Temple for God.

Vowed a vow that he would do so. (Ps. cxxxii. 2—5.)

But was not allowed to. Why?

Because he had been a man of war—shed much blood. (1 Kings v. 3.)

Therefore his son Solomon, a man of peace, should build it.

All this told to David by Nathan the Prophet.

II. David's Prayer. (18—29.) David not vexed at not having his wish.

Where does he go? Kneels before God in the Tabernacle.

Notice these points about his prayer—

1. *Address* to his Lord God, the great King of all.

2. *His own littleness.* (*a*) He is of little account.

(*b*) His family is a lowly one.

(*c*) His thought was but a small one.

3. *God's attributes.* (*a*) *Knowledge* of David's desire.

(*b*) *Foreknowledge* of the future.

(*c*) *Greatness* above all in the earth.

4. *A favoured nation.* (*a*) Its name Israel—prince with God. (Gen. xxxii. 28.)

(*b*) Redeemed from their enemies by God. (Ex. xiii. 3.)

(*c*) Allowed to make God's name great.

(*d*) Set free from idolatry of Egypt.

(*e*) Under God's protection for ever.

5. *Prayer.* (*a*) That God will confirm His word. (Ver. 26.)

(*b*) That His name may be magnified.

(*c*) That David and his family may be blessed.

Notice how this prayer agrees with the Lord's Prayer—

God's name and honour must come first.

Then follows prayer for man's needs.

III. Lessons. 1. Submission to God's will. (Golden Text.) All have often to give up cherished plans. Copy David in doing so cheerfully.

2. God's glory to be man's first object. Must always put God first—ourselves second. Then all will be well.

October 27. Sin, Forgiveness, and Peace.

To read—Ps. xxxii. 1—11. *Golden Text—Rom. v.* 1.

I. David's Sin. Children must be told, without dwelling unduly on details, that David was guilty of a great sin.

He took another man's wife, and killed her husband—thus breaking tenth, seventh, and sixth commandments.

Was unrepentant for a whole year.

Then Nathan the prophet was sent to him (2 Sam. xii. 1—7, 13)—told him the parable of the ewe lamb, and brought him to a sense of his sin. This Psalm one of those written after he had been forgiven.

II. Forgiveness. (1—7.) (1) *Its blessedness.* Because the sin is both forgiven and covered, *i.e.*, blotted out—no more remembered by God. (Isa. xliv. 22.)

How can God do this?

He no longer imputes (or lays to his charge) his sin—because there is no guile (or deceit) in the man's repentance.

(2) *Its source.* Not by keeping silence—no comfort in that. But by confessing all his sin, not hiding anything at all. Then only obtained forgiveness.

Examples of persons thus confessing and being forgiven—

The woman that was a sinner. (St. Luke vii. 47.)

St. Paul, who persecuted the Christians. (1 Tim. i. 13.)

(3) *Its result.* (*a*) The godly encouraged to pray.

(*b*) God will preserve His people in danger to soul and body.

(*c*) They will render to Him thanksgiving.

Examples. (*a*) *Jonah* the prophet fled from God, was in danger, prayed for mercy—was delivered—praised God.

(*b*) *Hezekiah* the king delivered from disease in answer to earnest prayer—praised God in the Temple. (Is. xxxviii. 19.)

III. Peace. (8—11.) God will guide and direct His people.

(*a*) *With His eye*—if they will look up to Him. (Ps. cxxiii. 2.)

(*b*) *With restraining* like a horse if necessary, as Balaam. (Num. xxii. 34.)

(*c*) *With sorrows* and trials, as Abraham when ordered to kill his son. (Gen. xxii. 1.)

But the end of all will be—

(*a*) *Mercy*, as to David, who was forgiven and restored.

(*b*) *Joy*, as the Apostles felt at being counted worthy to suffer for Christ. (Acts v. 41.)

(*c*) *Peace*—the third fruit of the Spirit, after forgiveness. (Gal. v. 22.)

LESSONS. Would we know these blessings of forgiveness and peace?

Must first have a sense of sin—to cry, "Father, I have sinned."

Christ is exalted to give repentance as well as forgiveness of sins. (Acts v. 31.)

None ever sought Him in vain. By faith ye are saved. Then being justified by faith, shall have peace. (Golden Text.)

NOVEMBER 3. DAVID'S REBELLIOUS SON.

To read—2 *Sam. xv.* 1—12. *Golden Text*—*Eph. vi.* 2, 3.

I. CRAFT. (1—6.) Remind of previous history of Absalom.

(*a*) Was the favourite son of David.

(*b*) Had murdered his half-brother Amnon. (xiii. 32.)

(*c*) Was in exile in Geshur for three years. (xiii. 38.)

Through Joab's influence returned to Jerusalem. (xiv. 24.)

For two years the king refused to see him. (xiv. 28.)

At last David and his son were reconciled. (xiv. 33.)

But what use does Absalom make of his new liberty? At once begins plotting against his father. What means does he use?

(*a*) *Display*—had chariots and men to run before him.

(*b*) *Friendliness*—affecting affection for people.

(*c*) *Promises*—of what he would do were he judge.

The result of this would be—

(*a*) To lower David in the opinion of the people.

(*b*) To exalt himself in their eyes.

Thus Absalom stole the hearts of the people.

In addition to this, was personally very vain. Was extremely handsome, and had beautiful and thick hair. (xiv. 25, 26.)

II. HYPOCRISY. (7—12.) Absalom carried on his plot for four years (so the best versions read, instead of *forty*, or else forty years may be counted from the first anointing of David). Then began to carry on his rebellion. What did he do?

(*a*) Pretended had a vow to keep in Hebron.

(*b*) Obtained leave of absence from David.

(*c*) Departed with the king's blessing.

(*d*) Sent spies to announce himself as king.

(*e*) Won over Ahithophel, David's counsellor.

(*f*) Gained more followers daily.

See how one sin leads to another.

Vanity, or love of self, led to *vainglory*, or desire of other people's admiration. This led Absalom on to *sedition*, or leading people away; then to *conspiracy*, or plots against his father; and at last to open *rebellion*.

Thus he sinned grievously—

(*a*) *Against his father*, by wilful disobedience. (Golden Text.)

(*b*) *Against the people*, by leading them to rebel.

(*c*) *Against God*, by pride, vainglory, and hypocrisy.

LESSONS. 1. Watch against vanity, root of many evils.

2. Disobedience to parents is sin against God.

3. Fear God, honour the king.

4. The hypocrite's hope shall perish. (Job viii. 13.)

NOVEMBER 10. DAVID'S GRIEF FOR ABSALOM.

To read—2 *Sam. xviii.* 18—33. *Golden Text*—*Prov. xvii.* 25.

I. SAD NEWS. (18—27.) We have seen Absalom's sin—to-day have to hear of his punishment. For a whole year had been in rebellion against his father, the king. At last David's forces prevailed, and the rebellion was crushed. But where was Absalom?

His head caught in the branches of a great oak—there was pierced with darts by Joab. (Ver. 14.) Buried in a large pit.

What had he done in his lifetime to preserve his memory? (Ver. 18.)

These pillars or tablets very common in those days, when were few books or records to preserve remembrance of great deeds.

Thus Jacob built a pillar at Bethel (Gen. xxviii. 22); also at Bethlehem, over Rachel's grave. (Gen. xxxv. 20.)

Such tablets very common still in all countries.

Absalom's pillar would recall a wasted life—most of its manhood spent as an exile from home, under his father's displeasure, and cut off in its prime.

But the news must be taken to David sooner or later.

Who wanted to be the messenger? But Joab preferred Cushi, an Ethiopian slave, to Ahimaaz, an Israelite, perhaps wishing the king to hear the sad news from a stranger.

But both ran along the plain.

Picture the king waiting, watching, inquiring—hoping against hope that the tidings will be good.

II. GREAT SORROW. (28—33.) Notice the delicate feeling of Ahimaaz.

(*a*) Calls out from a distance, "All well."

(*b*) Tells of the victory given by God over the enemy.

(*c*) Tries to conceal Absalom's death.

Now the other messenger comes up.

(*a*) He announces tidings—does not say, "All well."

(*b*) Tells of the vengeance taken on the foe.

Then, when pressed by the king, delicately tells him of his loss.

David was much moved. What did he do?

Like Joseph (Gen. xliii. 30), went to his chamber to weep, that no eye might see him.

Why was his sorrow so great?

(*a*) Because he lost his favourite son.

(*b*) Because Absalom had not repented of his sin.

(*c*) Because of his death of shame and disgrace.

Therefore David had no comfort—would gladly have given his life for his son.

III. LESSONS. Absalom's death teaches:—

1. In the midst of life we are in death.
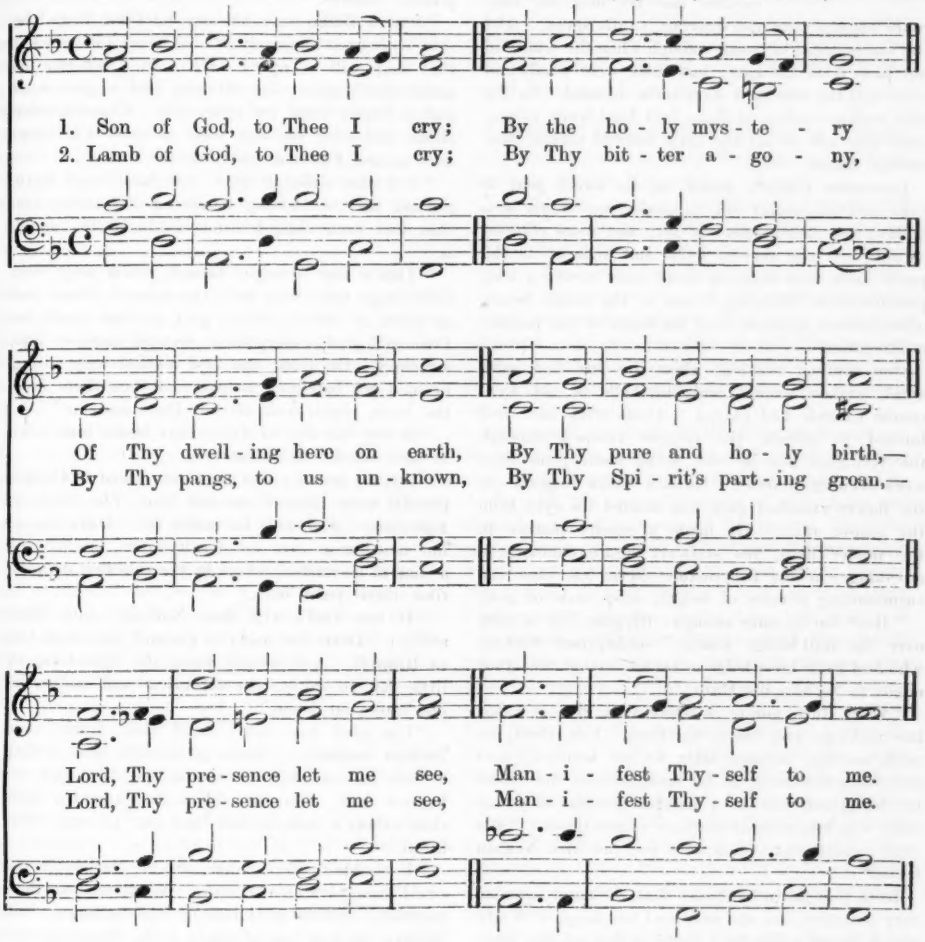
2. To repent of sin before it be too late.

Joab's messengers teach us—
1. Consideration for the feelings of others.
2. A foolish son is a grief to his father.
David's sorrow teaches—
1. The great love of parents even to erring children.
2. The greater love of Christ, who *did* die for His enemies. (Rom. v. 8.)

"Son of God, to Thee I cry."

Words by RICHARD MANT, 1831.

Music by CHARLES STEGGALL, Mus.D.
(*Organist of Lincoln's Inn.*)



3. Prince of Life, to Thee I cry;
By Thy glorious majesty,
By Thy triumph o'er the grave,
Meek to suffer, strong to save,—
Lord, Thy presence let me see,
Manifest Thyself to me.

4. Lord of Glory, Lord Most High,
Man exalted to the sky,
With Thy love my bosom fill;
Prompt me to perform Thy will;
Then Thy glory I shall see,
Thou wilt bring me home to Thee.

"THE PRIDE OF LYNCOMBE."

A STORY OF THE DEEP SEA.



T was the season at Lyncombe-on-Sea—the harvest-time of the landladies in Victoria Parade and the Esplanade and Marine Crescent, whence happy children issued day by day to join the services held on the beach, or to hold mimic warfare behind sand-castles, and try how far they could venture into the dancing, sunlit spray. Ah! the waves could be gentle enough when the wind did not blow from the east; but there were winds and tides that the fishers of Lyncombe dreaded. In the cold weather many of these had hard work to pay their way and to fill the little mouths within their cottage homes.

Lyncombe Church, noted for its sweet peal of bells and its quaint old gargoyles, was down in a hollow, and half-hidden by ivy, but roses climbed as well over the ancient walls, and high up in the porch birds were wont to build their nests; a long juvenile neck, belonging to one of the infant brood, often became apparent over the heads of the passing congregation.

One summer evening, when the sun had sunk amid rainbow clouds, and the bells of old Lyncombe Church had played "Abide with me," and hushed to silence, the ringers trooped through the lych-gate one by one, going home from their week-evening practice. Nathan Cleve lingered by the flower-wreathed gate, and shaded his eyes from the sunset rays. He made a goodly picture in the tender light, his stalwart figure showing to advantage in his fisherman's dress, his blue cap surmounting a mass of bright, crisp curls of gold.

"Here she be, sure enough; tripping like a fairy over the mill-bridge yonder," soliloquised Nathan, who had little knowledge of fairies, except that they ought to be like his Ruth.

"Why, Ruth, you're as white as a lily—it's that lace-making—you work too hard. You shall not work another moment after we are married," said the young fisherman, as he brought back the colour to the girlish face in a manner peculiar to young folks who linger about for such sunset-trysts: "you shall take it easy when once you are Mrs. Nathan Cleve."

Ruth thought in her heart that the name sounded very beautiful, but she answered laughingly: "A nice wife I should make for a fisher, idling all day long. I've been helping Aunt Ellen with the washing, and I feel a little tired, that's all."

"Then we'll go over by 'Old Sandy,' and you shall sit and rest as long as you like, sweetheart. By the way, didn't you say 'good-bye' to somebody over the other side of the bridge? Did your Uncle Ben walk down with you?"

"No," said Ruth, and her voice seemed to tremble a little as she glanced up at her sunny-faced *fiancé;* "that was James Blake. He had business in Church Street, he said, so he walked my way."

"James Blake!" repeated Nathan, and the name brought a passing shadow. Something told the young fisherman that if he had an enemy in Lyncombe it was the well-to-do proprietor of the enterprising "Stores."

"I wish Blake were not our landlord, Ruth," he said, somewhat anxiously; "one never knows what that chap will be up to. He's not a bit like his father that's gone; the old man had a good word and a kindly hand for everybody. Churchwarden Blake and poor old dad were as good Christians as I reckon I'm ever likely to see."

"Yet what different lives they had!" said Ruth, putting her two loving hands on the strong arm that had been obliged from childhood to "rough it."

"That's true enough, though when they were little chaps they were both the sons of fishers, and as thick at school and at play as boys could be. Poor old dad! everything seemed against him, somehow; the little 'uns and mother were ailing, or he'd got bad luck at sea, and then there came the fever, which took all but Dave and me."

"It was the loss of Dave that broke him down at last, wasn't it, Nathan?"

"Ay, my pretty; dad were that proud of Dave—prouder even than of our old boat, *The Pride of Lyncombe.* And well he might be: Dave was as fine a sailor as ever loved salt water—far too good a chap to be washed ashore by the tide that dreadful time three years back."

"It was God's will, dear Nathan," said Ruth softly; "Dave was ready to go, and God took him to Himself. And you're doing the right thing by little Kit, in taking the fatherless and motherless boy into your home."

"I'm glad you don't mind that, Ruth," said Nathan tenderly. "Some girls can't bear a chap to care for anybody but themselves; but you see I *must* look after the old mother and the little chap—there's nobody left but me to earn their bread."

"I wouldn't think much of you, Nathan, if you could leave your own to want. We'll care for them together," said the girl, flushing and smiling; "but, Nathan, are you *sure* it ought to be Thursday fortnight?"

Nathan laughed. "Yes, I'm *sure* it ought to be, Ruth, and the parson says so too; I've had a bit of a chat with him, and he's quite my way of thinking. A nice, sensible, pleasant-spoken chap he is, to be sure. Think of the many times you and me have put off our wedding-day because the

fishing were bad, or your Aunt Ellen couldn't spare you, or something of the sort! Says I to the parson, 'The old mother is but ailing, and it needs a woman down at our place to see to the old lady and straighten things a bit, and Ruth's uncle and aunt will be leaving Lyncombe soon, and then we'd be miles and miles apart. Why shouldn't we earn our living as well together as apart? Wherefore I've had the banns put up, and I'd like to be asked in church!'—'Oh, oh!' says parson, 'have you gone as far as *that*, Nathan? I thought you had come up for my advice. Well, God's blessing on you both; you've belonged to each other a long while now, and my heart is not hard enough to counsel longer separation. I'll marry you whenever the lady is ready!'"

By this time Ruth's face was more like the queen of flowers than the pallid lily, but the shadows were creeping round, and Nathan could not see the beautiful blushes that hid themselves close to his arm as she remarked, "*I* can't help wishing too, Nathan, that Blake were not our landlord. There are some nice little places to be had at the back of the Esplanade."

"Why, my lassie, the old mother would break her heart if we moved out of the old place to which father took her on their wedding-day; I believe every tile and every bit of stone is dear to the old lady's heart; she'd feel so strange in a new home that I believe she would fret herself into her grave."

"I didn't think of that," said Ruth. "We'll just stay on then, Nathan, and not worry about James Blake. He is not so pleasant-spoken as he might be, but he can't really do us any harm; we will pay him regularly every week, and take good care of his property."

"*I* should not like to change my quarters either," said Nathan. "As long as I can remember, I've looked out to the waves and heard them sounding close against our cottage, and it would seem queer to look out on bricks and mortar now. You will get just as fond of the old place as *I* am, lassie, and we'll have Blake's rent ready for him every Monday as punctual as clock-work."

"That we will, Nathan. I can always get plenty of work from the lace shop in Morchester, even if the *fishing* chance to be bad."

"Bless you, Ruth, I get no end of jobs just now," said Nathan, "taking the gentry boating and fishing; and mother has got her bit of garden stuff to sell, and Kit is looking round for a little place out of school-hours; bless you, we'll get along like that there yacht of Mr. Brown-Dawson's, that skims about as if she had wings. I reckon we'll be able to put away a trifle in the Post Office Savings Bank."

"Yes, Nathan; and we'll spare some of our earnings too for God; what can we ever give Him that's enough, when He's been so mindful of you and me?"

Nathan pressed her hand silently; his brave, loving heart was praying that in their little wave-washed home the Lord who trod the sea might never be forgotten.

And Ruth put aside the thought of the vainly proffered, persistently urged addresses of the master of the "Stores," of his contempt for the "common fisherman" she had chosen, and of his parting words that very night: "If you've finally made your choice, Ruth Meadows, you're brewing trouble for the pair of you. You will live to repent the day when you married a penniless fisher."

Care and anxiety fled far from the young couple that summer evening as they rested against the kindly buttress of "Old Sandy," a rock of varied colouring, and watched the stars shine over the sea, and the silvery track of moonlight crossing the waves like angels' footsteps.

* * * * * *

"Thursday fortnight" dawned fair as a bridal morn need be; and in rosebud-sprigged cotton Ruth Meadows became Mrs. Nathan Cleve.

"Uncle Ben" gave the bride away, a nosegay of geranium in his button-hole; and Ruth's aunt set forth a banquet of chicken and salad and plum-pudding, Devonshire junket and home-made wedding-cake, to the happy pair and the gentle, calm-eyed widow, who had weathered life's hardest storm in unshaken faith, and ten-year-old Kit, who had just been taken on as one of the many errand-boys at the flourishing "Stores," to render what help he could out of school-hours.

How proud was Ruth of their little white cottage; of the mother's improved health, tended by loving care; of Kit's remarkable progress at school, and industry with the grocery baskets at early morn and eventide; of the brown-sailed fishing-boat, *The Pride of Lyncombe;* and, above all, of her stalwart sailor-husband—a favourite alike with the fishing population and the visiting "gentry." And was not Nathan Cleve proud of his brown-eyed, busy little wife? It was a sight worth beholding to watch that family coming home from church across the mill-meadows those fair summer Sundays, Nathan giving an arm to mother and wife, and Kit, rejoicing in their treble love, finding cowslips and wild hyacinths wherewith to adorn "Aunt Ruth." It was a sight that galled the pride of the master of the "Stores"; his flourishing business, his prosperity, no longer aroused thankfulness—he gave over his heart to thoughts of jealousy and malice; for life had long gone smoothly with him, and his vanity had been stung to the quick by the fact that a poor boatman had succeeded where *he* had failed.

"See this, Ruth," said Nathan one day, laying a letter before his wife. "This is a notice that our rent is to be raised—that's ill news now the bad weather's coming on. Blake says Shore Cottage is worth more to him than what we're paying, and that he's had a many applications for the little place. To be sure, it's as pretty as a picture; but we've laid out a good bit on it ourselves, and mother's spared no

pains with the bit of garden. Still, as we're only weekly tenants, I suppose we must pay what he asks, or go. I can't think the extra bit of money can matter much to a well-to-do chap like Blake, and he might have let the rent stand as it was, seeing his old father and dad were so friendly."

Ruth thinks to herself that the raised rent means a little personal spite, but she believes in silence rather than in sowing ill will between people, so she only says gently, "Well, dear, I think, for mother's sake, we must try to pay the extra money; for she is poorly just now, and if we spoke of taking her away from her garden she would grieve sorely. I can get up a bit earlier and take in some more work; and I hope I'm not too proud to go shrimping and hunting for cockles whenever I've got the chance, and I might be able to take in a little washing week by week. We shall manage it, Nathan dear; let us try to stay here while mother remains to us."

"Yes, yes, lassie; she won't be left to us for ever. It's little we can do to give her pleasure, after all. We'll say nothing to her about the rent being raised, but I must just put my shoulder a bit harder to the wheel."

Unfortunately, the widow fell ill about this time with a severe attack of rheumatism, and Ruth had to devote so much time and attention to nursing that the lace-work had to be left. The doctor ordered many nourishing dainties as old Mrs. Cleve grew better, and nobody in Lyncombe (unless, perhaps, James Blake) guessed that the Cleves were hard-pressed for money, so that there was no outside help in the way of providing beef-tea and arrowroot and the like.

Blake's collector was good-natured, and cheered the young couple up, when he noticed their pale looks the first Monday that the rent was not ready.

"You can settle next week or the week after, I've no doubt," said he. "You won't run away. If everyone paid as regular as *you*, my work would be easy."

But a sorer trial of faith was to come. Crossing a field one dark evening, Nathan Cleve met with an accident that kept him indoors for weeks. He caught his foot in a hole, and severely sprained his ankle, so that, added to the medical expenses, there came the serious anxiety of loss of money, beneath which the poor fellow chafed and fretted, for each week placed them more and more in their landlord's debt.

"What *are* we to do, Ruth?" he cried out bitterly, looking through the rent-book, and seeing how they were getting behind. "Blake has a spite against me, for all he calls himself a Christian——"

"Hush, dear. It can do no good for us to talk against James Blake, and we are sure to pay him sooner or later. I must try to get a lace-set done when you are off the sick-list; and the doctor thinks you can go to sea again in a week or two now, you know. We'll both just do our best, Nathan, and leave the rest to God. He knows how perplexed we are, and all about your sprained foot and everything. Whatever happens, whatever lies ahead, we will trust in our heavenly Father"—and she knelt down tenderly beside the anxious-eyed invalid—"we won't lose faith in the dear good Lord who has given us to each other."

Nathan's blue eyes were dim as he bent to kiss her. "You put new life, new hope into me, wife; I was forgetting that there's One above knows all about the worry. Why, it were only a few Sundays ago we heard that sermon about the feeding of the multitude, and Him as said, 'Wherewith shall *we* buy bread?' and parson said, 'You see, the Master put *Himself* into the difficulty, so that of itself meant hope and help, and, when you're wondering over life's tangles, don't you leave *Him* out!'"

"Yes," said Ruth; "and we sang that good old hymn—

"'With Christ in the vessel,
I smile at the storm!'"

And just then Blake's collector called, and very reluctantly told them he had been instructed to press for the arrears of rent. Unless all were paid by the first of the following month, the Cleves must consider themselves under notice to quit.

"So we must pay, or turn out, Ruth," said Nathan. "God forgive Blake his hard heart! And may He help us now, for we are brought very low."

Little Kit saw their shadowed faces, and longed to help, but he knew not the nature of the case. Nobody guessed how heavy lay the dread upon them of being turned from the old home by the sea, for even when Nathan was well enough to go fishing, he earned little compared with the amount of the arrears. One dark, threatening Friday night, few of the boats put out, for the wind foretold peril. Cleve, however, put to sea; he understood the tides round Lyncombe, and his debt weighed upon him like a nightmare. Next morning the billows of spray were dashing up as high as the houses, and the winds moaned like a human voice. Young and old came down to the beach, asking anxiously, "Are the boats in sight?" Mr. Brown-Dawson's yacht, the *Triton*, had been out since Friday morning in the bay, and his friends at Lyncombe Manor, including the lady to whom he was betrothed, stayed all the morning on the shore, full of anxiety concerning him.

Ruth was there, with the mother and little Kit. She let the boy stay away from school that day; she whispered to him to ask God to send their sailor back. Ah! what mattered hard work, what mattered money cares, her heart cried out now, if only they were again together—if only in the dark night that brave life had not passed for ever beyond the sound of her voice, beyond her reach?

A dark speck hove in sight, and grew larger and larger. The fishing-boats drew home at last, with torn sails and exhausted crew, telling of tempest and threatening death. Of Cleve's boat

nothing was known, and nothing had been seen of the yacht. Then Ruth uttered no cry, though her soul in its agony spoke the name of Him who walked upon the sea; and the girl who was engaged to Mr. Brown-Dawson conquered her shyness, her timidity with strangers, and came up to Ruth, holding her hand, and speaking in a trembling whisper: "I once read the reminder that the bottom of the sea is just *God's hand*, for He holds the waves in His palm. If they are in God's hand——" and then the two women drew nearer, and looked out to the tossing billows, and could not weep.

So the day wore on, but domestic claims might not be ignored by the fisher's wife. Kit went down to the "Stores" at five o'clock as usual, and came in hungry from his evening errand-going. Ruth got supper for him and for the mother, and advised them to seek their rest. Then she went out again in the darkness, dazed, faint, bewildered. She had almost lost hope. It had strangely become an old familiar sorrow that her husband's face—his voice—were lost to her till the sea should give up its dead, yet the strain of an oft-sung hymn was echoing in her heart—

> "Oh, Christ! whose voice the waters heard,
> And hushed their raging at Thy word!"



"Ruth was there, with the mother and little Kit."—*p.* 904.

—and her tears flowed forth as a prayer to the All-merciful Lord of ocean and land. There was a great crowd towards the other end of the Parade, surging down on the beach. What had they found? What meant those moving, excited figures? A cry went up as they saw her in the dim light of the lanterns, and the young lady from Lyncombe Manor ran up to her and kissed her. It seemed to Ruth then that the kiss meant sympathy, compassion. She knew no more till she opened her eyes in the kitchen at home, and the mother chafed her hands, and Kit triumphantly filled the tea-pot with the water he had boiled, and her wet flaxen hair was pillowed upon Nathan's breast.

Her husband had carried her home—home to hear presently of merciful preservation from death when hope seemed hopeless, of the loss of the *Triton*, and the rescue of the drowning owner and crew by the old *Pride of Lyncombe*.

"I think my boat is done for, wife," said Nathan, with beaming eyes; "but the gentry here cried out they would give me another, and Mr. Brown-Dawson, he have made me take this note. I said it were too much, but his young lady said no money could pay for his life." And Nathan spread out the bank-note before her eyes, and she read upon it "*Fifty pounds!*"

The following day was quiet and golden; it was Sunday, and Nathan and Ruth said to one another, "We will pay our debt to-morrow." But as Nathan was starting off to ring the praiseful chimes, who should come in but James Blake, to tell how he had been smitten to the heart by the prayer of little Kit, alone in the outhouse, amid the treacle and paraffin:—"O God, kinder than all the world, bring my uncle back; don't let Uncle Nathan die. And take away his trouble, for he's worried by something—I don't know what—but Jesus knows. O Jesus, it *isn't* too hard for *Thee* to bring aunt and uncle right out of the worry."

The child's prayer, his trust, had haunted his master's mind; the little fellow was made the instrument of softening that proud, hard heart, and shaming the man out of oppression and revenge.

"Let the rent stand as it was," said Blake, "for the sake of the regard my father had to yours. And—and—I never gave you a wedding present, Cleve. Let bygones be bygones now—you deserved Ruth, and you got her, and I wish you happiness. Take the rent arrears for your wedding present, will you?"

"Thank you, Blake," said Nathan, grasping the proffered hand. "You mean it kindly, but if you don't mind, I'd like to pay up to date, and get our rent-book right. Hearty thanks for your good wishes, and I'm obliged to you for lowering the rent of our cottage again."

"Well, well," muttered Blake, "but I'll give you *something*, all the same. May I send you a chest of tea, Mrs. Cleve, and a couple of prime capons, and a cake for that young shaver? When he's done with schooling, I should like to help that boy along a bit."

Ruth looked up with sweet smiling thankfulness; and Kit knew his prayers in time of trouble were heard and answered, when all went together over the mill-bridge to the ivied church, and joined their voices in the Psalm, "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

MARGARET HAYCRAFT.

OF DESPISING THE CHILDREN.

(A MOTHER'S CONFIDENCES.—III.)

"SO to-night our talk is to be about despising the children. I am anxious to see what you will make of it; all the week I have been puzzling over 'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones,' and can make nothing of it. How *can* a mother despise her child any more than she can forget him? Now, do not imagine that my faith in your beautiful theory as a whole is shaken one bit, but don't you think these words may apply, as we have always been taught to think, to those who are young and weak in the Christian life?"

This is how I opened our third serious talk. I dare say you have wondered not to hear from me sooner, but you do not know how difficult it is to secure even an hour's quiet talk between husband and wife. One Sunday evening, poor baby was ill; the next, I had a nervous headache; the next, the Fletchers came home from church with us, and we had seen so little of them lately that we could not well shake hands at the door. And so it goes on; but we are as determined as ever to secure Sunday evening for serious *definite* talk on matters concerning the bringing up of the children. You will see my difficulty about this 'despising,' knowing how a mother's greatest effort is to make herself think *reasonably* of her children; one so easily gets into the way of thinking them prodigies! By way of answers to my objections, Evan read me the whole of that remarkable passage in the eighteenth of St. Matthew, so full of great sayings about children.

"Your objection, my dear, here, as before, vanishes in the face of 'this little child,' whom Jesus took and set in the midst: a child innocent and sweet of face, most likely, but no more so than the other children playing in the market-place at mimic funerals and weddings. Do you remember Carlyle's saying, that

the man who can see the brightness of a spring day and the face of a little child has no right to call himself miserable? I know a man who is never content until he gets a good view of the face in every baby-carriage he passes: he says a lovely baby face is as refreshing as the first violets of the year."

"What a wise man! But don't you see, Evan, this little child must have been converted? I have heard it suggested that perhaps he belonged to Peter; at any rate, the Lord Himself says, 'these little ones which *believe on Me*.' Now, my little ones know so little and understand so much less about the best things!"

"And don't you think your babes know you and trust in you long before they understand about your being their mother? In the same way, psychologists are agreed that all men are born with what you may call the sense or feleing of God. This appears to be the sort of belief our Lord alludes to, for here, as elsewhere, He speaks of Himself, not as the suffering Son of man, of whom the children could know nothing, but as God, the idea of whom is innate with us all."

"Thank you; that certainly does make this wonderfully full and suggestive passage more securely the children's own property. But what you say does not lessen my difficulty about 'despising:' perhaps, though, our Lord was not speaking to parents?"

'Umph! Parents are rather plentiful, and I should think there would be a few of them present, at any rate; to nobody in the world is the counsel so necessary, for no other people run the same risk of despising children!"

"Oh, Evan, how can you say so? The thing, on the contrary, that I most fear is that we should make too much of them, and think too much of them."

"Look out 'despise' in the dictionary."

"'Despise, to look down upon with contempt; to have a low opinion of; to undervalue.' There, Evan! in the face of that, you cannot say that any natural parent could despise his, much less *her* own child! It is as I say: this was said to people who were not parents."

"Once upon a time—it was on a Sunday, too, as it might be to-day—a family, as it might be ours, was sitting round the table after dinner. A fine boy of two put out his hand to reach a fig, with a half-questioning, half-coaxing eye on his mother. 'No more figs to-day,' said she, with an admiring glance at her bonny boy. But the hand was not drawn back; the curly head was laid on the round shoulders, a Cupid's smile, a Cupid's glance, half mischief, half entreaty, disarmed the mother. 'Who could resist the creature?' said she to her husband. The child watched; no danger-signal warned him off the ground, and another child of man ate—

> "'Of that forbidden fruit whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe!'"

"Oh, Evan, how dreadful! Why didn't you stop me at the time?"

"I'm not sure how far it was my fault, too: we have spoken of this sort of thing in connection with 'offending'—but the same thing may be done with different motives; here, the reason of our neglect was simply that we despised our child. We thought he knew no better, and that because he was so young it didn't matter. He would grow out of all that. In the first place, he knew as well as we that he was *allowed* to do wrong. In the next place, a child *never* grows out of a disobedient habit. Once parents have allowed such a habit to grow, they must pull it up by the roots, at whatever cost. Obedience is the life of the child. Besides, there is a veritable passion for disobedience bound up in the foolishness of a child's heart. Like the vice of the drunkard, let it once get ahead, and the child—for reasons belonging to our human nature which we can't go into to-night—the child, I say, will crave after the delight of small disobediences as the drunkard craves his bottle. 'Do not touch that plant,' you say, and an hour after, when no one is there to see, he steals into the room that he may handle leaves, and flowers, and pot—and then, he goes out—content! It is out of fashion to talk about the 'Fall of Man,' and very much in fashion to speak of children as semi-divine beings, altogether worshipful in the abstract. But this singular desire, which even the infant in arms shows, to resist the law he knows, is worth thinking about in this connection. Well, we foolish parents and unwise have not only allowed our little son to disobey and go scot-free, but we have let loose the appetite for disobedience, a craving which grows with what it feeds on. Are you satisfied that we have despised our child?"

"It is too dreadful to think of! But this is a hard saying. Who can bear it? It would be better never to have been parents at all, for who is to guard against small acts of disobedience?"

"Nay, dear; we need not discuss a question that we have already threshed out. It belongs to the 'Is marriage a failure?' 'Is life worth living?' series, quite foolish in themselves, but straws, all the same, which show which way the stream flows: if people had not begun to suspect that there is more in life and its relationships than they had dreamed of, these questions would not be turning up. Parents we are, and that is the state of life we must fulfil."

"You have given me a lesson to-night that I hope I shall not forget. But you will let me say that to be a parent is a 'fearful joy'? But go on; give me some more examples of 'despising the children;' you know, example goes further than precept, even in helping a dull scholar to learn."

"This struck me the other day. Brown was telling me of a nice young couple, the Frasers, whose first child, not two months old, is their dear delight. For young people, with their way to make in the world like ourselves, the Frasers are prosperous, and live with a good deal of quiet luxury; but the thing that struck Brown was, how little provision they had made for the babe in their scheme of life. The evening he called, the little creature was asleep in his cot in the dining-room; the room was fully lighted, conversation and even music went on without restraint; and all the time, there was the child in the cot—whose sleeping brain was taking vivid, if untutored, cognisance of everything, and weaving the whole into the curious fabric of baby dreams!"



"'Miss Roberts asked to see the children.'"

"What a pity for the poor little thing! But do you think it fair to quote this as an instance of 'despising' the child? Perhaps the parents were not aware of the *preternatural* consciousness—sleeping or waking—of infants: certainly I should never have guessed at it by my unaided wits."

"That may be true; indeed, Brown made some remark which Mrs. Fraser answered with, 'Oh, our boy must get used to these things! Why, how could we live without the piano?' But what I want you to notice is that life was arranged with a view to the convenience of the parents, not the necessities of the child. By the time there are three or four little Frasers, no doubt regular nursery arrangements will be made; but then, it will be still for the comfort of the parents, not for the right ordering of the children's lives. In other words, the little first child, 'the idol of the parents' hearts,' was a secondary consideration—was despised."

"I don't see that you can fairly bring this charge. Don't you think they wanted to have the child with them all the time? Besides, though the Frasers may be able to afford what you call 'nursery arrangements,' think of the countless poor people whose children grow up healthy and happy enough, though they always go to sleep in the 'family room.'"

"Ah! there's the difference. 'T is a case of 'the wind tempered to the shorn lamb.' The Fraser baby was born of parents both gifted with the sensitive artistic temperament; of course the child has an excitable brain. The children born in a cottage home, on the contrary, are commonly stolid enough to be less moved by what passes about them during sleep. And then, as for fondness, why, that's no excuse. Is love for a child to be a reason for hurting it?"

"I see it all! Like the Apostles who each asked, 'Is it I?' on that memorable night, I no longer ask, How can parents despise their children? But how shall we guard ourselves from undervaluing them? It seems at this moment as if all my dealings with ours were in some way 'slighting.' You know Tuesday was my 'day:' Miss Roberts asked to see the children, and while they were in the room, Mrs. Purbeck and two other ladies continued the talk we had been engaged in—about—servants! 'I don't know what the world is coming to! Would you believe it? My cook,' etc., etc. I will not repeat what was said, for I know how you detest the sort of thing. I looked at the children; they did not appear to be taking anything in, but that, as I have often found, proves nothing; months after, they will bring out, in their talk, remarks which they do not appear at the time to have heard."

"Indeed, you are right in supposing a child's unconscious looks to be no guide at all as to what he is taking in. He is unconscious, does not know that he is listening, or what he hears; but nothing said in his presence is lost upon him; what does not come out

in his words will some day bear fruit in his actions. *L'enfant terrible* makes great capital for humorists, but he is not to be despised by parents. Again, in 'Little pitchers have long ears,' the fact that children hear and take note of everything has passed into a proverb; and yet we go on as if they were not there, talking weary small talk of what shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed, until the very groundwork of the child's thought comes to be that life is no more than meat nor the body than raiment; and you may hear small mites of five or six discussing sashes, and 'chocolates,' and parties, with the gravity of their elders. Oh, it is pitiful! 'Set a watch, O Lord, before the door of our lips while *our children* are before us,' may well be the first petition of parents!"

"I sometimes think, too, that we undervalue the children about their lessons. George often says things more thoughtful and original than would occur to me, or to almost any grown-up, and when he comes to his lessons, it is to spell through 'The cat sat on the mat.' No wonder the child yawns and fidgets."

"How can he help it? The whole system is wrong. The child comes to us gloriously endowed; he sees everything, has the most eager curiosity to learn about all he sees, especially about natural objects—the ways of the squirrel, the name and all else about the willow catkins—here is the soil all ready for a scientific training. But we despise the child's desires and gifts, and let him grow up unable to distinguish an elm from a beech—let the time pass by in which he should be learning the name and the ways of every living thing and moving creature to be got at within easy distance from his home, and give him—what, instead? intellectual food that is as apples of Sodom in his mouth; we give him all his knowledge through the medium of words, forgetting how few of these he knows, and give him miserably little of the intercourse with things which should be the bread and milk of his intellectual life. How many wild flowers can George name at sight?"

"Let me see. He knows daisy, buttercup, primrose, bluebell—oh! and dandelion, and perhaps he knows two or three more."

"And how many of our forest trees does he know?"

"I think he knows the oak."

"And how many birds by sight and song?"

"You mean wild birds? I'm not sure he knows the note of any, but by sight he knows the redbreast, and perhaps the sparrow."

"If the law took cognisance of moral and intellectual offence, here are we, a pair of indictable parents! And I take most blame to myself, for a father might take this duty at least on himself. I followed yesterday with much amusement a father and his little daughter of four. 'What is that?' was the child's question, whenever the dialogue flagged. 'That is Victor Street, and that is Brewery Lane leading out of it on your left.' 'That is a surgery, and that is the surgery window.' 'That is the sign of a coal merchant—you know coal?' and so on through a score of names of streets, buildings, and the like, 'you know coal?' being the sole attempt to reach the baby mind. But the little maid was the amusing sight. With all the tact—and may I say coquetry?—of a woman, she perceived that her father was honouring her with much attention, and as for showing that she was bored and cared for none of these things, not she! an ever bright, interested little face waited on his dreariest remarks. Yesterday I thought hard things of that poor man, but to-day I find myself on his level. To think that our child should be in a state of blank ignorance on the very subjects proper for his early training! Then, too, 'Thou hast so done Thy marvellous works that they *ought* to be had in remembrance:' the matter does not lie between us and the child only."

"I see the children have been really wronged about this, but I do not quite see how to help it. I know so few 'country things,' and as for governesses—— Well, poor people like us must train our own children. But how? Indeed, you must help me to know, that I may teach. There are many delightful little books telling what to see and how to see it, which should help. Please look out two or three of the best. Never more shall I ask if it is possible for love to treat its beloved with contempt. I feel as if we had been all the time entertaining princes with the refuse from our table. And I do not feel as if the worst had been touched upon yet; we have spoken in a desultory way of despising children in body and mind, heart and conscience, but don't you think, Evan, there is a deeper danger? May we not undervalue them about spiritual things? I have been studying almost word by word the parts about children in the eighteenth and nineteenth of St. Matthew, and there are many things too deep for me. At any rate, it seems that the children occupy a higher place in God's consideration than in ours.'"



"'What is that?'"



"'Miss Roberts asked to see the children.'"

"What a pity for the poor little thing! But do you think it fair to quote this as an instance of 'despising' the child? Perhaps the parents were not aware of the *preternatural* consciousness—sleeping or waking—of infants: certainly I should never have guessed at it by my unaided wits."

"That may be true; indeed, Brown made some remark which Mrs. Fraser answered with, 'Oh, our boy must get used to these things! Why, how could we live without the piano?' But what I want you to notice is that life was arranged with a view to the convenience of the parents, not the necessities of the child. By the time there are three or four little Frasers, no doubt regular nursery arrangements will be made; but then, it will be still for the comfort of the parents, not for the right ordering of the children's lives. In other words, the little first child, 'the idol of the parents' hearts,' was a secondary consideration—was despised."

"I don't see that you can fairly bring this charge. Don't you think they wanted to have the child with them all the time? Besides, though the Frasers may be able to afford what you call 'nursery arrangements,' think of the countless poor people whose children grow up healthy and happy enough, though they always go to sleep in the 'family room.'"

"Ah! there's the difference. 'T is a case of 'the wind tempered to the shorn lamb.' The Fraser baby was born of parents both gifted with the sensitive artistic temperament; of course the child has an excitable brain. The children born in a cottage home, on the contrary, are commonly stolid enough to be less moved by what passes about them during sleep. And then, as for fondness, why, that's no excuse. Is love for a child to be a reason for hurting it?"

"I see it all! Like the Apostles who each asked, 'Is it I?' on that memorable night, I no longer ask, How can parents despise their children? But how shall we guard ourselves from undervaluing them? It seems at this moment as if all my dealings with ours were in some way 'slighting.' You know Tuesday was my 'day:' Miss Roberts asked to see the children, and while they were in the room, Mrs. Purbeck and two other ladies continued the talk we had been engaged in—about—servants! 'I don't know what the world is coming to! Would you believe it? My cook,' etc., etc. I will not repeat what was said, for I know how you detest the sort of thing. I looked at the children; they did not appear to be taking anything in, but that, as I have often found, proves nothing; months after, they will bring out, in their talk, remarks which they do not appear at the time to have heard."

"Indeed, you are right in supposing a child's unconscious looks to be no guide at all as to what he is taking in. He is unconscious, does not know that he is listening, or what he hears; but nothing said in his presence is lost upon him; what does not come out

in his words will some day bear fruit in his actions. *L'enfant terrible* makes great capital for humorists, but he is not to be despised by parents. Again, in 'Little pitchers have long ears,' the fact that children hear and take note of everything has passed into a proverb; and yet we go on as if they were not there, talking weary small talk of what shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed, until the very groundwork of the child's thought comes to be that life is no more than meat nor the body than raiment; and you may hear small mites of five or six discussing sashes, and 'chocolates,' and parties, with the gravity of their elders. Oh, it is pitiful! 'Set a watch, O Lord, before the door of our lips while *our children* are before us,' may well be the first petition of parents!"

"I sometimes think, too, that we undervalue the children about their lessons. George often says things more thoughtful and original than would occur to me, or to almost any grown-up, and when he comes to his lessons, it is to spell through 'The cat sat on the mat.' No wonder the child yawns and fidgets."

"How can he help it? The whole system is wrong. The child comes to us gloriously endowed; he sees everything, has the most eager curiosity to learn about all he sees, especially about natural objects—the ways of the squirrel, the name and all else about the willow catkins—here is the soil all ready for a scientific training. But we despise the child's desires and gifts, and let him grow up unable to distinguish an elm from a beech—let the time pass by in which he should be learning the name and the ways of every living thing and moving creature to be got at within easy distance from his home, and give him—what, instead? intellectual food that is as apples of Sodom in his mouth; we give him all his knowledge through the medium of words, forgetting how few of these he knows, and give him miserably little of the intercourse with things which should be the bread and milk of his intellectual life. How many wild flowers can George name at sight?"

"Let me see. He knows daisy, buttercup, primrose, bluebell—oh! and dandelion, and perhaps he knows two or three more."

"And how many of our forest trees does he know?"

"I think he knows the oak."

"And how many birds by sight and song?"

"You mean wild birds? I'm not sure he knows the note of any, but by sight he knows the redbreast, and perhaps the sparrow."

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"'What is that?'"

"We do, truly, think too little of the estimation in which Our Father holds the children. Let us be careful how we allow light speculations to be aired before them, or how Divine service is discussed as if it were a weariness to the flesh—the sermon too long, the singing too slow—all of it a thing to yawn over, until Mrs. Edwards's new bonnet, or poor Mr. Hinchcot's threadbare coat, gives zest to the talk. Again, 'grace' must be said slowly and reverently, without any poising of carving-knives and table-spoons until the 'functions' shall be over. And once more, family prayer and private prayer, the children's and ours, should be occasions of reverent joy, not to be hurried over with indecent haste. These 'outworks' of the Divine life are all we can touch upon now."

NO NIGHT THERE!

BY THE REV. WILLIAM BURNET, M.A.

THERE is nothing about which men are so inquisitive and yet know so little as the nature of the future life. The Bible, our only source of information on the subject, never condescends to gratify idle curiosity about it, whilst it affords amply sufficient light to guide, stimulate, and encourage us. Indeed, the silence of Holy Scripture in this matter is a strong evidence of its truth. Its descriptions of Heaven are for the most part negative, and we are told what it is not rather than what it is. The closing chapters of the Apocalypse are in a measure an exception to this rule; but how far their glowing imagery is to be understood literally cannot with certainty be determined. One thing is very clear—that Heaven is not a mere abstract condition, but an actual place. In whatever part of the universe it is situated, it does exist somewhere.

There is much truth simply but strikingly expressed in the answer of a poor blind boy, that "Heaven is where God is." Still, the risen saints will be clothed upon with spiritual bodies, and whatever a spiritual body may be, and to whatever conditions it may be subject, it would seem to require a local habitation. In some bright region of space there is the Father's House of many mansions, of which Jesus spoke, and where He is gone to prepare a place for His people. It is the same as the Holy City, New Jerusalem, which St. John saw coming down from God out of Heaven, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Both these familiar images imply the thought of social intercourse of purest, noblest, and most enduring kind. The members of the great family of God are now widely sundered by time and space and circumstances, unknown or misunderstood by each other; but there they shall be for ever united in closest and sweetest communion in the presence of their Divine Saviour. Do we ask, What shall be the condition and the nature of their bliss? One most short but suggestive sentence sheds a flood of light upon the question: "There shall be no night there." There is night here, and we know well what it is. It is to us the expressive emblem of ignorance, sin, insensibility, weakness, sorrow; and by the absence of night from Heaven is evidently meant a state of being from which all these forms of evil shall have finally passed away.

Night is opposed to knowledge. If it were always night, we should know but little of either the material or the social world. Dependent on the faint, fitful radiance of the moon and stars, or the feeble aid of artificial luminaries, we should make few or no discoveries. Progress of every kind would be impossible. Such is our present knowledge, at best, compared with that which the distinct and ever increasing light of eternity will supply.

Very wonderful are the achievements of modern science, and yet those most deeply acquainted with them are the most painfully sensible of their incompleteness. It can tell us much about laws and phenomena—molecules, motion and inertia—attraction, heat, electricity—development, heredity, and the like; but the innermost region of truth remains almost unknown.

The origin of life, the nature of mind and will as distinct from matter, the source from which matter itself is derived, are problems still unsolved. After all the boasted progress of our age, the most profound students of nature may still adopt the confession of Sir Isaac Newton, the prince of Christian philosophers, when, towards the end of his life, he said—"I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I seem only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lies all undiscovered before me."

How imperfectly, too, do we understand the appointments of Divine Providence. "God's way is often in the sea, His paths in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known." Even the Bible, although it so clearly reveals the way of peace and the path of duty, contains deep mysteries, which soar immeasurably above our reason as do the mighty cloud-capt Himalayas above the torrid plains of India. But it shall not always be thus. The Celestial City, as St. John beheld it in vision, "had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Admitted into the immediate presence of the all-wise God, our Saviour, the Author

of all being, in His light we shall see light, and be able to read, with intuitive certainty, truths which the wisest mortals now can only dimly guess at. In the all-pervading radiance of our Father's House, we shall discern the connection between all the steps of the devious way by which we shall have reached it. Beholding face to face our glorified Redeemer, we shall feel and know, as we can never realise now, that love of Christ that passeth knowledge.

Again, the present is the night of sin. The vicious and violent wait for the darkness to carry out their evil purposes, thinking that no eye shall see them, and forgetful of the one Eye that never slumbereth nor sleepeth. Men encourage themselves in evil, and say, "He hideth away His face and will never see it." Sin poisons the very air we breathe, permeates society, defiles and darkens the Church of God, and struggles for the mastery in even the regenerate believer. But There is no night There. Into the City of Light "there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." "Here," as it has been well said, "we are in the gloomy crypt amidst humiliating marks of sin and sorrow; there we shall worship the Lord in the cathedral aisles of light and love."

At the same time, night is a wise and gracious provision for human weakness. Men need repose, and our loving Father draws the curtains, puts out the world's great lamp, and bids His children sleep. It is well that they should sleep. Without periodical refreshment of body and mind, the powers of the strongest would be soon exhausted. "It is vain," sang the Psalmist, "for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows, for so He giveth His beloved sleep." So it must be now; but there is no night there, for there will be no need of rest. "They serve Him day and night in His Temple!" Inexhaustible energy will be one of the most delightful elements in the future condition of God's faithful servants. To the earnest thinker or worker it is no small trial to find his efforts curtailed by failure of strength; but when the frail tent in which he dwells shall give place to a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and that which was sown in weakness shall be raised in power, he shall be endued with perpetual youth. The children of the Resurrection shall be equal to the angels, who excel in strength. It is the rest of God that remaineth for His people, and, as He works continually and yet fainteth not, neither is weary, so shall it be with them. When Arnauld, the Port Royal divine, had invited one of his brethren to assist him in a new work, and the latter had declined, saying, "We are now old; is it not time to rest?"—"Rest!" exclaimed Arnauld, "have we not all eternity to rest in?" It was a beautiful reply, yet the rest which he anticipated, and has since entered, is not a state of dreamy inaction, but one of unwearied activity.

On the other hand, if the night of repose will be no longer needful, the night of sorrow will also be over. Grief often lies most heavily on the desolate heart in the hours of darkness and solitude, whereas the advent of day, with its fresh interests and occupations, chases away the gloom, and allays, if it do not remove, the pain. So true is it that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Still, the relief is only transient, for, so long as sin remains in this fallen world, fresh causes of trouble will and must spring up from time to time. Had man never sinned, he would never have wept, even if he had had the power to weep. But when the curse shall at length be removed, and the Tabernacle of God shall be with men, then shall come to pass that exquisitely sweet saying that is written, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

Can we doubt, then, that the gracious Father who will one day so tenderly wipe the last traces of weeping from every face, will never cause His children a needless tear? The sorrows which now call forth tears must be wisely and mercifully permitted for the correction of their faults, and the refinement of their character. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." "God's House," wrote Adams in his "Private Thoughts," "is a hospital at one end, and a palace at the other. In the hospital are Christ's members upon earth conflicting with various diseases and confined to a strict regimen of His appointing. What sort of a patient must he be who would be sorry to know that the hour is come for his dismissal from the hospital, and to see the doors wide open for his admission to the King's Presence?"

In that glorious Palace there shall be no night; no more sick-beds, no aching hearts, no open graves, no desolate homes, no partings from those we love, no hospitals, no prisons. These and all the former things will have passed away. In their stead there shall be the bliss of eternal reunion, unfailing health, unbroken friendship, enduring riches, fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

"When the faded flower shall freshen,
Freshen nevermore to fade:
When the shaded sky shall brighten,
Brighten nevermore to shade:
When the sun-blaze never scorches,
When the star-beams cease to chill;
When no tempest stirs the echoes
Of the wood, or vale, or hill:
When the morn shall wake in gladness,
And the noon the joy prolong:
When the daylight dies in fragrance,
'Midst the burst of holy song;
Brothers, we shall meet and rest
'Mid the holy and the blest!"

Be it ours, then, to be ever pressing through the darkness of this world's night towards the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. Even now are believers light in the Lord. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand, and then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."



May's Birthday.

TO-day eleven years ago
You—black-haired May—were born
You and a thousand, high and low,
This bright October morn.

And someone lulled you as you lay,
With cradle-chant of love,
Like waters singing on their way,
Or croon of hiding dove.

You knew not of the baby throng
Wherewith you journeyed hither.
You have forgot the flying-song
You sang in joy together.

The shining meteors shot in flame
Across your pathway proud;
A happy company you came,
Wingéd from cloud to cloud.

On earth you parted: each did kiss
Each little comrade mouth.
Some came to far lands; some to this;
To East and North and South.

Some were rich babies: many a page
Followed their steps, with awe
Quite disproportioned to the age
Of those whose lisp was law.

Some came to poor homes; I know well
Hunger and care and cold
Have taught some so, you scarce could tell
They were eleven years old.

Some have gone back with flagging feet,
Nor met the weary noon.
Ah, life to some was not so sweet
That it should end so soon!

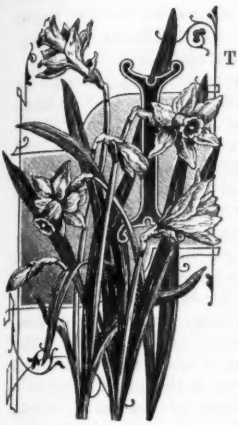
But yet, remember, clear and true
O'er all your homes, though far,
In all the lands, on each of you
Looks down the same Birth-Star.

And so I want you, when you pray,
To look up into heaven
And think of all the folk to-day
That are to-day eleven.

F. H. TEENCH.



A WORD ON WINNING UNAWARES.



T was the time of the leaping forth of the waters of the earth. A long summer drought that had shrivelled to a silver thread many a fair stream had ended months ago, and the snows and rains of winter and the mists upon the mountains had replenished every hidden reservoir. And one small tarn amongst bare northern hills was conscious — even to discontent—of its steady increase of depth and width. How narrow were its bounds! A little more, and they must be overpassed, and then what a miserable fate to be sucked in by the dry, ever-greedy earth as the raindrops were! Even this was not the whole of the loch's repining. The wind had whispered to it the secret of the sea, and the longing to share in the sea's wild freedom became more real and passionate with every mischievous hint of the storm-blast. One day the waters of the lakelet reached a dip in the southern marge, from which, earlier than this in other seasons, a river had begun to debouch, and a small trickling stream took its way in the old channel down the slope.

"This is glorious! I am off at last—to the sea, to the sea!" sang the tiny rill.

"Not you; I know better than that," growled an ill-natured boulder, by whose side it flashed in the sunlight; "you are swallowed up lower down by a gaping chasm in the mountain. I was brought from there by a freak of one of those strange creatures called men. He used me to sit upon while he caught fish with a stick and a string. Don't you fancy you are ever likely to get to the sea, whatever the wind may have told you."

The little brook was quite discouraged. It lost its last remnants of hope when the event befell exactly as the boulder had said, and with a shiver it found itself plunging into a dismal gulf, and whirling, boiling, frothing, in its anger and pain, from rock to rock, in the semi-darkness of an obscure and precipitous gorge. It seemed to have forsaken home only to be shattered into futile spray.

But the base of the mountain was reached, and here was another and a deeper channel already prepared. And beyond—what could the gleam as of burnished silver be? What was this wide expanse beneath the azure heavens? Ah! the promise of the wind was fulfilled. The stream had won its way to the sea unawares.

Two stones lay on a lapidary's table. They were brothers, though one knew not the fact. How was it possible for the rough, unsightly lump to imagine that it had anything in common—except (by accident) situation—with the sparkling gem it almost touched?

The rough diamond sighed, and with the courage of personal despair spoke—

"If I could shine like you for just one day, I think I would be content, and never trouble what happened afterwards; but that is quite out of the question. Ugh! How ugly I am!"

Was it that a bright sunbeam kissed at that instant the polished jewel, or was it that a smile trickled over all its brilliant facets? It was not a haughty gem. It had suffered in its season too much for that. It made grave and enigmatical reply—

"Who knows? You may surpass me yet."

"Never!"

And the thing did seem impossible. But the half-amused, half-sympathising friend had no opportunity to explain, for the lapidary had come back, and his hand speedily lifted the uncut stone out of sight and hearing of its fellow.

To what keen, racking agony was not the rough diamond subjected! How the wheel flew! How all the universe became a whirring chaos! A bitter punishment surely for being plain—as if want of beauty was a fault the stone might itself have mended, yet had refrained! And how prolonged the terrible, excruciating ordeal!

Yes; but when next the two gems met, as they did ere long, the reassurance which had once been so emphatically refused was entirely justified.

"You are indeed a more flawless gem than myself," said the unenvious companion—"it is our master's verdict."

Richest beauty had been won unawares—by submission.

Simple allegories these, but perhaps adequate for the purpose which has led to their introduction here. They present a partial interpretation of what is meant by the hard saying that very many of life's most precious gains are won unawares, even sometimes unwillingly. To see that it is so, we have but to scan narrowly the old, wonderful, word-defying phantasmagoria. Or, perhaps, assurance of the truth is to be gleaned at first-hand from a survey of our personal experience. The youth enters for the race with sturdy resolve and high anticipation. Defeat is deleted from his dictionary. He will have a career. Yes, but it is toilsome work winning. The glad glow soon fades from the face, lines of care are stealthily chiselled across the brow, a weary question begins to dominate the eyes. Already the day is at noon, and no startling triumph is achieved. But the feet are faithful to the course still. Not yet is victory yielded to opponents as—had it but been known in time—a foregone conclusion. And the shadows creep up the dial in their awful, sinister fashion, and the elasticity is gone from the footfall, the buoyancy from the limbs. The taxed powers flag, and the contest is over.

Has it been wholly in vain? A thousand times no! It is not more strange than true that a real and noble triumph has been once again unwittingly won.

Men mix daily in life's turmoil, conscious only of doubt, and danger, and strife. They are summoned there by duty, and they go as Arthur went to his "dim, weird battle of the west"; they struggle as did he in a confused *mêlée*, and fall, not seldom, as he fell. But their strength is not therefore wasted and their valour misapplied. If it were, existence would indeed be a hopeless riddle. Theirs is a heritage of triumph, though they obtain it unawares.

Further, those successes which strike the imagination and extort the praise of the world at large are frequently found when but dubiously expected. If biography abounds with examples stimulating to young ambition of men who have risen through the exercise of indomitable perseverance, reversing all odds of a forbidding campaign, it also supplies instances of the intervention at the nick of time of apparently happy accident. The familiar saying, that when the hour strikes the man is waiting, is, in a very legitimate sense, a commentary upon the fact. An interesting case in point is that of Sir Joseph Paxton, the architect of the Crystal Palace. As all the world knows, Paxton was a gardener in the employ of the Duke of Devonshire. For many a year he had toiled patiently on in pursuit of knowledge and at the task of self-culture. It is his true title to honour that he was ready when a door abruptly opened which ushered him in to fame and fortune. The committee of the great Exhibition of 1851, the first of the World's Shows, advertised for designs of a suitable edifice. Paxton sent in his unique plan, and distanced all rivalry. At a bound he was in the front rank of a great profession. But the dramatic swiftness and fulness of the recompense for laborious days and thoughtful nights can scarcely have lacked the element of surprise.

Another example is that of Patrick Henry, one of the most noteworthy American statesmen of the Revolutionary era, and sought as one of his Secretaries of State by George Washington. There was little of the glamour of promise about the early years of Patrick Henry. It was after repeated failures in commerce that, as a sort of forlorn hope, he turned to law, and qualified as an advocate. And here, again, for a season he seemed a failure. He belonged to the dispirited order of briefless barristers, until Mistress Opportunity flitted by, and Henry seized the capricious maid. In the courts of his native Virginia an intricate and anxious suit, affecting both the legal income of the clergy and underlying questions of colonial rights, came up for trial. The counsel for the defence abandoned their client's cause. In extremity, Patrick Henry was engaged. The test hour had arrived, and he was equal to its needs. With logical argument and irresistible eloquence he pleaded for what in effect was the emancipation of America from the control of the English Crown. Shoulder-high the advocate was borne out of the humble Virginia court-house when his duties were over. And great as must have been his gratification when the jury awarded him the verdict, it is most unlikely that he divined at once all that had hinged upon his effort, for from that day Henry was a prominent and trusted popular leader.

There have been cases in which literary renown has been won unawares. In affirming this, such instances as those of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Mr. Black's "Daughter of Heth," and Mr. Rider Haggard's "King Solomon's Mines," examples of astonishing success achieved at a stroke, are not in mind. But Sir Walter Scott kept "Waverley" by him in manuscript for nine years, fearing that by its publication it might put in peril the reputation which was already his in virtue of his poems. It is most unlikely that Master Samuel Pepys dreamed of the immortality his "Diary" was to give him. Miss Ferrier, the writer of the striking stories, "The Inheritance" and "Destiny," has herself stated that her first work was "begun at the urgent desire of a friend, and with the promise of assistance, which, however, failed long before the end of the first volume. The work was thrown aside, and resumed some years after. It afforded occupation and amusement for idle and solitary hours, and was published in the belief that the author's name would never be guessed at, or the work heard of beyond a very limited sphere." As a final and recent instance, Professor Henry Drummond and his widely circulated "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" may be quoted. The professor has told his readers that that fascinating book "was never formally written. It came into being almost by chance."

To return. It is advantageous to glance occasionally at the less considered side of a familiar theme, to realise that the streamlet does sometimes reach its desired goal in the sunlit ocean of success when expectation of such an issue is slender indeed—that the jewel wins its warrant of praise sometimes by a troubled and baffling experience. There is teaching in these truths. Are we young and on the eager lookout for that

> "tide in the affairs of men,
> Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune?"

It should be ours to prepare by an all-round self-culture to make the very best practical use of the opportunity we desire. Has victory in some sphere of human enterprise come to us unawares? Let us not lose, in that winning of outward ease, honour, or riches, the precious inward grace of humility. And has it been otherwise with us? have we struggled long and gallantly towards some goal early chosen as the objective of our life-race? and is it a disagreeable fact that to this very day and hour we have only failure for a record? Still let us decline to lose hope. We may usefully remember that in God's good Providence there is such a thing as finding when not expecting, when we have given over expecting; and none may speak of misspent endeavours when these have been devoted to worthy ends. They have at least formed and fashioned the one true and inestimable gem, character.

FELIX FERRY.

THE STORY OF TWO LITTLE BROTHERS.

THERE was a kind of family likeness between them, though no one was ever heard to say they had a single feature in common. Still, there *was* that family likeness: they were short and stout (in comparison with the rest of their fellows), one of them being considerably stouter than the other. They were hardly twins, though they were born very much at the same time. Their names, which will be familiar to you all, were "If" and "But." We are told by the immortal Bard of Avon that there is next to nothing in a name, but there is a great deal in the names of our little friends: so much, indeed, that they sometimes alter for good or evil the whole complexion of a human life. The wife, waiting to hear from her husband, who has gone before her to some far-off land, there to make a new home for her and the children, says, "Oh, to-morrow will be a joyful day *if* it bring me that long-expected letter!" and presently she adds, "I know it is not right to give way to feelings of despondency, *but* how can I help it, with my dear one so far away, and silent so long?"

I do not mean to charge our "brothers" with being busybodies; and yet it must be admitted that they are continually mixing themselves up with other people's business, and interfering in a way that is much to be deplored. Look at this poor collier's wife going into that grocer's shop with a basket on her arm. Look at her wasted form and pallid face. Mark the look of anxious care that clouds her eyes. You would say that the hardest heart would feel for her, and none would do her injury; and yet our "brothers" are going to wound her. "*If*," she says, speaking to the master of the shop, "if you will trust me one more week, Jim will be sure to get work somewhere, and then I will pay." And the master answers, "I trusted you last week and the week before, *but* I cannot go on doing it. You must manage some other way."

Sometimes our friends are mischief-makers pure and simple, and part loving hearts, never to be re-united here. Mark that couple yonder under the trees. They are evidently speaking in anger—let us listen.

He: "Then I tell you plainly that *if* you will not do as I wish, we must part."

She: "Please yourself! Once I promised to be your wife, *but* now I withdraw that promise. Good-bye!" [Shame on you, my brothers!] Pray do not take a dislike to our brothers. If they appear to be spiteful, it is in appearance only, for in reality they are the most peaceful creatures on earth. Yet for all this, many a man suffers continual calamity through the persistent interference of one or other of them. The fact is they cannot very well help themselves. Look at that man walking down the street in front of you—the one with the stoop in his shoulders and a general tired look about his face. He began life with every appearance of success, and everyone thought his barque was bound upon a prosperous voyage. Friends grew and multiplied, business increased by rapid strides; *but*, just at the time when it needed all the energy of which the man was capable, he began to take things easily, and to let matters go pretty much their own way. Then of course things got more or less tied up into a kind of moral knot, which took a lot of untying (as such knots always do), and he never quite regained his old position of prosperity. So now, in his declining years, he is still obliged to keep his shoulder to the wheel; and every day, as the work becomes more burdensome, he says to himself, "Ah! *if* I had *but* stuck to business a little closer then—*if* I had *but* put away from me for a few years idleness and folly, what a happy and peaceful old age I might have had!"

But do not for a moment suppose that these little creatures, whose story I am trying to tell, are always in some sort of mischief. They often bring consolation to wounded hearts. When Jones Junior laid himself out for that scholarship at the grammar-school, and was beaten only by the senior boy of the school, he found great consolation in saying, "*If* Brown hadn't been here I should have won the scholarship." So, too, he who makes a failure of his life may find a gruesome solace in the thought that *if* it had not been for this circumstance or that, he had not found the word "failure" written across his life.

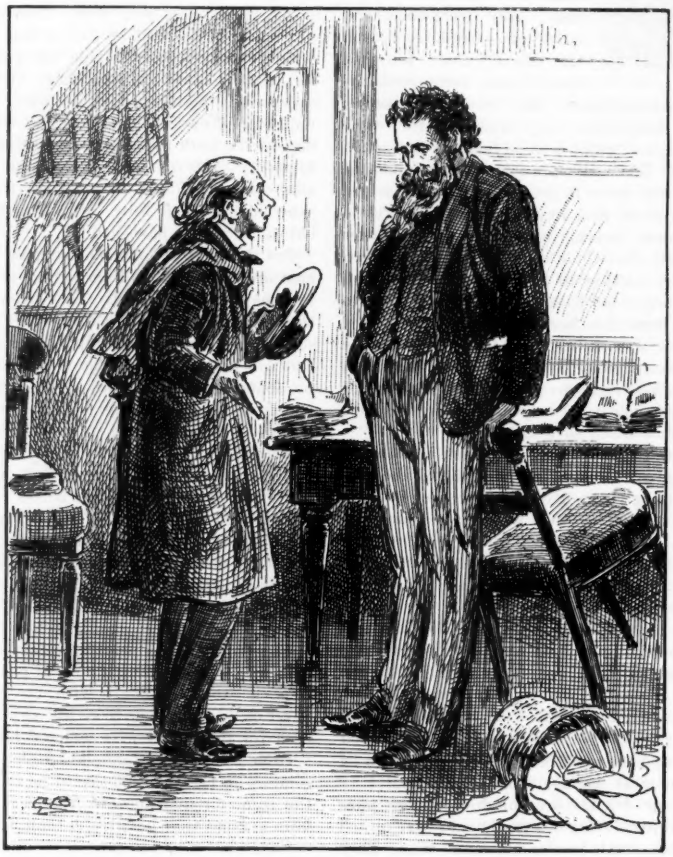
Then, again, our brothers play an important part in those ready-made excuses under cover of which we evade our duties or palliate our faults. "How much money I should give away," says the niggard, "*if* I were only as rich as Robinson." The thief says, "I should have been an honest man *if* I had been in the same circumstances as my neighbour next door." And the man who is undergoing a term of penal servitude for forgery excuses himself with the thought that he never could have come to so bad an end *if* it had not been for the friend who tempted him into sin.

Even poor little Jeremiah Jinks, the poet, takes comfort in the thought that *if* he had been placed in the same circumstances as Tennyson, he would have been as great as, if not greater than, Tennyson himself!

Nay, what would become of us all *if* we could not find some palliating reason for our numerous slips and failings? How could we pass through life if it were not for the qualifying property of our "ifs" and "buts?"

Sometimes, I regret to say, our little brothers are made to play a very base and ignominious part. None of us are exempt from the storms of life, and none of us can be certain of the moment when the storm may break over our heads. And whenever the storm *does* come, we fly at once for succour to our nearest and dearest friend, believing (and it is a beautiful belief) that friendship can still almost every storm and soothe almost every sorrow. That was the case with little Jinks. He made the mistake, common to poets, of falling in love, and the falling in love was but the

prelude to the falling into difficulties. When the storm burst on him he hurried at once to his bosom friend Binks for the loan of a five-pound note. But Binks replied, "Awfully sorry, my dear fellow—would do it gladly *if* I could, *but* the fact is I am at present in dreadfully low water—can hardly keep my own head up, I assure you—and therefore," etc., etc.



JINKS AND BINKS.

Then sorrow-laden Jinks, with the image of the broker's man sitting upon him like a nightmare, tries another friend, and that "friend" gives him the same reply in almost identical words.

[I believe that people of this kind keep a stereotyped answer for all such applications, and as it is issued by the same printing-office (the great firm of Self and Co.), the words are practically identical. Otherwise, how can you account for the similarity of expressions, such as, "Awfully sorry," "Would do it gladly," "Low water myself," etc.?] And then Jinks, with his heart nearly breaking in his sorrowful but unmanly little bosom, makes application as a *dernier ressort* to a man of whom he knows very little, and who was never regarded as a "friend." And this man says to himself, "*If* I do this I shall have to do without a new ulster this winter, and the old one is nearly worn out. *But* never mind! It is of more consequence for him to have a roof to his head than for me to have a coat to my back!" Then, aloud, he says, "It would have been better *if* you had come to me sooner, and not have let matters drift into so much troubled water; *but* better late than never!"

And little Jinks goes home with a lighter heart than he has had for many a day, and he writes a sonnet in praise of his friend, which sonnet I would append here for your perusal *if* I thought you would like to read it, *but* . . ."

J. T. BURTON WOLLASTON.

"THE MAN SENT BEFORE."

A SERMON FOR HARVEST.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE 'I WILLS' OF THE PSALMS," ETC.

"Moreover He called for a famine upon the land: He brake the whole staff of bread. He sent a man before them."—PSALM cv. 16, 17. (Coverdale's version—"He had sent," etc.)



IT is now many a long year since that wonderful harvest in the land of Egypt, when for seven years—one following the other — the earth brought forth by handfuls. Thousands of harvests have been reaped since then from this selfsame ground, and the generations whom they fed have passed away; but the "He" of our text, "the Lord of all harvests," is living still, calling, chastening, delivering, as He did of old. For those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, He is working not only in the bounties of providence, but in the still greater bounties of grace. As then, so now, He called for famine; and He sends a man.

This passage seems to me to bring us some teachings which may be of immense importance to us in our daily life; for, underlying the bare statements of the "calling for the famine," and the "breaking of the bread-staff," and the "sending of the man," we can trace God in action in a manner highly helpful to ourselves. For as He was, so is He now, the same in the principle of His dealings yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

Let us gather up to-day some of these teachings for our own daily need.

One thing that we learn here is, God's remembrance of the particular in the midst of the general—His not confounding—His not allowing the vastness of any transaction to overwhelm smaller interests with the care of which He has charged Himself; and concerning which, there are deep intentions in His mind.

Jacob and his family are a few poor wandering shepherds, are but little in comparison with the whole kingdom of Egypt; but when the Lord visited Egypt, He remembered Jacob. God's *pre*vision and God's *pro*vision befriend Jacob. He looked at what was coming with reference to him, and He provided that he should not want. The *pre*vision was necessary to the *pro*vision; and Jacob had the benefit of them both.

Jacob could not see far before him; he could not tell that a famine was coming, and if one did come, how he could provide against it; but what he could not do, God could do, and did; and God has often "done," and "will do," over and over again.

If you know God, stay yourselves on that. God knew what was about to come many years beforehand; God had arranged for it. He knows about your future in years to come; and He is not passive—He acts —*pre*vision and *pro*vision go together for His people.

The providence that went before Jacob and his family was invisible to them. God "sent a man before them;" and they knew it not.

A man had gone forth from the family under circumstances of mystery to one, and of shame and guilt to many; but as far as God was concerned, he was "a *sent* man." Invisible, silent, thoughtful, long-continued providences and provisions—they were wonderful. Long, long before he was wanted to act, but not longer than was necessary, God sent the delivering man that he might be ready when the moment that he was wanted came.

A great darkness is coming, and a man is sent to get ready for it; they were to go into a strange land, and a man is sent to prepare the way for them, and even to make them welcome there.

Let us not say that there are not any blessed providences ahead of us, because we cannot see them.

There may be temporary dark providences. "He called for a famine on the land," but there will be help for the people; "He sent a man before them."

I can testify to the truth of this. I have more than once gone into the lean places, but before me I found "the man." God grant us grace to believe in providences that we cannot see, to believe in their possibility, to believe that He has acted, though nothing meet our eye. It is hard—it is very hard—let those who have been in trial, even to extremities, testify to this; but we must try to learn what these things are meant to teach us. There are providences sent on, working for God's people even now, though they know nothing about them.

And these providences are sometimes very unlikely. "He sent a man before them." And who is the man? An ill-treated, half-murdered youth, who could not even save himself from being put into a pit, but who was made by God's own providences, and in God's own way, all that he required.

And here it will be interesting to note that the word used in this place in the Hebrew ("ish") to denote a man, means a "*noble man*."

In Psalm xlix. 2, you have men spoken of both high and low. The low or base man is described by the word "adam," so called from "adamah," the earth; the high or noble man is described by the word "ish," which implies heat, valour, nobility, dignity; and it is an "ish," a nobleman in God's estimation, that is sent forth before Jacob and his children, that they might be fed in the days of dearth.

The poor, half-murdered lad in the eyes of men! a nobleman of God! Ah yes, what we lightly esteem as poor, and weak, and miserable, wears a different aspect in His sight. Things and people are really as He sees them and makes them, and He can make the weakest noble in Himself, and noble for His work.

And what is that man sent for? With the *highest* possible design—to preserve alive the chosen seed, the infant Church, the line of the Lord's descent, the possible nation of the Jews. Yes! to fulfil God's great aim. And that is the provision that God makes for you. He has high designs in view; yes, the highest *for* you; and perhaps the highest *through* you too. Who can tell how much God is going to effect through the instrumentality of even the humblest Sunday-school teacher amongst us here to-day—what harvests that man is destined to reap, what souls he is destined to save alive?

But observe the "had."* He *had* sent a man before them. The expression leads us to think of God's far-back thought, of providential care and provision before the evil came. The messenger of mercy had sped forth, before the decree of famine came. Time is allowed him to go through all the processes by which he is to be fitted for being a helper; there must be no hurry in any dealings of God. "He had sent."

And it is all His own doings—"He." Man might have thought this, or that, a good thing to do; with God it is *done!*

When we are thinking we shall be overwhelmed, He has already made provision. We have confined ourselves to our own thoughts about ourselves; we forget that He has thought of us independently of ourselves at all. What a tower of strength it would be to us if we thought of God's "thinkings"—if we could say with the Psalmist elsewhere, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul."

And of all that God has been doing and preparing men have no knowledge. No consultation has been held with them. With them there is nothing but evil. God could not work with them. "He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity;" His word is, "Away from Me, ye workers of iniquity." He giveth no account of His matters;" they went down into Egypt not knowing that God in His thoughts and actions had been there before them, and that His representative on their behalf was there even then.

And it is so now. We don't know what preparations God has made, or is making to-day, to help us in a future trouble—a trouble for which perhaps He Himself will call. It was He who called for a famine on the land. It was He who brake the whole staff of bread, and it was He who "sent the man." We very often will not believe in what we do not actually know. God's dealings have to unfold themselves, and to come out—there is no need that we should have knowledge of them before the time. Even if we tried to know them, it is not His will that we should. His "way is in the sea, and His path in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known." "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." What we are to try and do is to say, "God is acting, always acting for us, with dealings which go before us in life—ever so far before; and which follow us in life—ever so far off sometimes; it may be in discipline, but, if we will have it so, evermore in grace.

But we must have a harvest thought to-day.

Well! what will God do for these hunger-stricken people through the instrumentality of the very one they have tried to destroy—that *a*based, but never *de*based man?

Jacob and all his people, though they had sowed nought, came into the harvests of seven years. Little did they know how much they would want! But God knew it, and God had provided for it. God had provided something for them, entirely above their expectations, but not above their need. There were to be seven years of famine, and He had made preparation for them all. We often limit God. We think that He will help us a little, and for a little time. We do not know how large His heart is towards us, how full He is in bounty, how He means us good, not for one season or two, but for many. He saw Jacob and his people through the whole of their trouble—the whole of their seven years' famine. We think of God's doing little bits for us, we limit the Holy One of Israel. The man who had been "sent before" bore a large commission—it ran thus: "Keep the whole of them alive for seven years."

Now you will observe that these harvests of seven years, which these poor folk had no means of touching, God, by means altogether outside the ordinary beat of sowing and reaping, put, so far as they needed them, within their reach, and applied to their use. God used outside means, something quite unconnected, to all appearance, with the feeding of hungry men. What had all that Joseph suffered, and all his dream-telling, to do with feeding the wandering, far-off tribe of Jacob? By no possible means could they get the Egyptian wheat; from sowing or reaping, they had no claim. But God put it within their reach in His own way, and that, one outside the ordinary beat of things; and so God can do with you what is needed for you—He can bring it within your reach by a train of circumstances apparently unconnected with you at all. All people, all things are in His hand, and He can make all things work together for good, to do you good. God's arrangement of one thing in your history is often a provision for another, having apparently nothing to do with it: the point is the "working *together*" for good. God can make your meeting someone in the street to-day to be an important link in the chain which ten years hence will do something wonderful for you.

Now, mark one thing more. It says here that

* Coverdale's version.

God *called* for a famine on the land. *He* brake the whole staff of bread—just as in Ezek. xxxvi. 29 He says, "I will call for the corn." You see how entirely you are in the hands of God. He has only to say the word, and hard times come—to say the word, and plenty comes; and yet men are making themselves out independent; and but a whisper, a breath of the Almighty, and their means of bread are gone; just as by His breath the means of bread will come!

And now let us draw from these teachings of the text some practical lessons for ourselves.

See how humble are some of the messengers God sends before us to provide for our needs. It will pull down your pride to be told that you don't know to how small a means you may be beholden for the very best you will ever get. Naaman was beholden to the little maid, Elijah was to the ravens and the widow, Paul was to the basket by which he was let down from the wall, the companions in shipwreck to the broken pieces of the ship. A spider's thread saved Robert the Bruce, a bit of a desert flower saved Mungo Park.

But if you want a grand example, it is in Christ. He went forth before us, and our soul's famine and need—in the counsel of God, before the ages—a poor despised man, but God's honoured one—at once the "Adam" and the "Ish"—and prepared for you the means of life, the very harvest of life, if you will have it at His hands.

Harvest signs are about to-day; but you are but emblems of the great harvest, of the gardens and the fields. Have you the first-fruits, the specimens of the heavenly harvest in your heart, the fulness of which you will have by-and-bye?

Always feel that great possibilities of blessing lie before you in very small things, and by very humble means. One of the greatest fortunes in the world was made by simply picking up a pin. You may be amid your possibilities of good even when you are amongst very humble folk, and dealing with very humble things.

You must pray for God's looking out, and arranging for you beforehand, as we pray sometimes that His grace may *prevent* and follow us. Remember, He had sent a man. You may take great comfort from being in God's thought for *all* futures, for the *long* future, for such harvest share as you require.

See God in the bread you eat, however it comes to you. If ever God could be seen in eaten bread, it was in that the patriarchs ate from the seven years' harvests during the seven years' famine in Egypt.

Mean your grace at meat when you say it. Many a man might as well be a pig putting his head into his trough, as a man who owns a God, for the intelligence and gratitude he shows about his daily bread. See God in your cupboard as well as in your church, at your common table as well as in the sacrament of the Holy Supper—the same God who will make all things hallowed, if you will have them so to be.

And see God acting in the most opposite directions, yet balancing, and harmonising, and adjusting. Don't say, "It is not my God who has allowed the dearth." Nay, He "called" for it; but He "arranged" for it too. Trust Him to settle all.

True religion is a thing for daily life. It was so with Christ; let it be so with us. I know it is hard—very hard—but if you seek for it, God will increase your faith and peace; and it will perhaps help us to believe and trust when we remember what we have heard to-day about Jacob and his helpless folk, how that when God called for a famine on the land of Egypt, and brake the whole staff of bread, He had provided everything for them, the produce of the harvests of seven years; and that they might eat thereof and have enough, "He had sent before them a man."

THE OLD PORTRAIT.

"YOU are looking so much better this evening, Elsa darling!—so *very* much better!" cried Mrs. Lowther, as she stood at the foot of an invalid's bed, a handkerchief steeped in spirits of camphor held to her nose with one hand, while the other wafted a feather fan. "Not that I have any foolish dread of contagion," Mrs. Lowther confided to her friends; "especially as Dr. Danberg assures me Elsa's illness is only a low fever brought on by extreme mental prostration. Very strange, isn't it?—so much as we have tried to make her happy. Not that I have any fears, only there are the dear children to be considered, and doctors are mistaken sometimes, and Elsa has always run such dreadful risks at those mothers meetings and ragged-schools."

"But you look quite yourself, to-night, dear!" she repeated.

"Do I?" said Elsa Vane, languidly unclosing her eyes, but shutting them again, as if they were dazzled by the vision in gay dinner-dress that had floated into the quiet room.

"Of course you do, and I am sure you are feeling ever so much better."

"Am I?" said Elsa, in the same listless tones.

They seemed to jar on the nerves of the lady's-maid who had brought her sewing into the invalid's chamber, and considered herself ill-used at having to

add nursing to her other duties. She snapped her cotton with a jerk, observing sharply—

"If Miss Vane won't make any efforts to rouse herself, I don't see how she can expect to get well; and everyone in the house is nearly worn out with sitting up night after night. Sarah, the under-housemaid, was just saying she's quite willing to take her turn, but how she is to get through her work afterwards she doesn't know."

Mrs. Lowther moved restlessly, and wished Manton would not be so snappish. Her servants had good wages, and really ought not to make a fuss at a little extra work now and then. Miss Vane herself had been too ill to be aware that she had been giving a good deal of trouble to the household of her cousin, a thoughtless young matron whose own share in attending upon her was confined to periodical visits, baskets of expensive fruit, and pathetic descriptions to callers of poor dear Elsa's changed looks and great sufferings.

"Can you not send me to a hospital?" the invalid suddenly queried.

Mrs. Lowther gave a little shriek of horror, and her maid shook up the young lady's pillow as viciously as if longing to shake her too.

"A hospital, indeed!" Manton repeated; "I call it downright ungrateful of you, Miss Vane, to talk as if we begrudged what we do for you! Though, if you were in one of those places, you wouldn't be *allowed* to lie here day after day never attempting to better yourself, and behaving as if you don't care whether you live or die!"

"Don't tease her any more!" said Manton's mistress, good-naturedly. "She means to be very brave and get up to-morrow, don't you, Elsa dear? Sleep well, darling, and good-bye."

But a faint call brought Mrs. Lowther back to her old place, for Elsa was asking another question—

"Can I not have a nurse—a hired, trained nurse?"

There was a pause.

"We have talked of it," Mrs. Lowther admitted, "ever since Dr. Danberg advocated it so strongly. I offered to devote myself to you, dear, but he would not hear of it."

"Then why—why——" began Elsa, impatiently.

"Pray don't excite yourself," she was adjured; "it might bring on a return of the delirium. Why have we hesitated? Oh, because I felt sure you shared my horror of strangers. If I were ill I should die if I hadn't the dear familiar faces about me; you wouldn't turn *me* over to a Sairey Gamp or a Betsy Prig, would you, darling? Still, if you wish it——"

"She do, ma'am!" interposed Manton, who often settled doubtful questions for her easy, indolent employer. "Miss Vane is too sensible a young lady to wish to deprive poor servants of their rest, while there's people to be had who make it their business."

"Dr. Danberg must be consulted. We must have someone of his recommending;" and Mrs. Lowther went away to write a note to the physician, all whose skill and care had not availed to bring his patient beyond the point where she lay stranded, making no further progress.

However, Elsa's head was clearer to-night, and she could think coherently, while Manton sat snipping and sewing, assuring herself that as long as her charge appeared half-asleep she need not go to the kitchen for the nourishment that ought to have been administered every two hours, but only reached the invalid's lips when someone chanced to remember the doctor's orders.

"Make efforts," Elsa repeated mentally. "Why, I have done nothing else ever since he and I parted, twelve tedious months ago. What has been my pleasure-seeking night after night—my days of teaching and visiting—but one continuous effort to banish self-reproach and forget him? I had no purer motives. I ought to rouse myself, they say, and then I should recover. I ought to be more eager to live. But they do not tell me what for. Is it to renew the dreary existence out of which I dropped when I could bear it no longer? or who will help me to rise into something better? No one; there is no one now. I have had the opportunity and put it away from me, and here I am."

By the time Elsa had reached this dreary conclusion, she was feverish, and tossed restlessly to and fro till she sank into a stupor. When that passed off, she became aware that someone was bathing her face and brushing her hair with more care and tenderness than Manton was wont to exercise.

There was, too, a delicate odour in her nostrils that transported her to an old-fashioned garden she had once loved dearly. Opening her eyes, she saw on her pillow a handful of white pinks.

What sweet and bitter memories the sight of these flowers evoked! She remembered that she was plucking them and inhaling their fragrance when *he* came in search of her that last, last time they met as friends and lovers.

With a hasty movement, she pushed the bunch of pinks away, then was about to grasp them in her wasted fingers, when she saw that it was a stranger who was busy about the room—a grey-haired, elderly woman, whose brisk, noiseless movements did not jar upon her nerves as the clumsier administrations of Mrs. Lowther's over-worked servants had done so frequently.

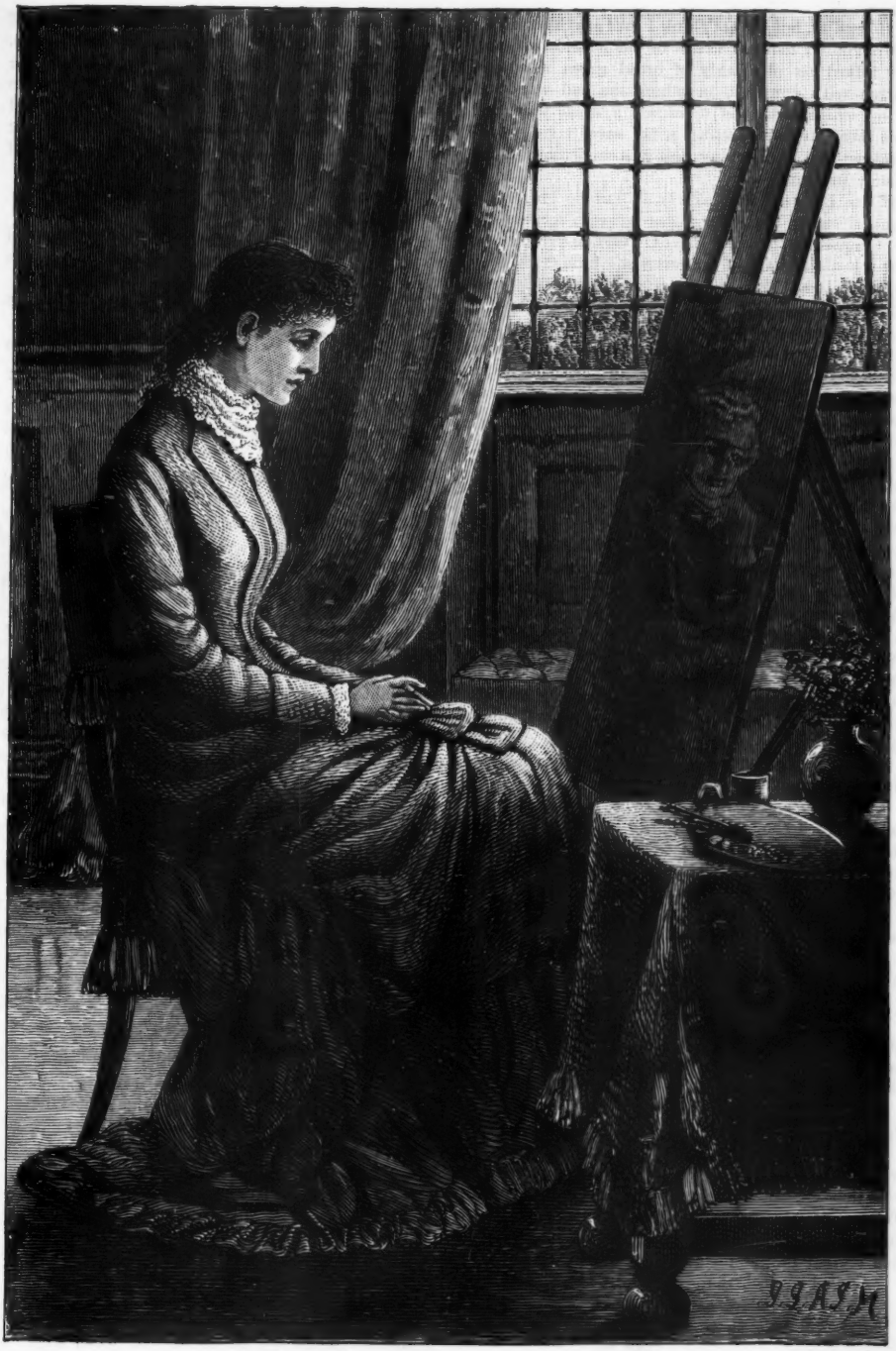
She found herself taking a listless pleasure in watching this person, whose orderly arrangements were carried out with taste and refinement. Under her auspices, the room was not only cooler, but more cheerful, for both sunshine and fresh air were freely admitted.

"Are you my new nurse?" Elsa inquired, as she was being propped up with pillows to eat the breakfast which certainly looked more appetising than usual. "I am afraid you will find me a very troublesome patient. What am I to call you?"

"My name is Sidney, and I hope you will like me. Why should I consider you troublesome, Miss Vane? You are not more impatient and exacting than invalids in general, are you? Shall I put those flowers in water?"

"Who sent them to me?" Elsa demanded, in startled tones.

"No one. I bought them of a child in the street as I came here. You love flowers, don't you?"



"Where had she seen this picture before?"—*p.* 922.

"I used to, but I don't think I love anything now."

Mrs. Sidney took no notice of the hopeless accents, but talked on pleasingly of broad green meadows, starred with cowslips, in which she had wandered in her childhood; and described a wood that had been her favourite resort with such vivid word-painting that in listening Elsa was carried out of the gloomy present.

If she improved but slowly, it was no longer for want of care. Mrs. Sidney was not only a most efficient nurse, but an intelligent, ladylike companion, and the little touch of authority she brought to bear on her patient when necessary, was too wisely and gently exercised to be rebelled against.

As the days passed on, the intimacy of nurse and patient ripened into positive affection. Elsa was ashamed to murmur or give way to despondency in the presence of Mrs. Sidney, and the latter was learning to feel a deep and abiding tenderness for the motherless girl whom she was nursing back into health.

Both were unpleasantly reminded that the connection would soon be brought to a close, when Mrs. Lowther commented joyfully one morning on her cousin's improvement.

"You will come down to dinner to-day?"

"And begin the old life again?" murmured Elsa, with a deep sigh. Was it for this, and only this, she had been mercifully spared?

"Begin life again? Oh, yes!" echoed Mrs. Lowther gaily. "You were very good to get well in time for the Vansittarts' party. After that we will all go to Scarborough—dear, lively Scarborough! It may do Miss Vane an immense deal of good to leave London, eh, nurse?"

Mrs. Sidney assented so promptly that she was afterwards reproached for it.

"With you, and in this quiet room, it is not difficult to think good thoughts and make brave resolves, but at a fashionable watering-place how shall I carry them out? Did you forget that?—or does your interest in me cease as soon as I am no longer your patient?"

"I shall never lose my interest in you," Mrs. Sidney replied, tears gathering in her mild grey eyes. "But I said truly that a change may benefit you; whether it will or not must depend on yourself."

"On myself? Ah, if you knew all!"

Then Elsa sat dreamily gazing at vacancy till Mrs. Sidney laid a hand on her shoulder. Twilight had fallen, and it was time her still delicate, sensitive charge was roused.

But when she proposed lighting the lamp she was gently detained.

"I want to tell you a story, nurse, and it must be while I am in the mood. Mrs. Lowther may have told you that a year ago I was engaged to be married. Tell me if you think any high-spirited girl would submit patiently to the galling knowledge that she had a rival in the affections of her betrothed."

"A rival!" Mrs. Sidney echoed.

"Yes, in the shape of his mother."

"But there can be no rivalry between mother and daughter——"

"In-law," added Elsa. "I had never seen Mrs. Romaine; I had no wish to see her. On the contrary, I soon found myself entertaining a jealous dislike of the woman whose name was so often on her son's lips. I had grown impatient of hearing him dilate on her virtues. When he came to me to invite me to go to her home in the north and make her acquaintance, I refused. I could not brook the thought of being criticised, and perhaps lectured on my faults and follies, by a person I had never seen; could you?"

"Not unless I loved her son dearly."

"I did; I shall to my life's end."

"But yet not as well, my poor child, as you loved yourself. That passion is wrongly called love, Miss Vane, that is not capable of self-sacrifice."

Elsa's eyes flashed at the reproof, but she did not resent it.

"I shocked him with my pride and—was it, as you hint, selfishness? I thought it the overweening love that would be all in all to its object."

"And never said to yourself, 'Do I not owe some consideration, some kindness, to the mother who sees herself set aside for a pretty, thoughtless young creature—the mother who knows she can be first in her boy's heart no longer, yet rejoices in his happiness, and would have taken his bride to her arms without a murmur?'"

Elsa's head drooped on her hands.

"You are right," she murmured. "I was too selfish to be worthy of him."

But Mrs. Sidney had left the room, and when she came back Mrs. Lowther's children came with her.

"Let me do something for you before we part," Elsa said caressingly, the following morning. What shall it be? May I paint your portrait? Have you no children who would like to have it? You have told me that you are a widow—but surely you are not alone in the world!"

"I have two daughters married, and a son, for whom, if you would retouch a faded old portrait, taken of me in the early days of my widowhood——"

Elsa eagerly consented; the picture was sent for, and she sat down at her easel to study it.

Where had she seen this picture before? It could not be the features only that made it so familiar. Had not someone shown her a photograph copied from it, crying the while that it was but a poor resemblance of the dear mother to whom he owed all the fame he had won as a clever barrister?

Elsa started up and turned to her nurse.

"You are his—Algernon's mother; and you have cared for me—ungenerous me—as if you were mine! Was it for his sake? Does he still think of me kindly?"

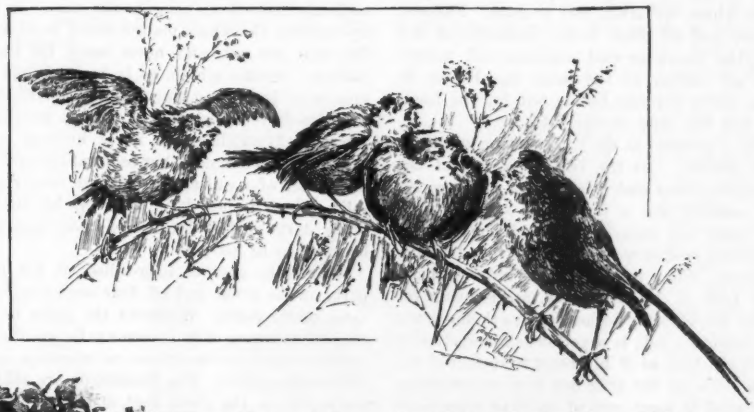
"For his sake and yours. How could he know you were ill without being anxious?—or how could I see my boy in trouble without coming to his aid?"

Before she had finished speaking, Elsa was kneeling at her side, pleading for the motherly affection she had once rejected.

Mrs. Lowther had to go to Scarborough without her cousin, for Elsa Vane is sharing the labours of love of a grey-haired woman who already calls her "my daughter," and waits in modest hope of renewed happiness for the not far distant day when Algernon Romaine will make her his wife.

LOUISA CROW.

OUT OF MY STUDY WINDOW.



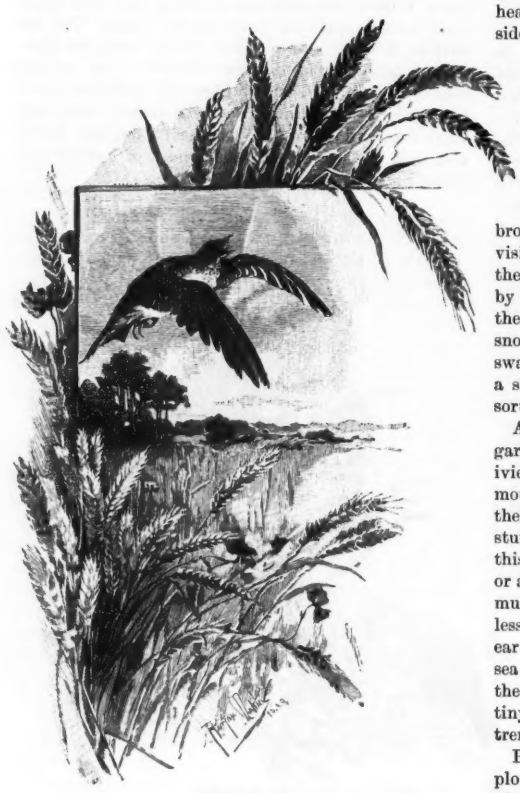
JUST outside my window, along in front of the house, runs a narrow, winding gravel path, which divides the little flower-beds from the grass-plot, and stretches up to the laurel hedge that separates our garden from the old turnpike road to Winchester. A hundred yards away on the other side of this road is a grand clump of Scotch firs, the tops of which just now stand out sharply against the blue sky, as the sun shines gaily down on my quiet domain—our first glimpse of him for many days past. I specially mention the fir-trees, as they were the cause of my starting up from my work and looking out to see what was going on up among their thick, leafy foliage. I was reading quietly by the fire, when all at once there came such a sudden chattering and screaming of birds—starlings, finches, blackbirds, and thrushes—as sometimes occurs when a hawk swoops down on some unfortunate chicken that has strayed away from the farmyard coop. I looked cautiously out of the window, so as not to attract attention, but for a moment could see nothing unusual. Presently, however, I noticed a great fluttering of wings, and swaying to and fro of branches, up in the tallest and thickest of the fir-trees; and, listening carefully, soon made out that some special gathering and confabulation was going on there altogether out of the common. But why, or what was the meaning of the turmoil, it was impossible to tell. Every bird seemed to have something to say, and to be saying it—in a language, too, which they all seemed to understand, but which to me was wholly unintelligible. All at once, however, suddenly out of the midst of the assembly flew a large yellow-and-grey bird with wings like a hawk; and then the mystery was solved. He was unlike any English hawk I have ever seen, and possibly may have been some belated wanderer from another clime. But, be that as it may, on rapid and strong wing he now dashed away across the open fields in the valley, soared swiftly into the higher air, and was soon lost to sight. The tumult suddenly ceased; the starlings streamed down into the next ploughed field; and in a trice life in my quiet nook of garden was going on much as usual.



SQUIRREL AND BLACKBIRDS.

And what a quiet peace and beauty linger there, as God has made it; just one of the pages of the great Book of Nature which He opens to so many of us, and yet which we often fail to note. Flowers, plants, trees, and all other living creatures of His hand—nay, the sweet air and sunshine—all unconscious, yet all telling of the same one Father in heaven, who cares not only for us, but for the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field.

Glance for a moment at the little picture, which in its way is perfect. At the further corner of the sunny grass-plot, away under the shadow of the young beech-tree, sedately sits a nut-brown squirrel, with his white, bushy tail curled up over his back, busily nibbling at some root or seed he has just found among the dead leaves. Close by, a couple of hungry blackbirds, with bills of bright yellow, are hunting for worms under the barberry bushes; above them, on the branch of mountain ash, is a yellowhammer, singing away in the sunshine as if his heart were full of it; while down below on the lawn are four or five merry titmice, engaged in some sort of sport or sober business, the exact nature of which it is hard to make out. As you watch them, you will see that, besides being busily at work in the grass, and along the edge of the flower-bed, in search of a stray breakfast on insects or other small dainties—fluttering and darting this way and that on eager, swift wing—every now and then one rises suddenly a foot or so into the air, and as suddenly drops down again to the grass. If they were fly-catchers the whole matter would be clear enough. But they are not, and never hawk for flies in this fashion; besides which, as it happens, not a single gnat or midge is just now anywhere visible, all having been driven to shelter by the last pelting shower. The true fly-catchers, too, never hunt in couples, or threes, in this manner; but each taking up his station on the top of a railing, an old post, or any projecting solitary bough, there keenly surveys his little domain of air, darts swiftly down on his prey, and as quickly back again to his perch.



WOODLARK.

Meanwhile, another long-tailed tit has joined the party on the grass, and all four are indulging in the same merry game. Whatever the game be, or whatever the meaning of it, it seems to be one of enjoyment to themselves, and to attract no attention on the part of the other birds. The blackbirds are still hunting for worms in the green turf, and the squirrel is beating sharply with his hinder paw on the grass, as if intent on his own private affairs. Presently, however, he stops in his drumming, eagerly digs up the grass, unearths a little brown beech-nut of last year's growth, sits up again on his hind legs, and makes a hearty meal, scattering bits of the ripe husk on either side of him. A fieldfare creeps in from the neighbouring hedge, and after a moment's hesitation attempts to join the blackbirds at breakfast; but they fly at him with great fury, and drive him out of the garden. By this time the tits have left the grass, and are all up in the thick of the barberry bush, creeping up and down the main trunk and in and out among the branches, busily clearing every crevice and crack in the brown stems and branches of insects, flies, and grubs visible only to their sharp eyes. Oddly enough, at the end of one of the branches still hangs, suspended by a string, a piece of dried skin and fat, hung up there for their express benefit in the days of wintry snow. *Then* they clung to and feasted on it, as it swayed to and fro in the frozen air; but *now* not a single bird goes near it. In fact, it seems to be a sort of scarecrow, which had better be avoided.

After having watched this little interlude in the garden for a while, I went quietly out through the ivied porch, across the garden, up to the grassy mound under the clump of firs. All along under their shadow grows a thick mass of ragged and stunted bushes of blackthorn, coarse grass, and thistles; but all alive with small birds of one sort or another, and just now full of noisy and chattering musicians. The blue sky overhead is all but cloudless, and, as we stand and listen, there falls on the ear a faint and far-off sound, like the murmur of the sea breaking gently on the sand. It is the sighing of the soft breeze among the tall tree-tops overhead, the tiny rustle of countless needle-like leaves as they tremble in the warm air.

Presently, up springs a woodlark from the open ploughed field, swiftly mounting aloft in a circling flight, away and away, higher and still higher, until

he becomes a mere tiny speck in the azure expanse; but ever singing as he mounts, and with such keen notes of eager and rapid joy as may be heard clearly by the listening ear when he is no longer visible. He will mount and sing thus, at times, by the hour together. To whom can he be pouring out this long strain of joyous melody?

Not to me or you, for he knows nothing of our presence under the fir-clump. Not to his mate, who is keeping watch over her half-fledged brood in the grassy nest in the next field of clover; but surely to Him, the Unseen, who built up the lofty heaven, "at whose gate the minstrel sings;" who gave strength to the tiny wings, and infinite melody and grace to the joyous song. That same song the woodlark sang as the first morning dawned in Paradise. Our first parents heard it, as they walked in the garden of unclouded peace and beauty, where, as yet, no cloud of evil had fallen, and all was still "very good." All through the long ages since then, the great song of praise has gone up with unbroken voice from the fields and woods of the green earth, and the chant of the joyous birds has remained unchanged.

The language of man has been broken into countless dialects. New words have sprung up as new ideas came into the human mind, or as new wants and new sensations demanded some new form of expression. Nations and tribes separated or mingled, and, apart or together, framed new speech. But to the living creatures of the earth, and the birds of the air, came no new wants, ideas, or feelings; nor any need of new converse, from the very dawn of life until now. As they first sang in the olden days of innocence, over the wide earth, so they still sing.



"The fir-trees tall and high."

But every bird has his own song, his own range of notes, his own key and expression; understood only by his own mate, or by others of a like genus. One only cry is there common to, and understood by, all birds alike, and that is the cry of warning and danger. Let a hawk appear, however suddenly, and in a trice a crowd of swallows dart shrieking through the air, calling up the whole troop of *Hirundines* far and near, and scattering sounds of terror on all sides. Every finch, and every sparrow, titmouse, and wren hears the terrible note of alarm, and all join in the hue and cry of trouble and terror.

Yet the song of the birds is not wholly unchanged throughout the year, for each, by law Divine, has his own song for the season. The spring voice changes in compass and variety as the summer comes on; and again in sober autumn, when summer's joys, cares, and excitements, and monitions are past and gone; until, by degrees, the song becomes more and more scanty, and less varied, at the approach of icy and solemn winter, when the one great want and care will be for food, as the stormy blast sweeps over hill and valley, the desolate fields and lonely woodlands.

And now the woodlark, whom we watched some half-hour ago swiftly rising up into the summer air,

is rapidly descending in long, sweeping curves of flight, still singing as he gets nearer and nearer to his grassy nest. As he reaches it, up from the long, tangled, heathy grass by the hedgerow—with a loud, harsh cry—there rises a golden and purple pheasant, his noisy wings flashing in the sunlight as he makes his way towards the wood. With the exception of the peacock and the jay, his is perhaps the most harsh and discordant cry of all our English birds. Perhaps to *them*—as to their foreign relatives, the whole tribe of parrots—their gay and gaudy plumage may be some sort of compensation for their lack of musical ability. In spite of all their gorgeous plumage, one's ear can find no pleasure in the scream of the peacock, the harsh screech of the jay or the pheasant, though we have learned to tolerate chanticleer—at a moderate distance—when his shrill clarion awakes us at early dawn.

And now, for a few moments, there comes a short lull in the happy chorus of summer sound. The noisy pheasant is away in the depth of the green woodland; the lark is at peace in his nest; the thrushes are silent; the busy "tits" are still busy round the ruddy stems of the fir-trees, but they are songless, and intent only on their search for the tiny insects which lie hidden in the crevices of the bark; each tiny insect perfect and complete by Divine creation, exact in his own way, habits, and life, of which we know so little, and perhaps conscious of his own exact use and place in the scale of being, of which we know still less. Forethought and knowledge of some kind we know they have. There, in the crevice of the rough bark, or on the blade of grass below, or under its root, or in the mud of the pool, was the tiny egg of that tiny insect once carefully laid, with infinite skill, and many precautions against possible enemies; and there, through the dark days of winter, as of death, it lay until the days of springtide resurrection and new life, as the full flush of summer came on, and the earth was again crowned with her robes of joyous beauty. Once more, before we go, let us look up to the outline of dark-grey and green tree-tops against the clear blue sky, across which there floats one little feathery cloud of white. How far away, how infinitely remote, seems the cloudlet; small almost as a snowflake in the wide expanse! How remote and silvery the whisper of the trembling, leafy needles! recalling the old well-known and pathetic words—

> "I remember, I remember
> The fir-trees tall and high.
> I used to think their slender tops
> Were close against the sky.
> It was a childish ignorance,
> But now 't is little joy
> To think I'm further off from Heaven
> Than when I was a boy." *

Yet, not further off, after all. For round about us on every side is the invisible presence of the Great and Good Father, by whom we live and move and have our being.

B. G. JOHNS.

* Thomas Hood.

GENTLENESS IN CHRISTIAN WORK.

BY THE REV. GEORGE BROOKS.



E have considered the Spirit of Christ, the Gentle Worker; let us now ask ourselves in what degree the Christian Church is exemplifying the spirit of Christ. Happily it may, I think, be answered that the Church is exemplifying this spirit in a very considerable degree: probably in a more perfect degree, on the whole, than in any former age. But even the best that the Church has done in this direction has been all too poor and unworthy. Never has the Church of Christ been really true to His spirit; and where she has failed this has been the chief cause of her failure.

Why are the masses of our population outside of, and more or less hostile to, Christianity? Because Christianity has been corrupted by the admixture of worldly elements contrary to the spirit of Christ. Christian people have often been selfish and proud, instead of being self-sacrificing and humble; they have frequently been more anxious to gain social and political patronage than to do spiritual work in the faith of God; they have cultivated the friendship of certain classes, and neglected others. We are now awakening to a sense of our responsibility in relation to those who have been too long neglected; awakening also to a sense of the danger which threatens us if this policy of neglect be continued. And this very movement of the Church's heart, so cheering from one point of view, is from another perceived to be a real peril. The danger is lest we should rush from the extreme of inaction to the extreme of over-action: from the slumber of indifference to the excitement of an unreal life; and thus, instead of correcting the mistakes of the past, aggravate the case by adding equally disastrous blunders in the present. We may be as destitute of the spirit of Christ when we are doing much as when we are doing nothing at all. Everything depends on *what* we do and *how* we do it.

Unsound methods, which seem to promise speedy and brilliant success, have a fatal fascination for the unthinking. This is an age of ultra-sensationalism, not only in religion, but in everything else. There is a feverish craving for excitement, induced largely by the conditions of our modern life. Men are not content to live as their fathers did, by steady hard work, relieved and sweetened by quiet and rational pleasures. In commerce, in professional life, in industrial pursuits,

and in domestic service, there is a growing dislike of patient and plodding toil, and an increasing tendency to resort to tricks and artifices. And when men are released from the labour which they are compelled to perform, and which most of them regard as drudgery, they are apt to at once plunge headlong into that mirth which is madness. These tendencies of the times have naturally affected the Church. The ingenious puffery of the acute trader is sometimes resorted to in order to recommend the Gospel of Christ, and the coarse slang of the streets is used as an aid in preaching it. For even the pulpit has not escaped the infection of this modern spirit. Ministers (and, still more, congregations) are in some cases impatient of the old, tried, and successful methods of preaching, and are straining after unwholesome novelty; heated and irrational appeals to the lower nature are, with painful frequency, substituted for the sober and reasoned speech which alone can convince the intellect and impress the conscience.

We are losing sight, too, in these days, of the worth of the individual. One man is not much thought of, especially if he be weak and poor. There is a strong tendency to overlook, or to push aside, the timid, the faint, the weary, and the helpless. But this is the brutish spirit of Paganism, not the gentle spirit of Christianity. Christ, like a true mother, gives most of love and help to those members of the family who are sickliest and weakest. We are so anxious about the crowds that we forget the preciousness of single souls. It is worth while to remember that Christ made much of the individual, and that a great deal of His time was spent in dealing with people one by one. In His discourse to the woman of Samaria He expressed one of His most sublime ideas of God; and in that to Nicodemus He spoke most clearly of the new birth of man. If we had more of His spirit we should realise the importance of individuals, and we should especially care for those classes who live off the great highways of our Church life—the poor, the weak, the suffering, the doubting, the fallen, and the neglected; and it will be well for us, in dealing with souls anxious to be saved, to remember that Christ always discouraged impulse, and insisted on conviction.

Amid all the confusion and uncertainty which exist in the Church with regard to methods of labour, we must appeal to the Pattern—not so much with respect to methods as in regard to the spirit which alone can make any methods successful. Earnest Christian men and women are perplexed as to the way in which they should do their work; and yet they need not be so. The only thing about which they need to feel any real concern is the condition of their own hearts and lives. Have we the spirit of Christ? Do we infuse that spirit into our work? Do we preach as He preached; teach as He taught; love as He loved? His life is our law and our ideal. He has left us an example, that we should follow in His steps. Freedom we have; but no such freedom as will permit us to set at nought His authority. This, then, is the grand test. Do we speak and labour in the spirit of the Christ? If we do, we shall succeed by method, without method, or in spite of method; and if we have not the spirit of Christ we are none of His, whatever methods we may employ. The prayer of all Christian workers should be—

"Lord, give me light to do Thy work,
For only, Lord, from Thee
Can come the light by which these eyes
The work of truth can see.

"Oh, send me light to do Thy work,
More light, more wisdom give;
Then shall I work Thy work indeed,
While on Thine earth I live.

"The work is Thine, not mine, O Lord;
It is Thy race we run;
Give light, and then shall all I do
Be well and truly done."

Of the ministry of Christ it was said that it should ensure the triumph of God's will. Though that ministry is so gentle and unobtrusive, nay, *because it is so*, "He shall bring forth judgment unto victory." In other words, the force of Christ's personality, the spiritual power by which God is saving, and means to save, the world, will accomplish its purpose silently and gradually. It is thus that God ever works. In majestic silence, by means often imperceptible, and with a slowness which to us is painful, He performs His wondrous and grand designs. Herein is comfort for quiet workers. Of late years, many a devoted preacher, as he has listened to extravagant eulogies of men whose chief distinction is that they make much noise and show in saying and doing nothing, or worse than nothing, has lost heart. Modest toilers, overlooked or despised by men—and by Christian men—grieve in secret because the world esteems them not, nor the Church. Blessed are all such, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Let them take courage. "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love." In the gentle, lowly, loving worker He sees and prizes the spirit of His Son; whilst many of those who strive and cry, and lift up their voice in the streets, show by their lack of that spirit that they are none of His. It is by patient and unwearied toil that the Kingdom is to be established. This is the law according to which Christ Himself works; and we may be sure that where there is excess of violence and passion, of noise and of hurry, there also there is most of the human and least of the Divine.

What the Church of Christ needs is not so much new methods as a revival and enlargement of the old spirit. The old ways of working are in the main sound. We must still preach, teach, pray, and work, much as our forefathers did, whilst using wisely and to advantage the new forces which have come into being since their time. But the spirit of Christ is our chief need. That alone will make our words and works a living and quickening power. To be saturated with that spirit is to be endued with God's richest and holiest baptism. It can only become ours as we become Christ's. When His life is our life, and His love our law: when our hearts beat in unison with His, and our feet take hold on His ways: when He is our Friend as well as our Master, ruling us in all things by the blessed compulsion of His love—then we shall be like Him; and to be like Him is to be independent of methods—it is to have within us a power by which we shall make methods.

How earnest we should be, then! What wrestling with God in secret! What striving to save men! What travailing in birth for souls! What strength of faith and purpose! What purity and love! And, withal, how gentle and tender we should be! How kindly and helpful to the weak, not breaking the bruised reed nor quenching the smoking flax. Oh, it is love that we need—love such as Christ's—love which exhausts itself in labour and sacrifice for men. This is the power that will save the world: the power of God, in and through the God-like. There is no force so mighty as this; there is none so gentle. By this the Church has won her triumphs in the past; by this she must win her yet greater triumphs in the future. Whatever the forms and methods used by the Church, this is the principle that must animate them with life, and clothe them with power.

This power will never fail; it is Divine. The strength of the Church is eternal as well as omnipotent. Human might and power will fail; wealth will decay, and eloquence cease; sensations and excitements will exhaust themselves, and religious fashions will change; even the faith and energy of God's children will sometimes languish; but "HE shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth." Amid all the changes and failures of earth, He, the Christ of God, works on—gently and slowly as of old, and also as surely. Nothing can destroy His hope, nor wear out His patience. His will triumphs, and His purpose is accomplished, even where His enemies seem to gain their own ends. He sees His coming victory, and He calmly and hopefully works on—and waits.

We shall fail often, and discouragement will be with us a frequent experience, for we are human. But in proportion as we are like Christ, we too shall be gentle and patient, steadfast and hopeful. Fellow-labourers, let us remember that if we are called of God, the power that is in us is of Him. In proportion as we realise that not only is the work Christ's, but that the energy by which alone it can be accomplished is His too, and keep our own souls charged with His life, in that proportion shall we be unmoved by the passing excitements of the times. To do our work in Christ's spirit, with His gentleness, lowliness, earnestness, patience, and hopefulness, and with as little as possible of the ostentation, tumult, confusion, and haste of man—this should be our deepest anxiety and our loftiest ambition.

"Lord, who Thy thousand years dost wait
To work the thousandth part
Of Thy vast plan, in us create
A patient heart."

THE LOVE-DREAM OF GATTY FENNING.

BY SARAH DOUDNEY, AUTHOR OF "MISS WILLOWBURN'S OFFER," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHANGE UPON CHANGE.

As Warren drew near the house, he looked up at the windows, and saw that all the blinds were drawn down. His heart gave a throb of fear; had some sudden change for the worse taken place? Invalids had been known to sicken and fall ill again just as they were supposed to be on the verge of recovery. He wanted to see Gatty once more; he longed to receive from her brown eyes a mute assurance of forgiveness.

A strange face appeared at the open door. Instead of Mercy's comely figure, he was confronted by a red-haired girl of fourteen, who wore a pinafore, and stared at him in shy dismay.

"How is Miss Fenning?" was his first question.

"I don't know, sir," said the girl, flushing up to her freckled forehead.

"Hasn't she come down-stairs yet?" His tone was impatient, and the shy damsel looked more stupid than ever.

"She bain't up-stairs, sir. She bain't here at all."

"Oh, then she has gone away for a change." He was much relieved. "Has Mr. Fenning gone too?"

"They be all gone, sir."

"And when are they coming back?"

"I don't know, sir."

Warren turned away from the door, and slowly retraced his steps to the gate. Gatty's chrysanthemums were blooming in the front garden, and he suddenly remembered that she had taken pride in them last November. The usual sounds came from the farmyard, and a healthy-looking man, whose face was new to him, was giving directions to one of the labourers.

"I don't know where they're gone to, sir," he said, in answer to Warren's inquiry. "Gibbon Fenning's a far-away cousin of mine, and he knew I was wanting a bailiff's place. So a fortnight ago he wrote and told me to come here; and here I have been ever since. And he's left the management of everything in my hands. When I've got anything to say I'm to write to Gibbon, and address my letter to his lawyer in London."

And this was all the information that Warren could obtain. He went to the Vicar, and found him quite in the dark about the Fennings and their doings. As to Bennet Vardye, he had always known that his curate would leave the neighbourhood as soon as his health was re-established. He thought that Gibbon Fenning ought to have called at the vicarage instead of writing a farewell note; but he

supposed that the farmer would bring Gatty back as soon as she was quite well again.

But the winter wore away, the spring came and went; the rich summer glided by, and a calm autumn thronging hopes and fears, their clouds and sunshine, had passed since Gatty went away from the farm.

Her place in that quiet country world was closed up; she was not, perhaps, altogether forgotten, but



"'You are the most charming surprise.'"—*p.* 932.

ushered in another Christmas; yet Gatty came not back to her old home. Nor was Gibbon Fenning seen by his former neighbours again. The sturdy bailiff managed the farm for some time, and then it became known that he was master instead of manager. And so—slowly and gradually—the name and remembrance of the Fennings began to die out of the Valley of the Meon.

* * * * * *

Six years, with their changing seasons, their

she had vanished out of those rural lives, and become a mere phantom to the people who once knew her so well. And the Mainsboroughs had vanished too.

Everybody in the Valley knew that, for some unexplained cause, Warren's marriage had never taken place. Mother and son had departed hastily and silently, just as the Fennings had done. White House, and all the land that had been held by the Mainsboroughs for centuries, was sold. There were new people in the house now—people who had made

their money in the city, and had plenty to spare. They spent their gold freely, made improvements right and left, and soon succeeded in winning the good-will of the rustics around them. Mrs. Mainsborough, with her languor, and her pride, and her aristocratic poverty, was not missed at all. Nor did the good-looking, do-nothing Warren leave a great blank behind him.

But there was one whose memory never entirely faded from the minds of the simple folk among whom he had laboured for a brief space. The good seed sown by Bennet Vardye had sprung up here and there, and borne fruit. They could not forget him as they had forgotten the others. When other faces grew dim, they could still recall that strong, kind face that had been seen so often in homes made desolate by sorrow. And they could remember the words that he had spoken, and would quote them as proverbs. "As the curate used to say," was the preface to many a wise sentence of warning or consolation.

Sir Lawrence Vansittart, the great doctor, had left his house in Harley Street for a still larger house in Cavendish Square. Lady Vansittart, and the young cousin who had come to live with her, were fond of the sight of turf and trees, and rejoiced in the shady greenness of the Square garden. As to Sir Lawrence, he had changed very little since the days when he had met his wife in the old village of Wood-Royal. He showed no visible signs of advancing age; some people even said that he seemed to grow younger. He was not a man who lingered behind the march of time, but went pressing on abreast of those in the front rank. The world honoured him; the poor loved him; and he trod firmly and quietly in the steps of the Great Healer, just as he had done from the beginning.

Lady Vansittart, with her silver hair and her sweet, calm face, was always to be found where help was wanted. Many a charitable scheme would have fallen to the ground but for her timely aid; many a good plan would have perished in the thinker's brain if she had not drawn it out into the light. Hers was the gentle influence which accomplishes great things without any display of strength.

At first, the young cousin was rather a puzzle to all the Vansittarts' numerous friends. They could not tell whether she was shy or proud, stupid or clever; but they saw that she was handsome, and soon found out that she was an heiress. Miss Fenning had an uncle who lived in commodious rooms in Holles Street, and who was a sunburnt, rustic-looking man, with an air of grave dignity about him. Uncle and niece saw each other every day, and there seemed to be a perfect understanding between them. But it was a long time before the light came back to Gatty's eyes, and the colour to her cheeks.

It was well for the girl that she had come to live with those who knew exactly how to manage her. Sir Lawrence and his wife understood her from the first, and made ample allowance for the cloud of despondency that had settled on her young spirit. They knew that Gatty's cure could not be effected by solitude and inaction; and so they made her see people, and set her to work. And then, when she had begun to take an interest in her new life, they told her the secret which her uncle had so long concealed.

She was rich, really and unmistakably rich! When Gatty learnt this fact, her first thought was that her whole destiny might have been changed if she had known it sooner.

Rich! She repeated the magical word to herself as she stood alone in her bedroom looking over Cavendish Square. To the last day of her life she would be able to recall her feelings at that hour, and even remember the spring colouring of the old trees. Rich! She might have been saying the word in the old-fashioned parlour at the farm, or whispering it to Warren as they stood in the porch together in the evening light.

Was she sorry that the news had come to her when her friendship with him was ended? No. She lamented still over the ruins of her castle in the air, but she did not want to build it up again, even on a golden foundation. In fact, she said to herself that the golden foundation would spoil the castle altogether. And yet a burden of memories lay heavily on her young heart, and she could not take in this knowledge of great wealth without a sigh.

But the years came and went, and wrought wonderful changes in Gatty Fenning.

Bennet Vardye did not change as much as she did, although he was drawn forward into public notice, and received great honour from men. He had not pushed himself into view; perhaps if he had consulted his own inclination, he would have kept a good deal in the shade. But he possessed certain gifts which make a man remarkable, however retiring he may be.

He was neither a commonplace preacher nor an ordinary worker, although his preaching and working were of a quiet kind. When he left the Valley of the Meon, he came to work in Marylebone, and now he was vicar of a large church in that great, straggling parish, which comprises so much wealth and so much misery. The Vansittarts were members of his congregation, and his old intimacy with Gibbon Fenning was as warm as ever. As to Gatty, she was sometimes a little shy with him, remembering that he knew all about her foolish past, a little reserved—a little grave in his presence; yet her uncle knew that she reverenced Bennet Vardye from the very bottom of her heart.

He was five-and-thirty now, but he scarcely looked older than he had looked six years ago. The grave, kindly face, with its expression of reserved force, had lost its youth early, through seeing the earnest side of life, but it did not grow any older. His health had been perfectly restored long ago, and he was strong enough nowadays to shoulder other people's burdens with marvellous ease. So unselfish, so loving, was the spirit of this man, that even hard men and women were moved by his influence, and acknowledged him to be all that they were not. And so he went his appointed way.

CHAPTER XV.

MEETING AGAIN.

It was early in May, and Lord and Lady Silverthorpe were in their town house again. They spent the greater part of their time in town nowadays, for Lord Silverthorpe, as he grew older, had developed a taste for philanthropy, and had his name printed in numerous committee lists. He attended endless meetings, made rather dry speeches, and yet, despite a considerable amount of needless fuss, contrived to do some real good. He was a benevolent man, honourable and straightforward, and if he blundered sometimes, his kind heart corrected the mistake.

Lady Silverthorpe was now generally looked upon as an invalid, although she never suffered from any serious illness. It was therefore said to be a wise arrangement when her sister came to live with her, and took most of her easy duties off her hands. And as Lord Silverthorpe had hundreds of letters to answer, there was no one better suited for the post of private secretary than his wife's nephew, Warren Mainsborough.

But Warren, although he was duly grateful for his uncle's kindness, distinctly felt himself to be a failure, and knew that his friends felt it too. He had been playing a losing game for years; he had lost his sweetheart (partly because he was a languid lover, his mother said), and then he had lost the little money that his father had left him. He was always losing things; all his chances slipped away; all his plans came to nothing; all his ideas drifted out of his head before he could catch them and put them on paper, and he seemed destined to go through life haunted by an eternal sense of loss.

"You will have to take Ethel to the Pagets' this afternoon, Adelaide," said Lady Silverthorpe, from her sofa.

Ethel Conway was a young girl who had come to spend the season with the Silverthorpes, and the duty of taking her about devolved, of course, on Mrs. Mainsborough.

"Yes," the widow answered meekly. "Ethel is very easy to take care of, and Warren is going."

"He'll meet his old lady-love there," said Lady Silverthorpe, with a lazy smile. "But I suppose he can stand the shock. And, really, I wonder Angela isn't ashamed to go about with her husband; he is such a fearfully stupid man, you know."

"It was all Warren's fault that she married Sir James Gifford." Mrs. Mainsborough's frown always appeared when they touched upon this subject. "Warren is so half-hearted: that is why he never succeeds. He lets everything slip."

"Well, we mustn't be too hard on him," said his aunt, in her good-natured way. "And Angela behaved very badly. Even my husband, who seldom sees anyone's faults, remarked that she was a sly girl. Of course we are always civil to her, but she isn't a favourite of ours, Adelaide, as you know."

And so it was destined that Warren and his faithless lady were to meet that day for the first time since their parting. After Angela's final farewell had come his other losses, and then he had gone abroad to be tutor to a little sick boy. The boy grew hale and strong, and came home to go to Eton; and Warren, thrown out of employment, had gladly accepted the post of secretary to Lord Silverthorpe.

He did not dread the sight of Angela in the least; indeed, he was quite prepared to meet friendly advances if she made them. He had been disgusted at being thrown over, but it would be too much to say that her fickleness had given him any pain. When they were in the carriage on the way to the Pagets' house, his face was as tranquil as usual, and he was amused by Ethel Conway's girlish remarks. His mother said to herself that he was looking very well, and followed the thought with a despairing sigh. It was hard to think of the chance that he had lost.

Mrs. Paget's "afternoons" were always a success, and her pretty rooms were full to overflowing. Warren Mainsborough, in a corner by a mantelpiece, stood looking on at the doings of the crowd around him. He had been out of England long enough to feel himself something of an outsider on his return; and so he glanced here and there for familiar faces, watching the groups that gathered and exchanged greetings and then broke apart and scattered themselves.

Society was decidedly monotonous, he thought. People were saying and doing the same things that they had said and done six years ago. They used a few new phrases, perhaps; but there were all the old stereotyped smiles and well-known ways. Still, he was not surly enough to quarrel with this pleasant sameness. Masks must be worn, he said to himself; anyhow, it was better for folks to wear them than to make ugly faces at each other. And just at that moment he saw a faded, fair little woman, with thin cheeks and an aquiline nose. If it had not been so absurdly impossible, he might have taken her for Angela Warburton grown quite old.

It *was* Angela; and he knew in an instant that she had seen and recognised him. There she stood, smiling and waiting for him to go to her. And he had to go.

"And where have you been hiding yourself all these years?" she asked. "You are looking very well indeed; I think your exile has agreed with you."

"Perhaps it has," he answered, scrutinising the fine tracery of wrinkles on her lifted face. "And it has made home seem fresh and pleasant."

"Ah! Mrs. Mainsborough must be glad to have you back. I used to inquire for you while you were away, but I could never get any news."

"There was nothing to tell about me. I've had no hairbreadth escapes, and I've never done anything to make myself talked about. What did you expect to hear?"

"Oh, I always thought you would do something romantic—marry somebody who was quite unlike anyone else, and be wonderfully happy."

This was said a little maliciously. Her vanity was wounded by his coolness, and it was a shock to find his aspect so unaltered when she was miserably conscious of the change in herself.

At this instant a group parted in front of them,

and afforded a glimpse of a young lady standing by a window, with three or four men near her. She was tall, and so exquisitely formed that every movement was full of natural grace. But she did not move often; she simply retained her pretty pose, smiling, and speaking now and then to those around her.

Her beauty was of the kind that attracts at first sight, and then keeps the attention spellbound. You were not satisfied with one glance; you wanted to see more of the great, clear brown eyes, and you watched every curve of the red lips, and wondered what expression became them best. Her face seemed capable of expressing intense emotion, and yet the prevailing look was a sweet calm.

"You are looking at one of the beauties," said Lady Gifford's thin voice by his side. "She's very pretty, isn't she? and tremendously rich. They say that's why she hasn't married: she thinks everybody wants her for her money. She is related to the Vansittarts, you know, and lives with them. Haven't you seen her before?"

"I don't know; I think not. What did you say her name was?"

"Miss Fenning, Lady Vansittart's cousin."

Warren Mainsborough felt like a man in a dream. A flash of recognition had broken upon him before he heard her name, but he had rejected the evidence of his memory. That beautiful girl, simply dressed in soft grey, and wearing one or two scarlet flowers, was a refined and idealised Gatty Fenning. She was, and was not, Gatty. The sight of her awakened more pain than pleasure, and he did not want to believe in her at all. He wanted to think that she was a vision—but why? Even in the confusion of that moment, and with the buzz of talking all round him, the answer came clear and distinct from his heart.

"If she is the real Gatty, you have lost the best chance that you ever had in your life."

Something in his face aroused Lady Gifford's remembrance. She looked at him keenly, still with that gleam of malice in her eyes.

"Wasn't there a Miss Fenning in the country?" she asked. "A Matty or Patty—she used to scowl at me. She was a handsome rustic, I think, and your mother tried to educate her, and failed."

Warren could never distinctly recall his answer to this little speech. Nor could he clearly remember how he moved towards Miss Fenning, nor what he said when he found himself holding the little delicately gloved hand. It seemed to him afterwards that very few first words passed between them. He had gone to her, and she had received him with a natural courtesy and sweetness.

"Have you been long in town?" he asked, as she sat down on a low chair, and he found a seat at her side.

"Let me think," she said, musing. "Six years. Yes, it is six years since I left the old Valley of the Meon. I suppose there are not many changes there?"

It was the same voice, low-pitched and delightfully modulated, but there was something new in the utterance. The smile, too, was new; it came softly and slowly, instead of flashing out with the old, ready brightness. The colour in her cheeks was less vivid, the outlines of the face were more delicate, the light in the eyes was subdued.

"I don't know anything about the old Valley now," he answered. "I left the place about four years and a half ago. We sold White House and all our land, and I went abroad as a tutor. Last autumn I came back to be Lord Silverthorpe's private secretary. And that's all I have to tell about myself."

"Is it quite all?" The clear brown eyes were softly questioning his. And his heart throbbed faster at this slight show of interest in him.

"All that you would care to hear," he said humbly. "Miss Warburton threw me over. She is Lady Gifford now. I was talking to her a few minutes ago."

"Ah! I have seen Lady Gifford," Miss Fenning spoke in her soft, quiet way; "and I thought she was like someone I used to know. But I didn't realise that she was Miss Warburton."

He was trying hard to keep up the usual society manner, but he had never found it so difficult before to retain perfect self-control. She was so wonderfully changed, and yet she had not lost the simple, candid look which belonged to the Gatty of the past. But to find the old Gatty in this lady, who was so composed, and bore herself with such quiet grace, was almost more than a man's head could stand.

"Do you ever see my mother?" he asked, after a little pause. "She is living with Lady Silverthorpe now."

"I have seen her once or twice, but always at a distance," Miss Fenning replied. "Just now I think I caught a glimpse of her."

Even while she was speaking, Mrs. Mainsborough was coming towards them with looks of unspeakable satisfaction. She held out her hands and smiled her most motherly smile.

"My dear Gatty," she began, "Lady Gifford has been trying to convince me that you *are* Gatty, but I wouldn't believe her till I saw Warren talking to you! This is the happiest meeting—it brings back the dear old days. We shall have a great deal to say to each other."

Gatty privately thought that she could have very little indeed to say to Mrs. Mainsborough. But she returned her old friend's smile, and was so calmly pleasant that Warren felt he understood her less than ever.

"I've just seen another face from the past," Mrs. Mainsborough continued. "Mr. Vardye came in a minute ago—he is made a Canon of Westminster, I hear. One so seldom meets him out that one must seize the chance of speaking to him. But at present, Gatty, I can think of no one but you. You are the most charming surprise!"

"I daresay I'm a surprise." Miss Fenning quietly omitted the adjective. "You could not possibly have expected to meet the little savage of old days *here*. But a great many things can happen in six years."

"A great many things have happened to *us*," said Mrs. Mainsborough, with a faint sigh. "But, Gatty, I hope you haven't forgotten that you were my pet once? You used to be fond of me, you know. It was a grief to us that you vanished as you did; but our

own troubles followed very quickly on your disappearance. We must talk over the old life."

"Miss Fenning doesn't want to be bored with her old life; she finds the new too delightful," interposed Warren, with a shade of melancholy in his manner. "Mother, you mustn't be unreasonable, and expect too much from her."

He knew that she would like him all the better for not presuming on the old intimacy. And he knew, too, that in her mind and in his there was a vivid remembrance of the night when they stood face to face in the farmhouse parlour. He must learn to know her, and study her carefully and patiently before he could understand her nowadays.

He fancied that he saw a sudden look of relief on the lovely face when Canon Vardye came up to them. He was the same frank, genial man who had won Warren's liking long ago; and Warren thought that here, at any rate, was someone who seemed to have been untouched by time. There was a little more talk, and then the Canon took possession of Gatty, saying that Lady Vansittart was waiting for her.

Mrs. Mainsborough went to look after Ethel Conway; but her mind was preoccupied, and her duties as a chaperon were hardly performed as well as usual. As they drove homeward she thought that Ethel's chatter was very wearisome, and noticed that Warren was silent and grave. She was glad to get back to Lord Silverthorpe's old-fashioned mansion in Mayfair, and resolved to have a long chat with Warren in her dressing-room before she slept that night.

CHAPTER XVI.

ANOTHER FROM THE PAST.

WARREN knew perfectly well that he should receive a summons to his mother's dressing-room that night, and he would not have obeyed it if he could have helped it. But he always yielded to her wishes, saying to himself that he must try to make amends for all the disappointment he had caused her. Yet he did not want to talk about Gatty, and felt an overwhelming desire to be alone.

But there was Mrs. Mainsborough waiting for him in her easy-chair by the fire. These nights in early May were cold, and the widow enjoyed her little comforts, and was pretty well contented with her quarters. Already she had been wondering what she would do if Warren were to marry a rich wife. It would be hardly fair to leave the good sister who really seemed to need her; and yet it would be very pleasant to have a son's house to go to.

"Sit down," she said cheerfully, pointing to a seat on the other side of the fire. But he remained standing, leaning against the mantelpiece.

"No, thank you, mother," he answered. "I'm tired, and I must get up early to-morrow. There are lots of letters to be written."

"Well, you need not go on writing letters for ever, if you use your opportunity," said Mrs. Mainsborough, with a glance full of meaning. "Gatty a beauty and an heiress! I can think of nothing else, Warren."

"Of course, it is a startling thing," he remarked coldly.

"Life is turned into a fairy-tale," she went on, with suppressed excitement. "Why, Warren, that child quite adored you six years ago."

"Exactly, mother; six years ago. And you see she isn't a child now."

"Nonsense! there is just the old look in her eyes She has been well trained and cultivated, but the change is merely external. You must win her, Warren."

He shook his head gravely and wearily.

"There isn't a chance for me," he said. "If I thought otherwise——"

His mother was watching him eagerly.

"Ah, I see," she half whispered. "You always liked her, and now you have developed a new feeling."

"Why need we talk about feelings?" he asked, with ill-concealed impatience. "I'm afraid I seem cross, mother, but I shall be all right after a night's rest."

On the evening of the same day, after dinner, a conversation was going on in Lady Vansittart's boudoir. Gatty was alone with her cousin, and had just recounted the experiences of the afternoon.

Lady Vansittart knew all that Gibbon Fenning and Bennet Vardye could tell her about the Mainsboroughs, and their influence on Gatty's girlhood. She was not altogether glad that the unexpected meeting had taken place, and yet it pleased her to see that the girl had gone through it calmly. She had devoted time and thought and energy to Gatty's training, and this young relative had grown very dear to herself and Sir Lawrence.

"It was a strange sensation that I felt when I first saw Warren to-day," Gatty admitted frankly. "You want to know what I really did feel, cousin Patience? Well, I can hardly tell you. I was talking and enjoying myself, and I suddenly looked up and saw him before me. Everything seemed to come back to me in a lightning-flash, and then I remembered that six years had gone by, and my whole life was changed."

"I wish I had been at your side just then," said Lady Vansittart thoughtfully.

Gatty had never told her cousin the story of her girlish infatuation in plain words, but she suspected that others had done so. How ashamed she was of that early folly! If only Canon Vardye had not known all, she would not have felt so humbled. But he did know, and the sight of Warren must have reminded him of everything.

"I was so glad when Canon Vardye came up to me," she said. "He came like a strong breeze from the hills, sweeping away the mists of memory that were rising round me. He seemed suddenly to bring me back to the bright, real world of to-day."

"I am glad it is a bright, real world, my dear." Lady Vansittart looked at her kindly. "You lived too long in a region of mists and dreams. Work is real, suffering is real, and joy is real also. But the highest kind of joy is that which comes through work and suffering."

"I want to live always among realities," Gatty cried. "Like the Lady of Shalott, I grew sick of shadows. Doesn't it strike you, cousin Patience, that Mr. Vardye is *intensely* real? He is not the

image of somebody reflected in a mirror, and tricked out with fantastic lights and shades! He has a strong will and a ready hand, and a heart that is 'at leisure from itself.' It is because he forgets himself that he understands everyone else."

"He is a very uncommon man, Gatty. There are qualities in him which are like my husband."

"He is one of the healers," said Gatty, with earnest eyes. "It is strange that I never saw him as he really is until I came here; and yet not strange, when one remembers that I used to sit before my mirror like the stupid woman in the poem. Ah, well, it was a good thing when 'the mirror cracked from side to side!'"

"And it always will be cracked," Lady Vansittart remarked, laughing. "You have been looking into it again to-day, my dear, and the crack was there. If I were you, I would have nothing more to do with it."

Just then there was a knock at the door, and the Canon himself walked in. He had a habit of looking in upon the Vansittarts at unconventional hours, and they always welcomed him.

Did he want to see how Gatty bore herself after the momentous interview of the afternoon? She thought that he did, and a quick remembrance of all that he knew of her brought the old vivid colour to her cheek. But when he spoke of the Mainsboroughs, it was in the easiest possible way.

"I thought Warren would have changed more," he said; "he has had a great deal of trouble. Mrs. Mainsborough shows signs of age."

"Yes," replied Gatty calmly; "she looks careworn, and I don't think her face has improved; that motherly smile of hers is overdone."

Lady Vansittart was amused, and the Canon laughed a little.

"Ah, Gatty," he said, "her smile is just the old smile that has done duty for years, but you have grown clear-sighted."

"Too clear-sighted, perhaps," she answered. "I felt rather ashamed of myself for seeing right through her in a moment. It seemed unkind, but I could not help it."

"It was not unkind," said Lady Vansittart: "but there is always something sad in despising what we once admired; only it doesn't always happen that old friends disappoint us. There are people who can stand the test of time. I have known men and women who reminded me of winter pears: they were hard and tasteless in the summer of life, and sweet and mellow when their year was ending."

"I wish I had known you earlier, cousin Patience," Gatty remarked, with a little sigh.

"Better late than never," the Canon said cheerfully; "and it isn't very late, you know. You are not quite in your autumn yet, Gatty, although I daresay you feel very old."

"I have my young days and my old days," Gatty rejoined, with a musing look which suited her very well. "This is one of the old days. The Mainsboroughs have reminded me that I have travelled six years away from my girlhood. Isn't that enough to make me feel ancient and serious?"

"But you don't want to go back, do you?" he asked.

He was regarding her with a gaze of steady interest. She bore it for a moment; then her colour deepened, and she looked away from him.

"No," she said in a low voice. "Oh no, I never wish to go back."

The Canon and Lady Vansittart began to talk of other matters, and then Sir Lawrence came in. Bennet Vardye did not speak to Gatty again till he was going away.

"Someone else has come out of the past and wants to see you," he said. "You will never guess who it is, so I must tell you. You have not forgotten a certain cabin among the hills, and a lonely woman who lived there?"

"Mrs. Piddock!" Gatty exclaimed. "But she can't be in London?"

"Certainly, I never expected to meet her here," he answered. "She is a gipsy, and gipsies don't thrive in cities. She is not thriving, poor soul, but her troubles will soon be over."

"Then she is dying? Uncle Gibbon must be told," said Gatty.

"Yes, she is dying," Canon Vardye replied. "About a week ago I saw her at a street corner, trying to sell flowers. Her face was greatly changed, but I recognised her dark eyes—they had the old light in them—and I saw that she knew me. Her story was soon told, and it was plain that she would not suffer much longer."

"And you took care of her?" cried Gatty. "One need not ask that."

"It is my business to take care of people," he said quietly. "I had her conveyed to a Home at Hornsey, where she can see grass and trees and plenty of sky. You and Mr. Fenning will go there to see her, will you not?"

"We will go to-morrow," Gatty answered.

And she kept her word.

Uncle and niece met every day, and spent a great deal of time together. The ex-farmer had taken very kindly to London life. He loved books and papers, and was deeply interested in all the great questions of the day. Then, too, he was constantly engaged in watching Gatty's development, and hearing all about those social successes of hers which had become so frequent.

"But I am always glad that she is something more than a beauty," he had said, when Lady Vansittart had first told him of the admiration she had excited. "I like her to be a beauty, and something else as well."

And as time went on he was quite sure that she was "something else as well." There was a shade of gravity and a touch of dignity about her which made Bennet Vardye liken her to "a grave and beautiful damsel named Discretion."

As they went to Hornsey together, she gave her uncle a brief account of her meeting with the Mainsboroughs. It did not surprise her to see his kind face darken a little; she divined his unspoken fear, and took his hand into hers.

"I know all that you are thinking, uncle," she said;

"but I am not sorry that I have had this test. It has proved that not a bit of the old foolish Gatty is left. Oh, uncle, I cannot thank you enough for taking me away from the farm, and bringing me into a new world!"

It was very seldom that she was as outspoken as this. A sweet candour was never wanting in her, but she rarely gave way to any outburst of emotion. Those who knew her best could understand that she had constantly cultivated the habit of self-restraint. Always on the watch lest the old impulsive and impatient spirit should break loose again, she had acquired a command over herself which was remarkable in so young a woman. And yet she was not cold. People knew instinctively that it was not want of heart that kept her so composed; there was ever a hint of deep feeling in her words and ways.

Gibbon Fenning's momentary doubt was set at rest. He gave her a contented smile, and then began to speak of other things.

"And now," she said, when they reached Hornsey, "I am going to see another face from the past."

CHAPTER XVII.

READING HEARTS.

THE Home had once been a family house—almost a mansion—with a large garden behind, and an extensive view from the upper windows. They had given Mrs. Piddock a little room high up—a room so small that it would only hold a bed—but the Canon had begged that she might have solitude and a wide outlook. And although in her heart of hearts the gipsy woman would rather have died in a tent on some wild bit of waste land, she was grateful for the kindness that had given her this last refuge.

The bed was drawn close to the window, and the light of a perfect day was shining in upon its occupant. Some creepers twined about the window-frame, and their shadows flickered over the coverlet and pillow; and now and then a bird darted past, followed by the dark eyes which still retained the vivid glow of old times. Gatty had entered the room alone, and her uncle waited down-stairs, thinking that Mrs. Piddock might be too weak to receive them both.

"So it's you, missy," said the woman in a faint voice. "'T was kind to come, and I knew you would. Ah! sit there in the light, and let me look at you."

Gatty complied, and sat down by the bed in the afternoon sunshine.

"Am I very much changed?" she asked, smiling.

"Yes, you've lost the country look, missy; and it suits you well to be a fine lady. How gentle your eyes have grown! You're a rose still, Miss Gatty, but not a wild rose now."

"I think the wildness is gone," Gatty said frankly. "But tell me how you came to be in London."

"I followed my Ben, missy. He took to coming to my cottage at odd times, and I knew it wasn't safe for him. At last he said he'd tramp to London if I'd follow and overtake him on the road. And so I did."

"Is he living?" Gatty asked.

"No, missy: he died a year ago. And then I'd have got back to the country if my strength hadn't failed. Ben was like his father, and my man led me a hard life. I married out of my own people, and that never brings luck."

She paused, looking out of the window at the bright May sky, and the tree-tops swaying in a light wind.

"It's peaceful here," she went on; "and I've learnt to love peace. 'T was Mr. Vardye who led me into the light, missy; and after the light came the calm. I don't think I knew how much he *had* taught me till you came and urged me to tell you the old rhyme. You pressed me sore, missy, and at last I did tell. But my heart smote me afterwards. I knew I'd done wrong in helping you to do a wrong thing, and I feared all that might come of it."

"When I look back on that time, it is like remembering a dream," said Gatty. "But I can recollect that I wanted to go to the top of old Winchester Hill when the moon was full, and call on Thor the Thunderer. I can never think of my folly without shame and disgust. And I am very sure that Mr. Vardye can never think of it without contempt."

She spoke the last words more to herself than to her hearer, and there was a tone of deep regret in her voice. Mrs. Piddock, weak as she was, had not lost her old powers of observation; her dark eyes studied the girl with an intent look.

"Maybe you can't read his thoughts as well as I can, dearie." The old woman spoke with uncommon tenderness. "Ah! I read them long ago. The poor gipsy has lost everything but her power of reading hearts. There have always been some in my tribe who could do that, let folks laugh as they will."

"But you do not say that you can read the future?" Gatty exclaimed.

"The heart foretells its own future, missy. I saw that he was good and wise, and very strong; and I saw too—— Shall I tell you?"

There was a breathless silence. Then Gatty bent forward, and the light in her brown eyes was very eager and bright. "Yes, tell me," she whispered.

"I saw that he cared for you, missy, in spite of all your waywardness and foolishness; and I knew that he wasn't the one to change. He was waiting till the blow fell on you—waiting to lift you up when you were bruised and hurt, and guide your steps afterwards. And he has been watching you all these years; he has seen you keeping guard over yourself, and walking carefully and meekly because of the past. Forgive the poor gipsy, Miss Gatty, for speaking out so plain. But I see that you are doubting and fearing now, and maybe that makes you shy when you should be frank and free."

The tears were in Gatty's eyes then, and her colour came and went. The dying woman had used the freedom which her condition gave her, and she had used it well. She had divined that Gatty's intense humility was standing between her and the accomplishment of her heart's desire. Humility sometimes looks like pride, sometimes like indifference, but it very seldom seems to be the thing that it really is.

A little of her superstitious belief in Mrs. Piddock's mysterious powers was clinging to her yet. At any



"'Gatty, you must listen to me now."'—*p.* 939.

rate, the gipsy was no ordinary woman, and it was impossible to disregard her words. Gatty did not want to disregard them; she took them gratefully into her heart.

The gipsy's dark, intense gaze followed her to the door as she departed. And when she was gone, Mrs. Piddock lay watching the swallows darting across the blue, and the waving tops of the trees. Her heart went forth to that out-of-door world, and she began to think of the tent on the borders of a wood, and the circle of brown faces round the wood-fire and the kettle, just as she had seen them in her childhood and girlhood. "Wed not with a stranger," was one of the unwritten laws of her people, and she had broken it, and had known bitter trouble.

Yet, with all the sorrow there had come to her consolations which she might never have known if she had clung to her old wandering life. First of all, the kindness of the Fennings had opened her heart to new influences; and then she had been drawn towards Gatty—partly because the girl had the picturesque beauty and the strong, free spirit that belonged to her own race. Then came Bennet Vardye, and sought her out in her solitude, and spoke to her as man had never spoken before. And now she was dying, and although the old longing for freedom and nature asserted itself sometimes, there was nothing that could touch the deep calm of the soul.

Gibbon Fenning went up-stairs and said a few kind words, and took the charge of her maintenance entirely on himself. When he came down again Gatty was in the garden, talking to the matron of the

Home, and he wondered what had made her cheeks and eyes so bright.

Lady Silverthorpe and Mrs. Mainsborough called on Miss Fenning, and the latter was a little disappointed, although she would not allow the disappointment to appear. Gatty was pleasant and friendly; but she was not in the least like the old Gatty. She smiled when her former friend talked of old times, but there was an invisible wall built up around her.

"If Warren can contrive to see her alone he may succeed—in fact, I am sure he will," said Mrs. Mainsborough to her sister. "But of course Lady Vansittart will guard her like a dragon."

"Oh, she doesn't need much guarding. I never saw any girl better able to take care of herself," Lady Silverthorpe replied. "If Warren does not get his opportunity it will be because she doesn't choose to give him one."

But he did get it. He went one day to Sir Lawrence Vansittart's house, and found Gatty alone in the drawing-room.

It was not the usual afternoon for receiving visitors, and she was sitting at a little table, with her work-basket at her side. She was very busy, making a frock for some poor child in one of those refuges which her uncle's money helped to support. The door leading into the conservatory was open, and the room was filled with the scent of flowers. Gatty was wearing the pale-grey gown again, and had a cluster of water-buttercups on her bosom.

Warren found, to his surprise, that he was noticing everything that she wore. He had seen scores of other women dressed in the same way, and yet he observed the fall of each soft fold, and the delicate ruffle of lace at her throat. Hundreds of other women wore flowers, but he looked at those yellow kingcups as if she had made them her own, and they had bloomed for her only. They were miles away from the Valley of the Meon, yet the old White House rose before his eyes, with its shaven lawn and dark cedars, and the sunshine lying warm on the grass. Perhaps she saw it too. She smiled at him, and they shook hands, and began to talk about the weather.

"Those buttercups make me think of the country," he said. "It is an age since I was there. Do you remember our flowers at White House?"

"Perfectly, and the great bunches of heliotrope you used to give me," she answered frankly. "Come and look at the conservatory, and tell me if you think my plants are doing well."

Among the leaves and blossoms he fancied he should draw nearer to her; and yet there was the invisible barrier which had checked his mother. She was kind and sweet, but there was always something a little cold in the brown eyes—something that rebuked him even for his old remembrance of her. At last some trifling remark seemed to make an opening, and he plunged into the subject of the past. First he spoke of his losses.

"I am so grieved that you should have been so unfortunate," she said.

"Don't grieve about me," he answered. "It couldn't be helped, and I have no right to complain. The trouble fell heavily on my mother, that's the worst of it. How little we thought of all this when we made a feast on your seventeenth birthday, and called you the queen of roses!"

"I remember," she responded. "It was a bright day, and you were very good to me."

"Good to you!" His voice shook a little. "What would I not give if I could be good to you now? If I were not the ruined man that I am, I would try to think you were Gatty again. Now and then a look or a word makes me forget my miserable position, and then I dream of what might have been. Do you—can you recollect the last time I saw you at the farm? If I had seen you again afterwards——"

He paused, and she looked at him with eyes that seemed to question and doubt. Then she spoke very quietly—

"I am glad of this opportunity," she said. "There is something that I want to say about that night. It was not until the hall door was shut that I remembered the bridge. I knew that it had been swept away, but I had not warned you. I tried to open the door and call you back, but my head grew dizzy, and I knew no more."

"If I had only known!" he cried. "A thousand times since then I have wished that I *had* gone back to you. I was utterly wretched when we parted; but it seems as if things had been against me all through. If I could only make you believe——"

"I believe that you felt very kindly towards an ignorant, undisciplined girl," she interposed in a calm, sweet tone. "And I shall always think of you as an old friend. You used to lend me books and make the days pass pleasantly, and I am grateful for it all. But I am very glad that I have done with that old time. I don't wish to live one hour of the past again."

He had got an answer to the question he had not dared to ask, and his heart was very full. For the first time in his aimless life he loved really and truly, and knew now that he loved in vain.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNDERSTOOD AT LAST.

After he was gone, Gatty went back to her chair by the table, and sat there with a faint look of trouble on her face.

"I am sorry for him," she thought, "but I'm selfish enough to be still more sorry for myself. This talk with him has brought back my old folly with such dreadful clearness. Every time I think of those days I tingle from head to foot with intolerable shame. It seems incredible now that I could ever have felt or acted as I did then. I am paying a heavy price for my madness. I was living in a dream—I saw nothing as it really was. But who will understand that? Not even Mr. Vardye, although he always seems to know everything. Ah! let the gipsy say what she will, he cannot help despising me."

For some minutes she sat motionless, her hands clasped in her lap, her eyes fixed upon a buttercup lying on the carpet. The sight of the flower was almost hateful to her at this moment. She could not

help recalling the time when she had strolled through the meadows watered by the Meon with Warren by her side, and they had gathered basketfuls of these large shiny buttercups. It seemed as if she was always to be haunted by phantoms of the past.

Then tears came, but they fell very quietly. She felt so bitterly humiliated by the vision of her old self that she wept for very shame. Presently she would compose herself and go on with her sewing; but just for a little while she must sit here and cry. It was not often that she felt so weak; the interview with Warren had unnerved her, and it was good to be quite alone.

She did not notice the sound of steps in the passage, and when the door was thrown open and Canon Vardye walked in, she was overcome with confusion. But he seemed to be unconscious of anything strange about her, and began at once to talk about Mrs. Piddock and the arrangements at the Home. Gatty tried to seem interested, but her face was still so pale and her voice so unsteady that the Canon saw how much the effort cost her. There was a brief pause, and then he said carelessly that he had seen Mainsborough in the square, and asked if he had called.

"Yes," answered Gatty, growing paler than ever. "He was here a little while ago."

"And he has been telling you about his troubles?" the Canon went on. "But his prospects may brighten yet. There is a chance that those investments of his may turn out well, after all."

Gatty was growing desperate. It was plain that Canon Vardye believed her to be grieving over Warren's sorrows. And it was true that her tears and pallor puzzled him very much and pained him also. She knew that she had never been so terribly misunderstood as she was at this moment. And it was all Warren's fault; the little scene with him had left her shaken and agitated; and she had not had time to recover herself before the Canon came in.

Oh! these old foolish loves—why cannot they lie still in the graves in which we have given them decent burial? Oh! those wild oats that we sowed long ago with such reckless hands—why do they spring up and mingle with the rich crops of our later years? Thoughts like these floated through Gatty's troubled brain, and her bitterness of spirit was greater than she could bear.

Bennet Vardye sat and looked at her in silence, his face set, and his firm lips pressed together. He understood it all, he thought. Warren had come back to her a poor man, humbled and chastened, and the old girlish love had been revived. It was just like Gatty to love her old hero better for being unfortunate and forlorn. All her intercourse with the world had left her as unworldly in spirit as the girl who had roamed among the hills. But Gibbon Fenning, with his deeply rooted aversion to Warren Mainsborough, would stand in his niece's way. And Gatty was feeling that here was an obstacle which she could not remove. This was the cause of her tears and uncontrollable distress.

"I must help her to be happy," thought the man who had loved her so long in silence. "Warren isn't a bad fellow by any means, although he is not half good enough for her. A true love will develop the good that is in him as nothing else could do. I must reason with Gibbon Fenning, and make the path smooth for their feet. As to myself——"

The thought of self was crushed down in an instant. He had never had much hope for himself, as far as Gatty was concerned. When she was a mere girl he had kept her back from committing an act of folly, and he had lectured her with perfect frankness. Of course she had been regarding him as a stern mentor ever since, and that was why she was always a little shy in his presence. Girls did not want to marry their mentors. Moreover, there was no romance about him, and he was the last man in the world to think of winning a beauty and an heiress. Gatty had always pined for somebody who *looked* romantic. He was sure that many of her girlish tastes and likings were clinging to her still. He had seen her receive the marked attentions of several eligible men with gentle indifference, and he had heard her say, with her slow smile, that not one of them had ever touched her ideal.

"I must see Warren and have a talk with him," he said, breaking the silence. "He ought not to lose heart about anything. I always thought that there was a great deal of hidden good in him. He must not despair."

"I don't suppose he will despair," she answered. And there was a tone in her voice which startled him a little; it suggested that she had spoken the words with a feeling of contempt.

"Warren is a hundred times better than his mother," he went on. "She is just a commonplace, worldly schemer, but he is capable of deep feeling. I think it was Mr. Fenning's dislike to the mother that made him misjudge the son."

"Uncle Gibbon never misjudges anyone." Her pale cheeks had flushed suddenly, and tears filled her eyes. "He saw people as they really were, and I saw them as they never could be. Uncle Gibbon is always right, and—and I suppose I'm always wrong," she added helplessly.

"Gatty, what is the matter?" His tone was decided, although it was as kind as ever. He meant to have an answer to his question, and very few could withstand his will when he chose to exert the force that was in him. She struggled silently against this power of his for a moment; and then their eyes met, and rested upon each other.

"Gatty, you will have to tell me," he said.

"It won't do any good to tell." The expression of pain deepened on her face.

"Tell me, and let me judge," he persisted.

She clasped her hands nervously.

"Oh, don't urge me," she entreated; "it—it hurts me sometimes to put feelings into words."

"It may hurt you now, but it will do you good later on. Speak, Gatty," he said inexorably.

She trembled, and flushed, and paled again.

"It won't do any good," she repeated feebly. "And I don't know how to say it all. Warren has been here talking about the past, and it has upset me."

"That is just as I thought," he said in his quiet voice.

"No, no, it isn't. You have been thinking wrong." She covered her face with her hands for an instant, and then let them fall slowly on her lap. "If I tell you the truth, it will not be my fault if you still misunderstand. I—I have almost detested poor Warren to-day for showing me a vision of my old self. I wanted to forget, and he brought everything back."

"Poor child!" he said softly.

"I don't even pity him as I ought," she continued, in a low voice. "He has reminded me of the former Gatty—the wild girl whom I must always despise. And the worst thing of all is——"

"What?" he asked gently.

"That you despise her, too!"

When the words were uttered she rose, and went away into the conservatory to hide herself among the flowers. She could not tell him to leave her, and yet she felt that she must escape from him somehow. But she could not go very far, for he followed, and took her hands in his.

"I knew I should repent having spoken," she murmured.

"No," he answered. "You won't repent it. Gatty, you must listen to me now. You must hear me say that I never did despise you."

Her hands were trembling in his own. "Are you sure?" she asked.

"Perfectly sure. Gatty, I did not think that you cared so much about my opinion."

"But I do," she said.

"Then you must hear me say something more. Instead of despising that wild girl you spoke of, I loved her, and saw in her the promises of a noble woman. Those promises have all been fulfilled, Gatty. I see how resolutely she has controlled her wayward will—how anxious she is for the good of others—how sweet and calm her life has grown. And with all my heart I love her now."

She lifted her face gently to his with a look that was indescribably tender and grateful. He would never misunderstand her again. There was perfect trust and joy in both their hearts—a joy that belonged entirely to themselves, and could never be touched by the world. Out of doors, outside their screen of glass and green leaves, the roar and traffic of London was going on; but it did not reach their senses. Gatty had found the resting-place that she had longed for, and nothing could enter into her sanctuary of peace.

THE END.

ON HAVING A HOBBY.

A HOBBY is a companion in loneliness, a resource in dulness, a meeting-ground for a congenial spirit who also has a hobby—perhaps your own—over which to fraternise; and really, when I begin to sing the praises of this valuable possession, it is hard to know where to stop. It is a good thing to become possessed of a hobby when you are young. You can acquire an immense amount of knowledge which will be of valuable service to you in later life if you have some pet pursuit.

You may be devoid of all taste for music, and not be able to draw a straight stroke; but if these two great talents are denied you, there are many others equally interesting.

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The selection of your special attraction must depend upon yourself, and if no one science or pursuit in particular seems to possess a charm for you, I should make acquaintance practically with one or two, and you may find the charm is there after all.

Actually studying and learning about any one especial thing—not because it is part of school routine and you are obliged to learn it, but because you have a curiosity to know all about it, and are interested in the subject—will teach you a great deal. To walking, travelling, society, you will find a great deal of interest added by your hobby. You will meet people who also care about the same thing as you do, and it forms a subject on which much pleasant conversation can be had. Exchange of ideas and experience on the subject will prove a source of knowledge to both parties.

Until people make the first plunge into science, many are dissuaded from doing so by the fear of finding it dull. All those 'ologies sound so formidable, and the books seem so uninteresting. Possibly, if as a tyro you take up a very advanced work on any science, it strikes you as uninteresting, as it is until you understand it. There are plenty of primers and easy text-books on all subjects published in these days, and if you master one of these, and add a little practical knowledge by your own experiments or researches, you will be astonished to find how very much you understand and enjoy in the larger work which hitherto has seemed so formidable. If you live in the country, and select entomology or botany as your study, you can easily increase your knowledge by trying to find specimens; and if ornithology has taken your fancy, bird-life can be observed, and an added interest will be given to your reading on the subject. It is a good thing, in the country especially, to try and form clubs for this kind of thing. Half a dozen people who really have had no definite interest in any special occupation will enjoy botanising together, or going on an archæological or geological expedition. Notes can be compared, and a great deal of information gained.

In a town, the study of any given subject must perforce be on different lines. Books are within reach of all, and a very fair knowledge can be acquired by means of study, by the use of plates, and also by going to museums and attending lectures. A hobby of some kind or other is a very great resource. A clerk in the City, who is hard at work all day, can spend many a happy evening if he has some occupation with which he can amuse and interest himself, particularly in winter, when outdoor pleasures are impossible, and perhaps limited means prevent his getting the diversions and society within reach of his richer friends. Another of the many uses of a hobby is that it is an antidote to idleness. And that idleness grows upon people is a fact that none can deny; and as the growth advances the will gets more and more paralysed, until all exertion becomes much dreaded, and one duty after another is let slip.

Many a child's hobby has turned out of great help to him later in life, when having to pass examinations. Then the practical knowledge of any given subject, knowledge acquired from pure love and interest, is easily revived and used, often helping him on to success or advancement.

A girl goes to an ambulance class, and takes up physiology in an elementary way. For the time being it becomes a hobby, and she enjoys reading books on the subject, picking the brains of any nurses she meets, and practising what she knows whenever opportunity offers. Passing over the use that this often is—sometimes a means of saving life itself—should the girl later on go in for hospital training, the knowledge gained will be a great help to her. *En passant*, I might give the said girl a hint that, even if she have passed her ambulance examinations with flying colours, and be possessed of her beloved certificates, she will do well to conceal the fact when she appears as a "pro.," or a "guinea-pig" (a paying pupil), at some hospital. Compared with hospital training, of course, the ambulance courses are but slight. They never profess to be anything else. Slight, but thorough as far as they go, has been my own experience; and if the girl has passed well, she will find much of the way paved for hospital work. But her wisdom will be in not boasting of her knowledge, as, if she does, a fair amount of "chaff," perhaps more than her temper can stand, will most assuredly be her lot.

Her hobby will have familiarised her with the outline of the structure of the human body. She will know how to bandage deftly, she will understand a good many scientific words, and she will find herself not quite at sea when she first tries her hand at poultice-making and wound-dressing.

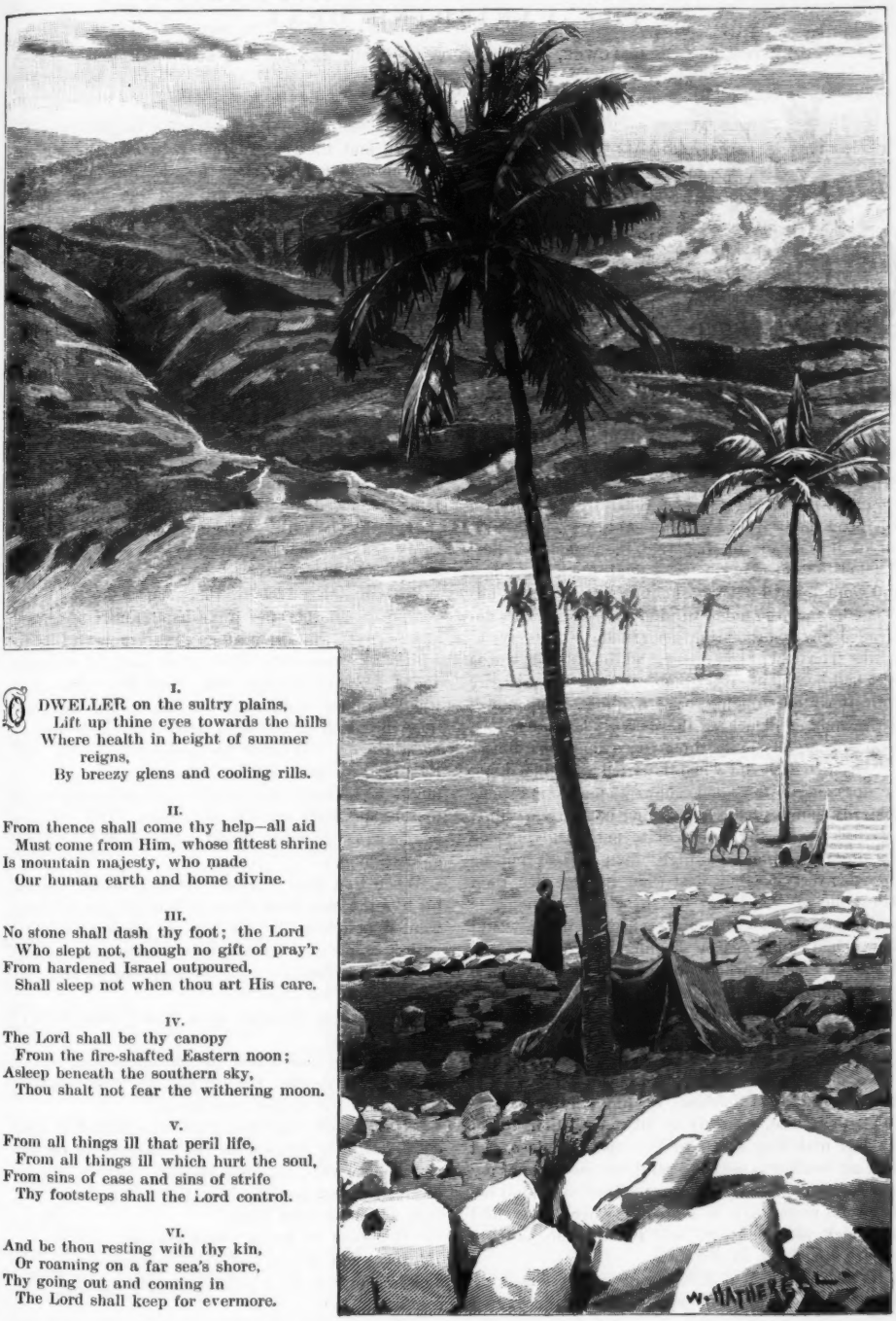
A lady I knew, who has made her mark in the literary world, once asked a great authority on the matter what he suggested for a fresh line upon which to exercise her pen. His answer was, that if she had a hobby she had better write about it. A great many of the groans we hear from literary aspirants whose efforts do not meet with success, would not be uttered if these good people only tried to write of what they *know* something about. All have not the talent for fiction or imaginative work; but to those who have taken up botany or entomology, or have any science or favourite occupation as a hobby, if the desire seizes them to write, then there seems a better chance of success if they draw upon what they have learnt by practical experience and the close observation of an interested eye.

To throw the smallest ray of light upon any of God's wonderful works in Nature is to do good work for the world; and most of the men and women who have made their mark in this way have done so by giving to the world the results of that which they learnt by the pursuance of what in its embryo stage was perhaps only a hobby.

THE TRAVELLER'S PSALM.

BY DOUGLAS B. W. SLADEN, AUTHOR OF "AUSTRALIAN LYRICS," ETC.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."—PSALM CXXI.



I.

O DWELLER on the sultry plains,
Lift up thine eyes towards the hills
Where health in height of summer reigns,
By breezy glens and cooling rills.

II.

From thence shall come thy help—all aid
Must come from Him, whose fittest shrine
Is mountain majesty, who made
Our human earth and home divine.

III.

No stone shall dash thy foot; the Lord
Who slept not, though no gift of pray'r
From hardened Israel outpoured,
Shall sleep not when thou art His care.

IV.

The Lord shall be thy canopy
From the fire-shafted Eastern noon;
Asleep beneath the southern sky,
Thou shalt not fear the withering moon.

V.

From all things ill that peril life,
From all things ill which hurt the soul,
From sins of ease and sins of strife
Thy footsteps shall the Lord control.

VI.

And be thou resting with thy kin,
Or roaming on a far sea's shore,
Thy going out and coming in
The Lord shall keep for evermore.

THE VANISHING OPAL.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE MAN ON THE SLANT," ETC.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART III.

CHAPTER III.

ISAAC COLOMAN'S son having taken his departure, the old man proceeded to consult the opal on his own account.

"Be favourable to me, precious of my heart," said he; "be gracious unto one who crowns thee the gem of all gems in his heart, and who loves thee with a love passing the love of women. Tell me what will ease my troubled mind, show me a token for good; yet whatever thou sayest I will not gainsay; for my sake, far be it from me to wish that thou shouldest lie."

Then the old man this time spun the stone round and round, until the shortening silk at last untwisted, and the gem turning the other way descended towards the bright spot made by the crystal again. The opal at last rested, and the old man, whose eyes had been shut, at the moment the stone gave any indications of stopping gave a quick, momentary, but searching glance at the gem. Then he gave a deep groan, and smote three times upon his breast.

"Even so as it did when I parted with Ben Ezra, so does it now. Thou showest me, O precious gem, thy flaming red. If warning is the right thing, I accept it as thy goodness to me in giving me warning; if danger be nigh, thou mayest not be able to avert it—thou dost what in thee lies, thou tellest me of it. I fear for thyself, O precious, O noble one, and for myself because of thee; would that I had wandered a seeming beggar about the streets of London, when first I came to this place, rather than have taken thee under Ben Ezra's roof, and let thee fall under his accursed eyes. May thy beard, Ben Ezra, dry up to the very roots—yea, I would that thou wouldest dry up thyself, from the crown of the head to the foot. And what is this thou sayest?" said Coloman, reading a letter he took up; "thou hast, contrary to all expectation, found the last matching stone to thy opal necklace, and thou art coming to me concerning the purchase of my opal for a pendant to the same! Thou remindest me that I am under oath to give it to thee; and, child of ill luck, here thou art," said the old man, as there came a knocking at the door.

It was indeed Ben Ezra's staff that was making the noise, and a few moments more saw him seated in Isaac Coloman's room.

Isaac had taken the precaution to put away the crystal and the gem, so Ben Ezra lost the advantage of a text ready-made for the discourse.

"Sit thee down, brother," said the visitor, "and gladden thine eyes with the opal that comes next to thy precious gem," and the Jew drew one of such cases as we have already described from his breast. It contained the necklace, now perfect; the match gem had indeed been obtained. "And now, brother, to complete this matchless necklace—destined after many years' delay for a crowned head—I have come to thee to provide what is yet lacking—a pendant such as is worthy of the necklace itself. I make no secret of it; thou and thou only canst supply this stone, and thou shalt have thy price. This is a case of what they call love, and love is the best pay there is. He who gets these gems to give them away must pay for them, and that he knows well; and—poor fool!—he will get some kisses for them and think that he has been well paid. Now, Coloman, thy price?"

"I will not part with the gem," said Isaac.

"Didst not thou put thine hand under my thigh, and swear?" said the visitor. "But thou art turning white—thou art ill! Thou must think of it again, and I will call another time," and Ben Ezra—who was afraid of Coloman's having a fit, and not knowing what to do with him if he had—took a hasty leave. "What if he should have a fit," said Ben Ezra to himself, "and die upon the floor? I might be taken up for murder; coming with intent to rob, and then staying to murder. The necklace has had to wait long; it will not harm it to wait yet a little longer."

When Ben Ezra returned home, he found waiting for him the man from whom he had bought the long-wanted match opal. He was an ill-looking man, with a couple of deep gashes in his face, but he had brought Ben Ezra the stone he had wanted, and that was enough for him.

"And where thinkest thou that I have been?" said the Jew.

"Grubbing somewhere in the slime and dirt, I suppose," answered the ill-looking man gruffly; "trying to get money somewhere."

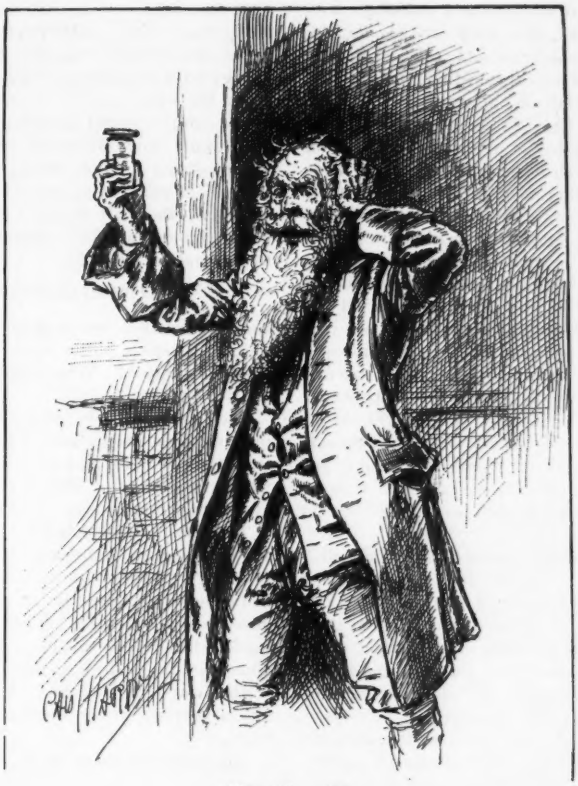
"Nay, friend," said Ben Ezra, who wished to keep on the best of terms with the stranger, for he had yet some smaller, but very precious, opals to dispose of: "Nay; but getting an opal, or trying to get one, that will beat even thine."

"It cannot be found," said the man gruffly.

"Nay; but it can, and I know where to find it, and I mean it to be a pendant to the necklace now complete."

"There is but one opal in the world," said the

man, "that I know of that can answer your description; and there is one—would that I could draw something across the throat of the man to whom I sold it—for it once was mine. It was not so much its size—though that too was excellent—but it was its fire; nay, talk not of its fire, but of its fires. Where I got it is naught to you, and you need not ask about it; and why I sold it, and sold it for what at the moment I could get, is naught to you either. I know not where it now is, or where the man to whom I sold it. Would that I could see the stone again for the love of it, and would that I could see him again to transact further business with him," and the ill-looking man made an ugly gesture.



"Gone!"—*p.* 944.

"I can tell thee his name, perhaps," said Ben Ezra, "but I will not tell thee where he lives; or thou mayest perhaps be a shedder of blood, and lose thine own life. Is his name Coloman — Isaac Coloman—and comes he from Hungary?" The Jew watched the effect of this.

"The same," said the stranger excitedly. "Would that I could meet with him—at any rate with his throat. I have cursed him ever since I let him have that stone; but I tell you, friend, you will never get it from him—not for money, not for anything that man can name. But try, and if you succeed—look here, Ben Ezra, I will give you this opal as a present;" and the man grinned from ear to ear. "This I will promise on my part; and look! this is not an every-day stone; and you—you must promise on your part that, if the stone is not in your possession within a month from this, you will follow out my wishes about that stone, on the faith that you run no risk, and are not subjected to any loss; except, indeed, your not being able to get that stone, which I tell you no living man will ever get out of Isaac Coloman's hands. A month! Work at him for a month, and then I come again."

Ben Ezra did work hard for a month; he worked very hard. But the end of the month found him where he was at the beginning. He not only could not get the opal itself, but he could not even get a sight of it.

And now appeared again upon the scene that ugly-looking man. "Well, let me see Isaac Coloman's opal," said he to Ben Ezra. "No, you have not got it. You need not tell me this and that about it; I knew you would not. But what you could not do, I can do for you; and, more than that, I can give that opal a lustre even beyond what it already has, but you must be patient. You must tell Coloman that you have abandoned the idea of having a pendant to your necklace; you must tell him that it is complete without it, that even a crowned head could not afford to pay what he justly demands for it. You and he must be the closest of friends, and then you must tell him that you have found out that there is a way of increasing the power of the opal's colours, and that on his paying you such a sum as you choose to name you will give him the charm. I will give you that charm, and he, being no longer obliged to sell to you, will not object to let his opal lie for a while in a crystal bottle sealed with his own seal, and left in his own possession; the water in it will be opal life—the secret of opal fire. I can bide my time. You

go and try. One thing I promise you: the precious opal of Czernowitza shall leave the possession of Isaac Coloman."

The Hungarian departed, and Ben Ezra faithfully carried out his instructions.

When Isaac Coloman found that Ben Ezra was no longer on the tack of purchasing the opal—that, in fact, he had abandoned the idea, he became near friends with him, and allowed him with comparative freedom to see and even handle the stone.

As soon as friendly relations and confidence were thoroughly established, Ben Ezra arrived one day, following a letter which he had previously sent, telling Coloman that he had something to tell him, full of wonder, and full of profit too.

"Isaac," said Ben Ezra, "thou didst never expect to live to see such a happy day as this will be for thee, and for thy priceless gem. Know that I have been long experimenting upon opals to increase their brightness, but until now have failed; but a scholar, one of our people, has met with something in a very ancient book written by one Theophrastus, a friend and disciple of one Aristotle, who may have been a Christian for aught I know or care, and that put me on the scent; and I have raised the value of many of my stones full fifty per cent. What will thy opal be? It will be like forked lightning, like twenty dying dolphins, like the sunrise and the sunset; it will be green as the grass, blue as the sky; it will shame the sheen of silver and gold; it will mock the diamond, the ruby, and the pearl. I should like before my bones are gathered to my fathers to see such a sight as thy gem will be when it hath been dipped in this elixir of life."

Isaac Coloman listened open-mouthed to all that Ben Ezra told him. "I knew not," said he, "that aught could add to the beauty of this gem; but can no harm happen to it?"—"Love I not it even as thou dost?" said Ben Ezra reproachfully. "Thou shalt see that which will make it the wonder of the world. It is naught save water with the light of heaven imprisoned in it by means of crystals; and there is a certain prayer to be used, which I will tell thee after we have seen thy gem blazing like a thousand sunsets and sunrises to boot; and then thou canst treat every opal thou gettest, and make it of double price."

As Ben Ezra had formally renounced any desire to possess the opal himself, and had absolved Isaac Coloman from his oath, the latter had no suspicion of any kind, and a day was settled when the gem was to be plunged in the elixir of opal life.

Ben Ezra received from the Hungarian a wide-mouthed crystal cup, with a stopper closely fitting thereto, with directions that the opal should be gently dropped into it, and be allowed to remain in the dark for fourteen days. "So long," said he, "tell Coloman it will take to absorb finer shades, and to intensify the fiercer fires; then, at the end of fourteen days, let him take out the gem—he will scarcely dare hold it in his hand owing to those fires."

With great reverence did Isaac Coloman receive the crystal, and with great solemnity did he produce the gem, and with many expressions of affection did he commit it to the little vessel, sealing down the stopper with his own signet, and depositing it in a dark recess which he had made for it by taking out one of the bricks from the wall. It was of the essence of the operation that no light should reach the crystal while it was going on, and during that fortnight Isaac Coloman never left the room.

At last the day came when he was to see the gem, the darling of his soul, a thousand times more lovely than before. All the preceding night he had tossed to and fro upon his bed; he was almost dazzled with the visions of light which had flashed across his eyes.

The sun rose bright that auspicious morning. The gem would catch its light, would concentrate it, would shame it; light would dwell in it without the sun at all. "Oh, glory of all gems! and thou art mine, thou art mine!" said Coloman, as he removed the brick with a trembling hand, and held the crystal to the light.

THE OPAL WAS GONE!

Naught remained but a small, a very small, dark spot. The spirit of the opal had fled! Was that indeed its corpse? What was it that had destroyed the precious gem?

The crystal fell from Coloman's hand and smashed upon the floor, and Coloman himself followed it. He was struck with an apoplectic fit, and the life which would have been of little use to him without the almost worshipped gem, quickly passed away.

The Hungarian had had his revenge. What even the blowpipe, concentrating on one spot the heat of terrible fire, could not do, a solution of caustic potash had done; with a fire which could not be seen, it had devoured the opal's life. It had lent no colour to the liquid which it impregnated; it destroyed its victim almost in the garb of an angel of light.

The corpse of Coloman and the vanished gem are an epitome of the history of too many human lives.

The world has many opals; it has many corpses, too!

Thus died Isaac Coloman; but he left other folk in the world behind him. The Hungarian was not dead; nor was Ben Ezra, his brother Jew; nor was Sigismund, nor was Leopoldine.

As to the Hungarian, Ben Ezra saw him no more. The man knew only too well that the opal must perish; and he knew also that that would mean life-long misery to Isaac Coloman, his foe. He did not know that it would mean death.

Ben Ezra, with many curses—for the opal had now slipped from his hand for ever—spent much time and money in endeavouring to track the man, but without effect. He was never heard of more. There was a man somewhat answering the description guillotined in France for murder committed in a

jewel robbery, and Ben Ezra comforted himself much with the thought that it might possibly be he.

There are opals in the world which are made of elements somewhat softer and more precious than silica (flint), of which, after all, the most precious opal is composed—soft opals, whisperers of light, whose



"Little Maira was all she had left."—*p. 946.*

transitions from beauty to beauty are so imperceptible, yet so real, that their grace and power are but as one; and of these was Leopoldine Gratz.

Leopoldine married Sigismund in due time after his father's death. The days of mourning Sigismund cut as short as possible, and then was comforted (if comforting he needed) for the old man's death by the newness of married life.

Sigismund was a Jew, a bitter Jew; but Leopoldine, who also was a Jewess, could never see why her people should have killed the Nazarene, Who had done no one any harm, and Who had done everyone good. Much did Leopoldine love to read of Him; oftentimes she thought that, had she lived in His times, she would have belonged to Him. Much she wondered whether she would have anointed His feet with ointment, and wiped them with the hair of her head, carrying away herself, by the very law and necessity of the act, some of the perfume she had spent on Him. Many a time did she almost talk with Him, making her lone room like that lone well at Sychar; and be He what He said He was or not, she believed that were it all to be done over again, and were she there, she would try to fetch His body away, and would stand weeping outside His tomb. Whoever He was, whatever He was, He was lovable, and to be loved.

The term "Nazarene" was one of reproach; and by this name He was never known in Leopoldine's

mind. With her it was as the prophet says it was, "not day nor night, though at her evening time it came to pass that there was light." Leopoldine could not bring herself to see all that He was, though she did acknowledge that He was—oh, how much! She knew Him in her mind as "THE ONE," let that mean what it would, and all that it could.

And had it not been for thinking of this ONE, Leopoldine's life would have, after a while, been ill to bear.

For Sigismund, her husband, became gradually soured by the loss of the opal on which his father had set such store, and which he had counted upon inheriting, and with it exceeding wealth.

True, he had the other stones, whose hiding-place he knew; and these, with what he already had, were abundantly enough for far more than comfort; but we think not of what we have, but of what we have not—not of what we have had spared, but of whatever we may have lost. These are corrosives for the mind, the heart, the man; and the Hungarian seemed to have provided one not only for the father, but also for the son.

As time went on, what had become of the opal was the one question which fretted the jeweller's spirit. The memory of the stone began to be almost as precious to the son as the stone itself had been to his father; but it was gone—gone.

Gradually the corrosive ate into the young man's spirit, and soured him in his business; and, worse than that, soured him in his daily life.

The jeweller had in his wife a gem more precious than many opals—a gem whose voice, and look, and touch, and way, had in them tendernesses softer than any opal's lights; but his heart was not with what he had, but with what he had not; and he believed himself to be absolutely poor, because he was not relatively rich.

Had he not another little gem in Maira, his only child—a little human opal full of changing lights and fire? But they were naught; wife and child could not cope with his heavy loss. Sigismund the jeweller became morose—no husband to Leopoldine, no father to Maira, a dweller amongst the tombs, one bound to the lost, even as a criminal was bound to a corpse of old. Sore were the provocations which fell to poor Leopoldine's lot almost every day, and no human comforter could she anywhere find. Her friend, the one who first came with her to the jeweller's in her early days, had herself married, and gone to live far, far away; her old aunt had gone to the far, far off away of all. Little Maira was all that she had left. Could she only have made Him wholly her Friend who was the Friend of friends, the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, all might have been well. There would have been the heavenly compensations for the earthly losses. But Leopoldine could only go thus far—that which was of earth had gone, and that which was of heaven had not come. The mighty compensation which was also the mighty consolation, Leopoldine could touch, as it were, with her fingers' ends, but could not grasp.

And graspings are what we need. Wind-struck, wave-washed, our Rock may be, but it stands sure; the feebleness is in our hand-graspings, which are not fast.

And in all, the One she had been taught to call the Nazarene was her comfort. She felt, she could not say why, He was her Friend—she felt He could not say her nay. Like the women of old, she followed Him, only at present not knowing all that He was, yet that He was much to her. She was seeing as through a glass, darkly. How many such go on even to seeing face to face?

And little Maira walked with her mother hand in hand. They groped onward, the mother and the child, but ever onward; for to Leopoldine there was nothing behind. So time passed on and on, and Leopoldine's hair became silver, and she herself was like silver purified seven times in the fire. There is One who sits as a refiner of silver, and some He purifies in quick-burning fires, and some in slow dross-consuming furnaces, the heat of which is to be for many days.

As little Maira grew, she walked step by step with her mother. The jeweller held little communion with them. He lived, and he meant to live, with his loss; had he been one with them, he might have been made partaker of their gain.

So things went on, until one day Sigismund came to the room where his wife and daughter were sitting, and announced that there was to be a change in the establishment, so far as was involved in the addition of another inmate.

"I have been robbed," said the jeweller, "of some precious stones; even I have been deceived by the counterfeits that have been put in their place. I have nearly lost my character as an honest man by trying to sell them myself, believing them to be true. This must never be again. Therefore I have hired a young man, who is one of the best gem-setters in the trade, and he is to live here. He is to have a top room fitted up for him as a workshop; his meals are to be carried to him every day, and no loose stone of any worth will leave my house again. You women look after him when I am not looking after him," and the jeweller pulled a key out of his pocket, and, with a symbolic motion thereof, let his wife and daughter know that the young man was to be locked in. "He is a Christian dog," said the Jew, "and therefore we need not trouble ourselves about him much."

It was not long before the expected new-comer arrived. He was a tall, slight young man, some four-and-twenty years of age, with large somewhat dreamy eyes, and brown curling hair. His fingers were like a woman's—they were white and tapering, and seemed as though they were better fitted for handling gems than anything else. The rough work of life was not for them.

Paul Tarson ate at the Jew's table, and lodged in

the Jew's house, but at first he mixed little with its inmates. He seemed to find in a small book, which he had generally in his pocket, as much companionship as he required. Had he made any advances, the jeweller was prepared to sit upon him immediately; and, had he ventured one word on the subject of the Nazarene, immediately to turn him out of doors.

But he was destined ere very long to come into somewhat closer connection with the mother and her child.

One day the jeweller came in with a troubled countenance to the room where his wife and daughter were sitting. They were afraid that he had met with some great loss.

"I have to leave this to-morrow," said Sigismund. "I have to go to Paris, and from Paris I may have to go to Vienna, and from Vienna to St. Petersburg, and it may be some weeks before I can return. I have scent of the stolen stones; and I must track them out if it be within the power of man to get hold of them again. For amongst them is a spinel which was given to me to set, on account of which I have had to pay heavy damages, and have nearly lost my character to boot. This robbery has touched my credit in the trade, and I have had winks and blinks for which I could have blackened the eyes of the people from whom they came. But I could prove nothing, and a man's word without proof is not thought worth very much. And now about this youth Paul Tarson. A man's wife and child have the same interest as himself. He must go on with his work as usual while I am away. All you women will have to do is to see that he is safe. As long as your eyes are upon him, or the key turned in the door, all will be well. The foreman will do the business down-stairs. I can trust him. You two keep a sharp eye on Tarson, and," said the jeweller significantly, "woe betide you if you don't."

The next day the jeweller took his departure, and with him a couple of officers, who were supposed to be as good as sleuth-hounds when once they were put on the scent; and Paul Tarson found himself in some sense the prisoner of Leopoldine and her daughter Maira.

True to their trust the women were; but they were women still. If I am to be shut up, let the key be in a woman's pocket, unless indeed, by some freak of nature, I suddenly turn into a woman myself. Should this by any chance take place, then I content myself with saying—"Let things take their ordinary course." I don't think I should feel—"A female warder preferred."

Such were the warders in whose keeping Paul Tarson now was, and the commission to his turnkeys was, as they interpreted it, sufficiently wide to enable them to ameliorate his condition, for amelioration it required in their eyes.

"He must often be very lonely up there by himself all day," said Maira to her mother; "couldn't we do something to make it more cheerful for him?" Oh, yes, women find out many ways of alleviation when they want to alleviate, many holes and chinks through which to let in sunbeams when they wish to brighten. That was how flowers got into Paul Tarson's room, that was how fresh ones came when the old ones withered; that was how Maira played and sang in the room next him, where he could hear through the wall; and, as time wore on and the jeweller did not return, that was how Maira and her mother after a while sat in the room where the long white fingers were twisting gold and gems into beautiful form, and, by degree. Paul and Maira learned to sing and to think together—to sing, and to talk, and to think, and to feel, and to hope, and to wish, and to—how many more verbs, good reader, do you want me to string together? Whatever verbs go to make up life, active and meditative, I make you a present of them all, and put them down to the account of Paul Tarson and Maira.

But that which bound Maira to Paul was not only the things of the heart or of the head—there were deeper bonds than these.

And the chief bond lay in Paul's little book. The absence of the jeweller seemed to have so far unbound the handicraftsman that he sang now sometimes at his work. And that singing Maira heard—it was of the One she and her mother knew as the Nazarene; but He was more than that to Paul, and his songs of Him were of peace, and of triumph, and of hope.

The songs and the subject of the songs lured mother and daughter to the craftsman's room, and there they saw what was the craftsman's book. It was the story of the Nazarene. "This book," said Paul, "was all my mother had to leave me, but in it is 'all'—my 'all.' I work indeed amongst precious stones, but here is the story of the most precious of all stones. You need not look to my Testament to find it—it is in your own prophets: 'Therefore, thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation. He that believeth shall not make haste,' and from that stone, my Testament says, 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' It is in Him I hope, it is because of Him I sing, it is from Him I look to getting the white stone by-and-bye, and it is in His City I hope to walk. That light," said Paul with enthusiasm, 'will be like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.' There!" cried the young man, his eyes lighting up with something almost more than earthly fire, "see whereof the foundations are made; see whereof the gates are made; and see Who is the light, and Who is the temple there."

So time passed on—day after day, and week after week—but Sigismund the jeweller did not return home. He wrote, indeed, and his manager heard from him even when his family did not. That manager was an honest man, and did not betray the great trust reposed in him.

And now, Paul Tarson either wrought in Leopoldine's sitting-room, at a little bench which Maira had

fitted up there, or in his own room with Maira and her mother as his companions. Plenty of beautiful work he did, but the most beautiful was not on gold and gems, but on human hearts. Many a time he thought how precious it would be to win Maira for himself, but how yet more precious to win her for Another; and if—if he himself might stand second to Him, how great an honour that would be!

And not one, but two—Leopoldine also. But Maira was the easier to win, and she was won. One morning she came down radiant, like one of the gems that Paul had to set that day. She had been pale and anxious for many days, and Paul Tarson feared that she was falling ill; but now she was full of light. In her long struggle during that dark night her last doubt had passed away, and she had found the pearl of great price.

But she was weak, she was ignorant. Who would befriend her, and especially when her father returned? She knew well that she must be expelled from house and home; she knew that she must go out a pauper into the world. But she made up her mind to endure all—the merchant seeking goodly pearls had sold all to get one—should she do less? Still, she was only a woman—only a girl—and the world was hard; and she had heard that it was bad. Could she ever face it alone?

Yes, if need be, she would! But there was no need. When she went through the temptation and triumphed, she did not know that; but she soon found it out.

"Maira, you shall never want," said Paul, as he spread out his ten white fingers before her. (If you are precise, good reader, rather than be troubled with you, I will say his eight white fingers and his two white thumbs, and I will throw in the palms of his hands gratis, if you like.) "Never, Maira, while these fingers can do their cunning work. The day that this home is taken from you, another shall be open for you."

"Whose, Paul?" asked the girl, with tears in her beautiful eyes.

"Mine, Maira, if you will have it; and, if you will, with it, me!"



"They saw what was the craftsman's book."—*p.* 947.

The one daily fear which now haunted the little household of the jeweller was that of the master's home-coming again. His letters to his wife were not written with sugar and water; and he kept continually bewailing the loss of his father's precious

stone. He believed that its colours would have guided him in his present search; but it was gone for ever. Sigismund was heard of from Vienna and St. Petersburg, and was on his way home; and now the test would come.

But, instead of the jeweller, there arrived another Jew, who brought the manager a small parcel and a letter. The parcel contained the missing stones, and, above all, the spinel which had caused so much trouble. But Sigismund himself was not coming just yet. He had heard of a choice opal, which at that time was somewhere in his father's old country, and he was off to Hungary in quest of it. Who knew what he might find? There might be twins amongst precious stones, even as there were amongst mankind. That was the last his family ever heard *from* him, but not the last they ever heard *of* him.

Some ten months afterwards a Government official called, and, after putting many questions to make sure that he was dealing with the proper people, gave them a document with an account of Sigismund's death, and told them what steps to take for the recovery of his property. It consisted of various precious stones, and some money. There was an inventory of the stones; and it was no small relief to both Leopoldine and her daughter that there was not a single opal among them. This was accounted for by the belief that his ideal as to the stone was so high, that he would not have any but one that came up—in some measure, at least—to the one that had gone.

The jeweller died without a will. He was not in a fit state at the last to make one, and so all the property came to his wife and child. Not a penny would they have had, if he had returned home.

And so it came to pass that Leopoldine and Maira remained in the home in which they had lived so many years. Paul Tarson had no need to seek a new one for Maira, or one for himself at all.

What could be more suitable than that he who loved precious stones so much, and understood them so well, should carry on a business which was flourishing in the extreme?

And so the young man stayed where he was.

And, at last, he closed Leopoldine's eyes. Many were that noble woman's struggles, but she never could bring herself to take the final plunge, and make an open confession of faith. She was an unconfessing believer to the last; yet not to the very last. Life's last breath was a witness to the faith—it was not much, but was it not enough? Are not such heard by the One who quencheth not the smoking flax? Thrice amid her hard breathings she said, "He is——" They bent their ears to her lips and heard her murmur—"more than the Nazarene."

Gems there were both rich and rare in Paul Tarson's cases—none admired them more than himself—none took more interest in dealing with them than himself—they made him richer and richer every day; but on none of them was his wife's heart, or his own heart, set. They knew of what was brighter than the sparkling gems amid which they lived, which they possessed; and in that was their wealth. The best of earth, they felt, was insecure, and might slip from their grasp, how and when they did not know. Where their treasure was, there also was their heart; and if ever there came stealing over their souls too deep content with aught of earth, they remembered how suddenly, how mysteriously, all might go, even as went Isaac Coloman's all with

"THE VANISHING OPAL."

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 874.

121. "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. A spirit hath not flesh and blood as ye see me have." (St. Luke xxiv. 39.)

122. Their strength and speed: "They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." (2 Sam. i. 23.)

123. He offered a burnt offering at Gilgal instead of waiting for the coming of Samuel. (1 Sam. xiii. 9—15.)

124. From the Proverbs of Solomon. (Prov. x. 7.)

125. "Hatred turneth up strife: but love covereth all sins." (Prov. x. 12; 1 Pet. iv. 8.)

126. They drew water and poured it out before the Lord as a token of the pouring out of their hearts to God. (1 Sam. vii. 6.)

127. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." (Phil. i. 29.)

128. "I beseech you, brethren, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me"—"Ye also helping together by prayer for me." (Rom. xv. 30; 2 Cor. i. 11.)

129. He conquered the stronghold of the Jebusites on Mount Sion, who up to this time had held possession of it. (2 Sam. v. 6, 7.)

130. That it might be a means whereby God could commune with His people. (Ex. xxv. 22.)

131. "And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we inquired not at it in the days of Saul." (1 Chron. xiii. 3.)

132. As a denial of God. (Job xxxi. 24—28.)

SHORT ARROWS.

NOTES OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN ALL FIELDS.

"SEEK HIS FACE EVERMORE."

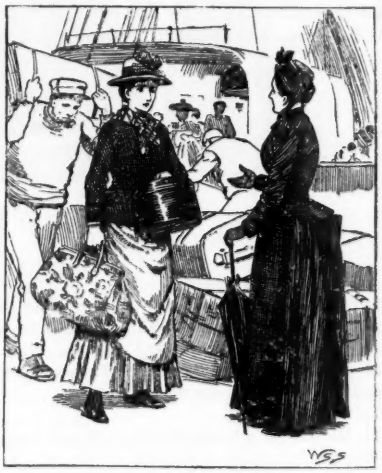
IT was said by the ancients that Antæus, the giant, could only keep up his strength by constantly touching the earth; the legend tells us that each time he touched it he became twice as strong as before. We may smile at the fancy, but it may whisper to us a reminder that it is only by touching *heaven* our Christian life can be truly strong and mighty, removing mountains, spreading gracious influences around, withstanding every power of the world and of the tempter. Our religion opens the way to many duties, many merciful works, many activities that claim our time and thought, but these are dethroning our Master if they keep us from the Mercy-seat. The most successful worker, the most helpful church, the family most blessed by God, the soul of sweetest growth, will ever be found the most prayerful. Prayer moves the arm that moves the world, and there is no limit to Almighty power: let us, with simpler, grander faith, take the Master at His word, "Ask, and it shall be given you." We remember hearing of a great preacher about to address a multitude, who slipped away from the friends eager to introduce him to the great ones among his hearers, and found a quiet place wherein to be alone with God. Thence he came out as one inspired, and spoke the divine message powerfully to many a heart; but without that quiet place alone with God, true success is impossible. Whatever the daily path may be, if He go not with us, we labour in vain; let not the stress and bustle of life, whether of toil or pleasure, rob Him of our worship—rob us of the consciousness of His presence and His smile. Our past years bear witness to many and many an answered prayer, striking and wonderful at the time, but growing perhaps too dim to our remembrance now. Let us look back and recall the way our God has helped us. He has done so much for us in the past; who knows what His love has for us yet, of spiritual and temporal grace? While His hands are lifted up to bless, shall not ours be held up to receive? The best tribute to render to the Lord for His great mercies unto us is to call upon His name yet more, and let larger, more fervent petitions witness of our praise and love and faith.

"IN EVERY ACORN THERE IS A FOREST."

The Rev. Eynon Davies quoted this old saying at the anniversary of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews. Some criticise the conversions recorded as few compared to the expenditure, but we are not so ready to bewail expenditure where pleasure and luxury are concerned. "We want to convert some of the pounds, shillings, and pence," said he; not *smaller* funds must battle on for God, but *larger*, and more fervour, more prayerfulness. The workers among God's ancient people seem to have much cause for encouragement. It has been put on record that more Jews have accepted the Lord Jesus as the Messiah during the nineteenth century than during the eighteen centuries that have previously elapsed. But even if converts could only be reckoned here and there, the numbering of believers does not always represent the extent of the victory that has been accomplished. "In every acorn there is a forest;" who can estimate the possibilities that live within one saved soul? The speaker instanced a stray lad converted one stormy day by the words of a Primitive Methodist minister. The youth who found Christ that day has become a preacher of world-wide fame—the means of blessing multitudes. Let every Christian worker bear in mind that one life led to the Saviour may mean untold trophies for the Divine Kingdom. If we are doing not less than our best, it need not trouble us that results seem few; the one soul through which God's grace is flowing may yet be used for the reviving of thousands.

WHERE HELP IS NEEDED.

Mr. C. S. Thorpe, 79, Finsbury Pavement, is secretary of the Female Servants' Home Society, which provides a safe home for female servants out of place, affords facilities for meeting with employers, and endeavours to influence the inmates in the best and highest degree. The battle of life is hard and perilous for young women who stand



MEETING THE STRANGER.

alone; they need advice and encouragement; and we rejoice to know that not a few are brought each year to a saving knowledge of God by means of the weekly services and other spiritual influences. A specimen letter is given of those received by the Society; it asks that someone may look after two young Scotch girls seeking places in London, with very little money, and nowhere to go on the arrival of the steamer. These girls were met at the docks, and are now doing well in service. When we think of the dangerous surroundings of strangers in London like these, we realise the untold value of such a society. Rewards are given for prolonged and faithful service on the part of those assisted, and, as we glance down the record of the employers bearing witness to trustworthiness, goodness, conscientiousness, we feel such lives as these were in all respects worthy of a helping hand and kindly encouragement. We can ask no more than that our Master's witness to the fidelity of all His servants may record them, even as these handmaids are described, "walking not with eye-service, but in a manner pleasing to the Lord."



"The captain had no need to call for volunteers."

"FOR THOSE IN PERIL ON THE SEA."

It is a Christlike work to care for the needs of the shipwrecked sailor, and to relieve those that his loss has left destitute. We owe an untold debt to the men who do business on great waters, and we cannot care too solicitously for our sailors, spiritually and temporally. The "Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society" extends aid to those suffering from misfortunes at sea, carries on a self-help section for the encouragement of thrift, and grants rewards for the saving of life imperilled through shipwreck. A disastrous storm in the Bristol Channel, following the wreck which was the occasion of Grace Darling's heroism, led to the formation of this society in 1839, and since that time distressed sufferers of all grades have been aided, to the number of more than four hundred thousand. Barometers are supplied to fishermen and fishing-stations, needy colonial seamen are looked after, and a Home and pension for disabled merchant seamen have been provided. The list of rewards for saving life furnishes a record of noble heroism, shown by masters and by men; in one case of peril we read, "Every man realised the risk of putting off in the boat, but the captain had no need to call for volunteers." The sailors scrambled in, all ready for the work of rescue, and they made for the shipwrecked crew, hauling them one by one into the boat, till eleven lives, saved from death, were on board the *Holland*, after hours of peril. What must have been the joy of the rescuers! Christian workers, who go forth to save the perishing, and have seen immortal souls delivered from shipwreck, know something of this gladness: surely it is in some sense the very "joy of the Lord." We heard a preacher recently ask his hearers to think solemnly of that word *lost*, and he read the Master's parables of the lost sheep, the piece of silver, and the prodigal son. "Whatever else these parables may set forth," he said, "take note that emphasis is laid on the rejoicing of the *Finder*—the gladness of the heart to which the lost one is restored." Thus does the Lord of all rejoice when some wrecked soul is rescued.

DEBATING *VERSUS* DOING.

The two things ought to go together, but too often they seem opposed. People have been heard to say,

"I never go to such and such a meeting: it is all argument and talk, but nothing is done." Schemes have been talked to death before now; words may be silver, but work, when true and faithful, is golden. Committee-meetings should result in setting some blessed machinery in motion, not in displaying the eloquence of some gifted brother, or the powers of discussion and repartee of the assembled throng. A too timid-minded leader will glance in despair at the clock, conscious that time waits for no man, not even for the extremely lengthy minutes of last meeting produced by the official whose pen is that of a ready writer. Whether his popularity suffer or not, the worker who is responsible for the meeting must bear in mind the business for which the friends are assembled, and he must keep on reclaiming his wandering brethren to the special subject to be settled, till he can rise at last from the chair of honour with the thankful sense of "something accomplished, something done." It is well, when the "whips" are sent round, to notify the matters to be arranged, so that friends can gather in council with clear and definite notions why they are there. We have some sympathy with rebuked workers who are reproved for not continually bringing the details of their labours before assemblies for discussion. Time is short, and workers with hearts on fire for action are apt to feel a little impatient when argumentative minds go round and round the subject, and question whether this or that would be quite in order, or if such and such a fashion is exactly the way things *used* to be done, or *are* done in another society, of which they remember to have heard. It is easy to discuss, criticise, prepare cold-water buckets for damping purposes: it is harder to *do*, but a thousand times more glorious. Join the workers and try, and you will come to believe in short definite debates, and in certain sweet quiet souls, who are cutting the Gordian knot of difficulty by doing the next thing that lies in their way, and *dealing* with the perplexities on which others are enlarging.

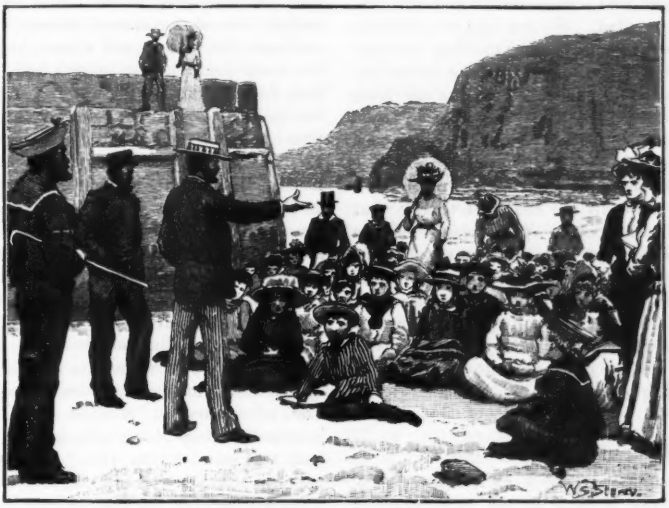
TO LIGHTEN THE LONG EVENINGS.

Not long ago we had occasion to ask an earnest preacher for an explanation of a misunderstood sentence in one of his sermons, and the question brought from him the emphatic declaration that "To deny the God-head of our Saviour is to take the heart out of Christianity." We were reminded of this incident by Mr. Gwatkin's admirable contribution to Messrs. Longmans' "Epochs of Church History," on "The Arian Controversy." For, in a nutshell, this denial was exactly what Arianism did put forth. And for a time it almost seemed as though the false doctrine would triumph over the older and pure teaching of the Apostles, which we still hold. The conflict, which began in the fourth century of our era, was no doubt aided by the troublous state of the then-known world, amid which the decaying Roman dominion was tottering to its fall. Step by step Mr. Gwatkin traces the progress of the battle, and points out the persons and influences at work in it. He pictures the origin of the heresy at Alexandria, shows the hold it acquired over the Goths, and how at length it received its death-blow on the coronation of Karl the Frank in the last year of the eighth century. The story is an interesting one, fraught with many lessons for us, who live in days when there are not found wanting those who would explain away the great truth of the divinity of our Lord.—In the rapidly growing "National Library" we are glad to see that Messrs. Cassell have now added Milton's "Paradise Regained," and Cowper's "Table Talk, and other Poems," thus bringing these poems within the reach of all readers. "Bacon's Essays," too, are also to be found in one of the latest volumes of this series. Now that the long evenings are with us again, leaders of Bible-classes should see that their scholars are provided with literature, at once varied and elevating, such as is to be found in "Cassell's National Library."—All who are interested in work among girls and young women should see the first volume of "The Book of the Household," just published by Messrs. Cassell, where will be found many useful lessons in the dear old craft of housewifery.—From Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton we have received four of those pretty booklets, printed in monochrome, which we have come to associate with a later season of the year. Perhaps the most attractive of the four is one entitled "On the Ocean of Time," but all of them are most tastefully and carefully reproduced.

"WHERE THE BROOK AND RIVER MEET."

The poet Longfellow apostrophises a maiden as standing with reluctant feet between sweet childhood and womanhood, and counsels her to bear a lily in her hand, and on her lips the smile of truth. The period between childhood and womanhood or manhood may be a time full of inspiration to the poet, but it is also an extremely difficult time with the pastor and teacher; so many drift away, conscious of knowing *everything*, or careless as to knowing *anything*, just when we most want to retain them amid helpful surroundings. "What you want," was the remark addressed to us once, "is to get hold of the lads and girls; there are many good works on behalf of the *children*, but children never go far wrong. We want more efforts put forth on behalf of the elder girls and boys who are just starting in life, and surrounded by temptations." In reply, we triumphantly pointed to lads in the neighbourhood, who had been well looked after in childhood, and were adhering firmly to the principles grafted within them then. We cannot do too much for the little ones, for if we wait till May with *them* glides onward into June, there will be a sad crop of weeds resisting our efforts. Still, it is a fact that children well looked after by day and Sunday schools find their leisure too often a means of stumbling when the school-days are over

and they go out to work. If we can keep our lads and lasses from wasting and misusing their time by counteracting influences, instructive and recreative, the England of the future will be all the better, and hundreds of young lives will be purer, happier, wiser. The "Recreative Evening Schools Association," 37, Norfolk Street, Strand, is engaged in this important work of looking after the leisure time of the young, and the Society works not only in connection with the London School Board's evening schools, but aids several others, and provides evening Homes for the factory, laundry, and other work-girls of London. Here sewing, cooking, singing, wool-work, wood-carving, and similar pursuits, are carried on, and games and musical drill benefit lungs and muscles. Bible-meetings are also held, and in every way an endeavour is made to extend uplifting influences to lives just at their springtide. May Homes like these be prospered and increased, so that not one of England's young men and maidens may have cause to feel, "No man cares for my soul."



A SERVICE ON THE SANDS.

FEEDING THE LAMBS.

This year we chanced for the first time to witness one of the beach-services for children, arranged by the Children's Special Service Mission. Usually our visits to the sea have been somewhat later than those of the lads and lasses, but this summer things fell out differently, and one bright Sunday we stood by the breakwater, watching the assembling of the bright-eyed congregation. We were rather curious to hear the addresses, for a good many more imagine they can talk to children than really possess that ability. The memory of most of our readers can furnish examples of very conspicuous failures in addresses to children, and if they have tried such work themselves, they will realise its importance and difficulties. We read lately that we must not accuse speakers of preaching "over children's heads;" only the missiles strike the ground ere reaching the children's feet. However this may be, addressing children is not the easy work it may seem to some, especially when the congregation can so soon jump up from sand and shingle, and leave the speaker without an audience. Not only did we see many juveniles assemble, but many nurses, care-takers, and parents, and very soon the conductors arrived with their instrument, followed by several stalwart fishermen who assisted in keeping order. Not that much of this was necessary: extreme quietude followed the hint that "boys and girls who throw sand at one another will receive no magazines after the service." There was a good deal of bright, sweet singing that soon swelled the listening throng. The prayers and addresses were short and simple, and, like Professor Drummond when *he* talks to children, the beach-preachers believe in drawing out the knowledge of their audience, and making opportunity for the young voices themselves to be heard. One of them told of a minister who taught a little kitchen-maid (too busy to join the others at family worship) the prayer, "Lord, teach me to know *myself;*" and then, later on, "Lord, teach me to know *Thyself;*" and very sweet and solemn sounded these words, echoed again and again by the listening children. We felt it was good to be there; old and young seemed to feel holy influences, and only the Great Day will reveal all the blessing wrought by services like to this.

REAPING-TIMES.

The last report of the Irish Evangelisation Society (Hon. Sec., J. Barton, Esq., Dundalk) is filled with memories of tokens of heavenly grace and blessing. Men and women remained to the after-meeting in connection with evangelistic services who for a long time had derided the work; whole families were moved to work and pray for the conversion of their neighbours, and some who had travelled miles stayed on to the inquiry meetings, and testified of help and blessing. At one place in Londonderry ropes were cut and stones were thrown, but peace-makers intervened, and a wondrous time of spiritual awakening was granted. We are told of a working man at Ederney who, through attending the services, cast off his drunken habits, and his house and family seem entirely changed; his debts are paid, and he has bought "as good a cow as there is in the country." A great many young men have been brought to the knowledge of the Lord, young Christians have been stimulated, and older ones gladdened, and, amid all the heat and trouble that surround the Irish people, the heralds of the Gospel have gone on proclaiming the name of Jesus —the balm for every wound, social and spiritual. One rejoicing in the increasing power of the work writes thus: "We know the society is working for God's glory, not for man's thanks, yet we do thank you, and thank God for putting it into your heart to carry on such a glorious work."

THE BEST OF SIGHTS ABROAD.

Drawing attention to Europe as a field of missionary labour, the workers in the Foreign Evangelisation Society remark that a great point would be gained if the Christians of this country could be brought to realise that the sight best worth seeing is the work of God in the salvation of immortal souls. Many of our readers sympathise with the McAll Mission, and will rejoice to know that fruit continues to be gathered in through its ministrations. Last year a building, which for nearly a century had been a gay and ill-reputed ball-room, and latterly a resort for atheistic gatherings, was transformed into a Gospel-hall for nightly meetings. Last August a man came forward and told how large was the debt he owed to this mission. He had wasted his fortune, he was an anarchist, and he considered Christianity a worn-out theory; but a sermon preached in the Salle des Conférences convinced him that he must think first—not of reforming society, but of a personal change. He went on recklessly for a time, and almost became a suicide, but words heard in the mission-hall drew him back from death: "For all these things God will call thee into judgment." He is now travelling on the Continent as the representative of a temperance society. The Belleville mission has now an office at 205, Rue St. Honoré, in the centre of Paris, where Miss de Broën and her helpers hope the open Bible and the texts in the window will witness for God to many a passer-by. Miss Grant Brown has undertaken evangelistic work in Corsica, and speaks of villagers rushing forward with eagerness to ask, "Where is the hall for the meetings?" The magic lantern is used to illustrate Scripture; large audiences are frequently secured, and in one village the mayor said hundreds are now wanting the *religion biblique*. The missionary in Brussels says, "We simply preach the Gospel—we preach Christ and seek to lead the sorrowful to Him." Christian and temperance work are prospering in Germany, and, though difficulties are met with in Austria, showers of blessings have descended where Christ is preached simply and earnestly. In some Italian districts there has been a spirit of persecution, yet we hear of the fire of true religion burning still unquenched;



CORSICAN PEASANTS.

and in Spain the work of the Gospel is lifting shadows and triumphing over obstacles. We hear of a Spanish carpenter, who, when first converted, declared his trade would be ruined if he made an open profession; but now he closes his shop on Sundays, being the only man in the town who does not work on the Lord's day. "I have the wealth of pardon and tranquillity of heart," he says, "worth more than all besides."

THE BAG OF FEATHERS.

Speaking of those who start on the Christian road, yet cherish some sin hidden, covered over, unconfessed, a class-leader gave a homely illustration, which will appeal to the experience of many a housekeeper. A gentleman and his wife engaged a house which they found infested with moths; the insects were everywhere—in chairs, beds, curtains, pillows—in fact, moth-hunting became their one occupation. Passing a shop one day, they noticed a placard concerning the extermination of moths, and they requested the vendor of the specific to visit their house and ascertain the cause of the annoyance. From room to room he went, overhauling the furniture, yet becoming no wiser. "There must be some place yet, I think," said he, "that I have not seen." They conducted him to a cupboard up-stairs, and told him he had now been everywhere. "No," said he, "I cannot have examined everything—what is that over there at the back?"—"Oh, only an old bag of feathers!"—"Well, have it out, and see its condition." The old bag, unnoticed, forgotten, was the nest of the insects, and when made away with, the moths soon disappeared. "I can give up everything," the would-be disciple may feel, "except such and such a habit; surely there can be no real harm in that." If the conscience be debating the matter, most likely there *is* harm in it; and the question arises, "Can we not give it up for Christ's sake, and make to Him an entire surrender?"

DIVIDENDS WORTH SECURING.

The question has been well asked concerning Mrs. Mearns' Convalescent Home at Folkestone, "Who would not wish to be a shareholder in such an institution, the dividends of which are secured in grateful hearts and brightened lives?" Every subscriber of a guinea may recommend a deserving patient for two weeks, and may enjoy the assurance that some feeble one is thus securing the breezes of ocean, generous diet, and kindness and sympathy. Cases of grateful testimony are given in the report. A carman unable to work was so much strengthened by a fortnight's change and rest that he could follow his occupation again; and a nursery governess sent a letter of thanks, which said: "I never enjoyed myself so much at any seaside place as I did the fortnight I spent with you." Apartments are reserved for visitors who can pay somewhat more than the usual charge, but many inmates of East Cliff House are received there freely. We have heard the remark as concerns Homes of benevolence that sometimes there seem too many restrictions; but witness is borne concerning Mrs. Mearns' Home that it is a place of liberty as well as of order and beauty. As soon as patients, well fed and well nursed, are on the road to recovery, anxious friends devise means to take them to the sea. What new life the winds of ocean must assuredly bear to our poorer neighbours, who have been ill in close rooms and smoky alleys, and are sent hither by Christian love to find space to breathe and opportunity to rest and rejoice!

THE USES OF FAILURE.

"To climb steep hills requires slow pace at first," and many a great success has been reached by what for a long time seemed *defeat*. Have we not read of years going slowly by without any record of conversion? But still the faithful, prayerful work went on, and the outward tokens of glorious success were realised at last. Though our efforts seem terribly up-hill just now, though all things seem against us, let us remember that "the battle is the Lord's," and defeat cannot touch His banner: the Master is in the harvest-field, and though the seed we sowed may seem to be dead, let us be very sure it has *not* fallen void to the ground—it will bear immortal fruit after many days. Yet if we really feel we make no headway against the tide of evil, we may well think quietly and prayerfully whether the reason for failure may exist within ourselves. Is anything amiss with conscience while doing God's work, or are we going to it in a spirit of *self-confidence*, giving no time to the needful prayer, the thoughtful preparation? We are told that the leopard, ere seeking prey, daily sharpens its claws on a tree; if we take up the work we have at heart without careful forethought, we are less wise than the lower creation. We must give the best possible *preparation*, constantly rekindling our own dim lamps at the Source of all power—the very Light of lights. But if our hearts bear witness before God that indeed we are doing our best, and yet we write "Failure" on our work, the one consolation is that God has not written it. Little do we dream what *He* has written around our efforts, though we shall know hereafter. Meanwhile the sense of failure will do blessed work indeed if it keep us low at His feet; if it lead us to think more highly of the work of others than of our own; if it give new life to prayer; if it clothe us with meekness and humility; and if it whisper to us like sweet music the assurance, "Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldest believe, thou *shouldest* see the glory of God?"

"BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM."

Henry Ward Beecher once pictured a horticultural show where a man claimed the prize because his fruit was grown on ground whose title went back to the flood. "The other fruit," said he, "is uncovenanted."

The next founded his claim on the fact that his productions were grown under glass, according to prescription, "all pattern-fruit." Then there was noticed magnificent fruit that had only grown on a wilding. "I cleared away the brush that choked it, and trimmed it," said the grower, "and this is the fruit." The regular fruit-growers were loud in protest, but the judge said quietly, "The rule here is, *by their fruits shall ye know them.*" We know trees this year that have given plenty of promise, but very scanty performance; blight and other causes have destroyed the fruitage they gave us cause to expect. How many lives, bedewed by grace, have so ignored their privileges as to show nothing but leaves! and, on the contrary, how many unpromising ones have stretched out arms to the sunlight, and are gloriously bearing the fruits of the Spirit! It is a solemn fact that lives *we* call fruit-bearers may really be barren in His sight who tries the heart; and some of whom no account is taken, may be as regards heaven like the orchards, bowed down with beauty and plenty that enrich the autumn-tide. So the question to every soul amongst us comes home—"What about my fruitage in *His* eyes who seeth not as man seeth?" Much fruit is lost through careless gardening—much Christian growth is spoilt through neglect of the means of grace and strength.

"TO THE POOR THE GOSPEL IS PREACHED."

From Mr. Sawell, 3, Bridewell Place, New Bridge Street, E.C., we have received an account of the efforts put forth by those who undertake special services in theatres, halls, and mission rooms In creased operations must cope with the great problem of evangelising the growing masses in the four-million-peopled city. Only a small proportion of the toiling population can be drawn to ordinary services, hence the need of simple, plain, aggressive efforts to find them and bring them in, and set Him, who is the power of God, before them. Bright music, personal appeals, often a hand-shake, pointed sermons, simple illustrations, are the means that God has deigned to bless in the Pavilion Theatre, in various town-halls, and in humble mission-rooms. "During twenty-eight Sunday evenings," it is reported of one of these services, "our attendance has been over fifty thousand people." Over fifty thousand lives familiar with want, temptation, and all the difficulties that beset the poor! One who had belonged to a theatrical troupe undertook to play the double-bass fiddle, and his daughter, a chorus-singer, joined the choir; the singers are trained for Christian work, and many of their parents are led to attend the meetings. Some have been influenced by their children to become members of Christian Churches. To show the influence of religion even on those we might be inclined to consider hopeless, we will mention the case of a drunken couple, brought to Morley Hall, Hackney, by two young men who worked in the same place as the husband. He lived in a "shanty" up a ladder; the poor wife could not go the first Sunday because of bruises, but the young men brought them both next time, and both at last were drawn out of misery and degradation. The man, his wife, and the children were seen by-and-bye in decent clothing, and regular attendants at the meetings every Sunday evening. The Bishop of Peterborough truly remarked at the Leicester Church Congress that the burning question just now is the fact of masses, around church and chapel, for whom life has no higher or better meaning than a daily struggle for the means of a joyless existence. It is to make them conscious of immortality, and to bless them now and hereafter, that these special services go on year by year.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE-READING SOCIETY.

BIBLE PASSAGES TO NOVEMBER 10.

(Bearing on the International Lessons.)

OCTOBER.	MORNING.	EVENING.
14.	2 Samuel vii., to ver. 17.	Psalm viii.; Genesis xxxii., to ver. 10.
15.	Isaiah xlv. 5—18.	1 Chronicles xvii., to ver. 15.
16.	1 Peter ii., to ver. 10; Psalm cxlvii., from ver. 12.	1 Chronicles xvii., from ver. 16.
17.	Psalm cxvi.	Psalm xxxiv.
18.	Isaiah lxiii., from ver. 7.	Luke ii. 40—55; Revelation xix., to ver. 6.
19.	Psalm ciii.	Ephesians v. 8—20.
20.	2 Samuel vii. 18—29.	Psalm xxxii. 1—11.
21.	Romans v., to ver. 15.	Ephesians ii., to ver. 17.
22.	1 John i.; ii., to ver. 6.	Psalm li.
23.	Luke xv., to ver. 10.	Luke xv. 11—24.
24.	Romans vi., to ver. 11.	Romans vi., from ver. 12.
25.	Mark ii., to ver. 17.	Luke v. 17—32.
26.	Matthew xviii., from ver. 21.	Micah vii.
27	Psalm xxxvi 1—11.	2 Samuel xv. 1—12.
28	Exodus xx., to ver. 20.	Matthew xv., to ver. 9; Proverbs i., to ver. 10.
29.	Jeremiah xxxv., from ver. 5.	Isaiah xxx., to ver. 18.
30.	2 Samuel xviii., to ver. 17.	2 Samuel xviii., from ver. 19.
31.	2 Samuel xix., to ver. 15.	Psalm xcii.
NOVEMBER.		
1.	Isaiah i, to ver. 20.	Malachi i, to ver. 11.
2.	Luke ii., from ver. 40; 2 Cor. vi., from ver. 4; vii. 1.	Ephesians vi., to ver. 16.
3.	2 Samuel xv. 1—12.	2 Samuel xviii. 18—33.
4.	Proverbs xiii., to ver. 15.	Proverbs x., to ver. 12.
5.	Luke xv. 11—24.	Romans vi., from ver. 13.
6.	Nehemiah i.	John xi., 35—52.
7.	Luke xiii., from ver. 25.	Luke xix. 35—44.
8.	Romans v., to ver. 15.	John xv. 6—17.
9.	Prov. xvii., to ver. 6, and 13-25.	Ephesians vi., to ver. 15.
10.	2 Samuel xviii. 18—33.	2 Samuel xxii. 47—xxiii. 7.

"THE QUIVER" WAIFS FUND.

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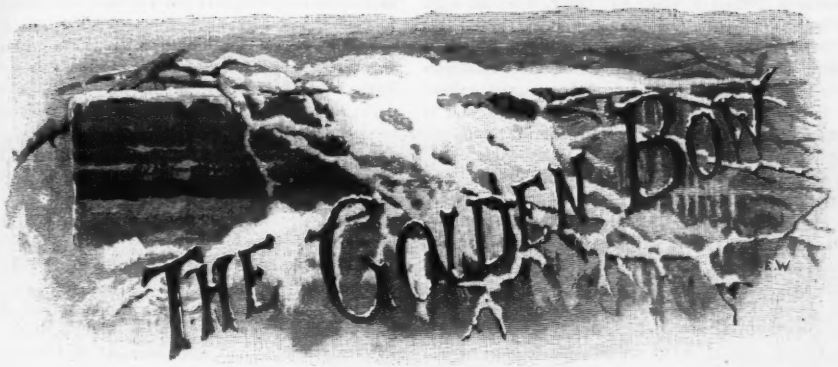
XUM





CHRISTMAS GUESTS.

(*See p. 41.*)



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
FRONTISPIECE—CHRISTMAS GUESTS	2
A DOCTOR'S WIFE. By ELLEN BEIGHTON	3
GOD'S PROVIDENCE. By GEORGE WEATHERLY	27
"COME, REDEEMER OF THE NATIONS." A CHRISTMAS HYMN. *Music by* C. HUBERT H. PARRY, MUS.D.	28
THE STORY OF THE INCARNATION. By the REV. H. ALLON, D.D.	29
WHITER THAN SNOW. By F. M. F. SKENE	32
CHRISTMAS GUESTS. By S. S. MCCURRY	41
DOUBLE-DUTCH. By W. RAINEY	42

A DOCTOR'S WIFE.

BY E. BEIGHTON, AUTHOR OF "BARBARA STREET," ETC.

THE parish of Ridley-Friars is contiguous to the small town of Pottersby, separated therefrom, as say its inhabitants, or connected therewith, as say the townsfolk, by a stretch of common adorned with fine old elms. This Ridley Common, though not a very large piece of ground, represents a very wide social gulf. Ridley-Friars is desperately aristocratic, Pottersby is hopelessly plebeian. In the latter are shops and humble middle-class tenements, rows of new villas, a church in the gingerbread Gothic style, a school-board, and a vestry much addicted to squabbles. In Ridley-Friars not one new brick obtrudes itself; the dwellings are family mansions, clothed in ivy, surrounded by gardens; the families are in keeping, time-honoured and imposing; and in the midst stands an ancient church. The middle-class is for Ridley non-existent. Picturesque poverty is represented by neat cottages, whose inhabitants cultivate their front gardens, pay due reverence to their betters, and send their children, dressed in lilac prints and well-patched corduroys, to the parochial school, which is honoured by the visits of the Ridley ladies.

In Pottersby, democracy is urgent and turbulent, but it has never gone the length of rebelling against Ridley *prestige*. When a carriage and pair comes dashing down the High Street and the ladies condescend to shop, fat Mr. Marks, the chemist, trots out in the east wind, regardless of his asthma, to take the order; while that the fair occupants should carry a yard of ribbon to the carriage is an idea too revolutionary to enter the heads of the draper's young ladies. The very butcher-boy when he canters across the common leaves his rollicking whistle and front of brass behind him on the Pottersby side.

It will thus be seen that Ridley-Friars high-breeding incurs little risk of suffering by contact with Pottersby vulgarity. Butchers and bakers they have

in common certainly, since humanity, whether high or low bred, is alike dependent on bread and beef; but beyond this they have no dealings. Spiritual sustenance is derived from an exclusively Ridleyan source, and for medical aid internal resources suffice. The Ridley doctor is well stricken in years, and is often laid by with the gout; yet aristocratic constitutions could hardly be understood by medical men accustomed to Pottersby practice—by the reckless Dr. Groulett, parish doctor, who is safe to kill or cure his patient; or the comfortable Mr. Mallam, the middle-class practitioner; or the young Dr. Warwick Hall, reputed to be clever in an upstart fashion.

This last had taken up his abode in a painfully red house of the newest style of construction, in which sham art is offered as a cheap substitute for comfort. It had been tagged on to the extreme corner of the High Street, to the detriment of the congruity of its unpretentious old houses, and to the offending of the good taste of such folk as possessed any—presumably the inhabitants of Ridley, a glimpse of whose stately mansions could be caught through the elms on the common by Mrs. Warwick Hall from her drawing-room window.

She stood there one morning with a mixture of impatience and pleasure in her air and in her fine clear eyes. A certain childish eagerness animated her—a childishness which, in the opinion of some of her admirers, gave a peculiar piquancy to her commanding height and amplitude of form. She stood in the bow-window, straight yet pliant, looking out over the frosty common, with one white muscular hand holding back the curtain. A dawning smile parted her frank lips, and seemed to await the arrival of the proper recipient. At the sound of a smart ring she darted towards the door, but checked herself with her hand on the knob at the vision of a prim and becapped figure which had been as prompt as herself. The next moment a brisk, vigorous step crossing the hall was arrested by the restrained vehemence of her call.

"Warwick, Warwick!"

"Can't stay. I'm off again in a moment," cried a voice in reply.

Mrs. Warwick ran out into the hall, seized her husband by the arm, drew him into the drawing-room, and shut the door impressively.

"Pray. Warwick, do help me to remember my dignity. In another second I should have let it all out before the servant. What do you think—what *do* you think? Miss Hastings, of Ridley-Friars, has sent for you."

The doctor did not greet the news with any outward demonstration, but when two people very thoroughly understand each other words are often delightfully superfluous. Dr. and Mrs. Warwick Hall stood looking at each other with hands on each other's shoulders, and as each was possessed of expressive eyes well versed in reading the other's, they managed thus to convey their exact sentiments—the wife in a full smile of eyes and mouth, sympathetic and exultant; the husband in a steadier, more judicial look, as considering the matter in all its bearings, yet with an elevation of dark eyebrows signifying surprise, and a relaxing of grave mouth-lines indicating satisfaction.

"Oh!" he said at length, with the air of a man who must make few words do his business. "Well, Diana!" affectionately, as his wife buttoned up his coat; and finally, "What's the matter?" with a return to professional preoccupation.

"The messenger did not say. Oh, Warwick, isn't it absurd to feel delighted—as if your success were not the merest matter of course!"

"What a goose you are!" said her husband, hastily kissing her. In a few moments more the bang of the street door announced his departure.

Diana, left to herself, paced the drawing-room to and fro softly. Imagination had a good deal of work to do, and very energetically and joyfully it set about it. Only a year had they been married, only a year had her husband entered upon his Pottersby practice, and patients were multiplying daily. But to-day it seemed that a new era had begun. Ridley-Friars had sent for Warwick: what brilliant possibilities—nay, probabilities—lurked in that simple-sounding announcement!

With impatience she awaited Warwick's return. Was it a consultation? who was the patient? and what happy chance had winged Warwick's fame abroad at the right moment?

To all these questions Warwick, when he returned from his round, had one reply, accompanied with a smile something grim.

"My patient is no less a personage than the kitchen-maid, and Dr. Alloway is in bed with the gout."

He laughed at Diana's rueful countenance, and continued, "But, my dear, it is a stroke of luck, after all, for Miss Hastings is coming to call upon you to-morrow."

Diana was silent, but the flush that rose to her cheeks, and the brilliance of her eyes, spoke for her. Her look questioned eloquently.

"Yes, it seems she knows my Uncle Warwick; asked if I belonged to the family, and was very kind, though perhaps a thought patronising. She was pleased to observe that she had seen my little wife (I suppose you would make about three of her) walking about, and had often wished to know you. Now, my dear, are you not pleased with your husband, who has brought you an *entrée*, as your Cousin Polly would call it, into the best society of the neighbourhood? Now is your chance, Diana; go in and win."

But Diana's face had clouded. She turned her look away from her husband and sighed.

"Yes, poor boy," she said, "and but for me you would have taken a place in it of right. It would have been better for you had you taken your uncle's name, as he wished, and married your cousin. And then I should not have been reproached by that plebeian 'Hall' on the door-plate whenever I go out," and Diana made a little *moue* of disgust.

Warwick drew his wife closer to him, and said, in tones more grave than usual—

"And I should have been living at Warwick Court, my uncle's slave, with a wife I could not love. I am proud of my father's name, Diana, for he was a fine fellow, and my mother did well to marry him in spite

of all that the Warwicks say. And I am proud of my profession, and mean to rise in it, and, unless I am mistaken, I have a wife who will help me."

"But you should not have married beneath you.



"'I am so glad to know you,' said Miss Hastings."—*p.* 6.

A doctor's success so much depends upon his social position," said Diana, with a face still disconsolate.

"A fig for that sort of success! Come, clear your looks, and smile at me. Why, Diana, I did not know you were such a worldly person!"

Thus adjured, Diana allowed herself to be comforted. But the next afternoon, as, bereft of Warwick's reassuring presence, she awaited her visitor in the drawing-room, her misgivings returned. She felt anxious, though not for her own sake; she had not been used to caring what people thought of her. But, for Warwick's sake, it was of the utmost importance that she should appear to the best advantage. Warwick had told her to look in the glass if she needed encouragement. Yes, of course he admired her, but then the points most important in Miss Hastings's eyes would altogether escape his. Her gown fitted well—that was a comfort; and it was a gown of refinement—soft and flowing, with no superfluity of adornment. From her person she turned her observation to the room. There, surely, nothing remained to be desired. It was furnished

after the latest methods; the tone was a dusky blue; flowers, books—no detail of refinement was lacking. But what of her less patent qualifications for admission into society?

Conventionality would say that Warwick had married beneath him, but its verdict would be unjust. They were equals in mind and heart. It was while under the stimulus of a self-respecting glow that a very sober brougham drove past the window, and the fateful visitor was announced.

Diana rose and bowed, and looked very striking and self-possessed, with a heart beating faster than usual. Miss Hastings shook her hand and smiled agreeably with her lips, while her bright, restless eyes glanced everywhere at once. Her small person was attired in very shabby black, her gloves were worn at the fingers; her face was singularly sharp in contour, and wrinkled like that of an old woman of eighty, though her age was probably nearer fifty. To a superficial observer she would probably have appeared the plebeian, Diana the aristocrat. Yet, oddly enough, Diana had no sooner greeted her visitor than she was conscious of a painful newness in her appointments. The while she was replying gracefully to Miss Hastings's opening remarks, her mind was suddenly disturbed by an idea that the pattern of the wall-paper was too pronounced, and even by a wish that the furniture were covered with an old chintz.

"I am so glad to know you," said Miss Hastings, sitting bolt upright on one side of the fire, to Diana in a low chair on the other. "You have been quite an interest to me. To see a person like you walking about is a public benefaction."

"I don't think Ridley-Friars can want novelties; it is such a dear, charming old place!" and Diana smiled, thinking that Miss Hastings was proving herself an approachable person.

"Oh, the nut is flavourless. Wait till you have cracked the shell," replied she, nodding her head vivaciously. "We want young blood. It is refreshing to see your young Dr. Warwick setting the world to rights as he does. I am so glad we found a mutual friend in Sir Charles Warwick. You will not find Ridley brilliant. Mrs. Mountstephen is our leader; she must call on you. Our hospitality is according to our lights. A state dinner once a year is *de rigueur*, then we subside. Under the rose be it spoken, we are tired of each other in Ridley. A new face across the dinner-table will be a boon. You and your husband will enliven us."

"You are very kind," answered Diana, making no attempt to keep gratification out of her face, and instinctively aware that her visitor gauged accurately the value of those last words. "We have been rather isolated since we came here."

"That is too bad. I am glad we have unearthed you. Of course you could have few associates in Pottersby. Really, these worthy Pottersby traders have a far better time than we others. They are not half so much bored, and can suit their own whims as to associates. Now, if you had happened to be the draper's or the brewer's daughter, you might just as possibly have taken my fancy, but I couldn't have known you. Absurd, but a fact all the same."

Diana's face had flushed and then paled during the latter part of this speech. It needed but a moment's deliberation before she raised it resolutely, but she experienced now no self-respecting glow; on the contrary, her spirit sank under a chill disillusion. Defy conventionality! It seemed it could only be done by a lie, and that she could not stoop to. Would Warwick ever forgive her if she did?

"Perhaps I ought to have told you before," she said; "I myself am a tradesman's daughter. My father was a bookseller."

Diana had clasped her hands nervously, in a state of mind that might await an explosion. But no outward result followed her speech. Miss Hastings neither started, nor blushed, nor removed her small bright eyes from the speaker, and her tones had neither gained nor lost a whit as she replied—

"Indeed! Well, then, I may congratulate myself on having successfully dodged prejudice for once. If I had needed another proof of its absurdity, you have given me one. Positively, I am grateful to you!"

Miss Hastings professed herself grateful, but Diana looked so. Relieved from the double dread of hampering her husband's career and of allowing herself to remain in a false position, her face shone like a storm-cleared sky, and two tears welled up into her honest eyes. The talk passed to indifferent subjects, and presently the visitor rose to go. She pressed Diana's hand energetically, and said, in significant tones, "Pray come and see me soon, and bring your frankness with you. But keep it for me, for *I* appreciate it."

Miss Hastings's call was soon followed by an invitation to dinner, and before long the Warwick Halls were fairly launched into Ridley society. They made a success. Mrs. Mountstephen, the most important member of the community, had called on Diana at Miss Hastings's request, and had taken her up. Diana made no more confessions, feeling herself under the protection of Miss Hastings, and therefore absolved from the necessity. There was a certain largeness and freshness about the young creature which gained her an easy passage into favour. Her husband was full of vigour and enthusiasm, and together they made a handsome couple, instinct with the indescribable inspiration of youth. Diana enjoyed her success, as was natural, but chiefly because it relieved her from the fear that she would be a drag upon her husband's career. And the long evening chat with him, discussing and confiding, was always the cream of the day's pleasure. A dear charmed circle of warmth and reality shut them in from society, which, mirror-like, shows but the outside of things.

Among the acquaintances Diana now made, there were none with whom she came to be on terms so friendly as the ladies, Mrs. Mountstephen and Miss Hastings. They were very dissimilar. Mrs. Mountstephen was a widow, somewhat over thirty, and possessed of one little boy, before whom she, and her friends if they loved her, bowed the knee. A dashing pair of bays carried her to Diana's door; her equipage and footmen created around them a very atmosphere of splendour. Arrayed in costly furs, and of striking presence, when this visitor was ushered in Diana's drawing-room took an aspect, not

of a too raw newness, but of utter insignificance. Everything dwarfed and paled, and her little artistic arrangements appeared trivial to absurdity. The great lady's tones were low, her face and manner were gracious and calm, and all combined to form that wonderful product—uniting the appearance of candour with the reality of absolute reservation, which, for want of a better word, one might call "style." Mrs. Mountstephen was very kind, and even caressing; but, as Diana told Warwick, she sometimes thought that Miss Hastings meant a real friendship towards her, though the idea was not seldom banished by some more than usually steely glitter from the old maid's black eyes.

The future now looked full of promise to the young couple. It is true there was little or no direct result on Warwick's practice from the social success they had made. This could not be expected as long as Dr. Alloway was able to attend his patients. But he was daily becoming less able to do so, and even before Mrs. Mountstephen's suggestion to Warwick, which was made about this time, it began to be talked of in Ridley as a likely thing that the care of aristocratic constitutions there would, in course of time, devolve upon the young Dr. Warwick Hall. Mrs. Mountstephen's happy suggestion was this: that Dr. Alloway should take Warwick as his partner. She thought it would be beneficial to both sides. Warwick could not but feel highly gratified. Merely as an index to Ridley feeling, the suggestion, coming from such a source, was extremely valuable. But of course the initiative must come from Dr. Alloway, and he was known to be very jealous of his position in Ridley, and of somewhat uncertain temper. However, Mrs. Mountstephen declared she was determined to carry the matter through if possible, and as she was a favourite with the old doctor, she should not hesitate herself to broach the matter to him, and endeavour to make him see the advantage it would be to him to amalgamate with his young colleague. "If not——" began the lady, in conclusion, but broke off her sentence with a smile, adding, "I must not talk treason against the dear, gruff old man." We may be sure that Mrs. Mountstephen's "if not" was the theme of much merry discussion between the young people.

While matters were at this point, Warwick, one evening, having stood for some time contemplative, with his back to the mantleshelf and his eyes on the carpet, said suddenly, scanning the while his wife's face, "I think we ought to ask some of these people to dinner."

Diana, much startled, cried out against the idea; it would be considered only an impertinence; they would certainly not expect to be entertained by them. Warwick now took up his own suggestion warmly, considered it a British vulgarity to suppose social intercourse dependent on the possession of a butler and the quality of wines, and referred to the brilliance of French assemblies sustained on *eau sucrée*. Diana asked if they could state in the invitations that they cherished an admiration for French institutions. But Warwick would not be laughed out of his idea, nor was he convinced when his wife reminded him of the awkward angle in the dining-room where Jane could not get round the table, and of how cook spoiled the soup only yesterday. They would be obliged to get in a cook and a waiter, and the thing would be pretentious and at the same time a failure. Warwick now began to gain ground in the discussion by insidious suggestions that Diana should give her acquaintances a new sensation—to wit, that of refined simplicity, economical elegance, everything perfect of its kind. Diana smiled; she was one of those people who seem to show an open heart in the disclosing of white teeth and the curving of full lips. The simplicity and economy were easily managed, she admitted, but the elegance and perfection! That sort of thing was her specialty, said Warwick. Between gratification and Warwick's energy Diana stifled her misgivings and surrendered.

The invitations were sent out—half-a-dozen. With a party of eight the servants could get round the table.

"Let's have your cousin John," said Warwick; "he's not a society man, but if we get him on his own subjects he'll astonish these people."

"Oh, Warwick, he hates society. They can never drag him out of that den of his. Besides, I'm sure we couldn't ask him without Polly. She would feel aggrieved."

"Oh, I'll manage it. I'll ask him to meet a few friends in an informal sort of way, so that he won't shy, and if it's done in that way his sister won't feel slighted. We must get him. What's the good of having a genius in the family if we can't make him of use on occasion?"

The eventful day arrived. Everything was propitious. The *menu*, prepared with much thought and discussion, appeared to combine simplicity and refinement in due proportion. The same desirable result had been aimed at in the arrangements for service. The cook, having practised the art for several previous evenings, was to assist the housemaid in waiting, and a person of more "professed" capability was engaged in the kitchen.

Imagine Diana, with scarce a flutter, having given a last glance at her elegantly simple table, ascending to her toilet. It is only half-past six when a smart ring is heard at the front door. Alas! vain is the confidence of man! Jane trips up and announces Cousin Polly. O horror! What evil fortune sends her here on this night of nights? Diana stifles a cry of dismay, and bids the servant bring her up. Up she comes, and enters smiling.

"Oh my, Diana! you've got a party!" she exclaims. "Now I have put my foot in it."

"It is only two or three Ridley people who are coming to dinner, dear," said Diana, kissing her cousin, and smiling with a good imitation of cordiality. "We asked John if he would kindly come to make up the number—we can do with so few in our small rooms, you know."

"Well I never! I'm sure he doesn't know it's a grand affair. He'll come straight from the City in the utmost innocence, just like me. When I heard that Warwick had asked him over this evening, I thought it would be a nice opportunity to come, as I

had not seen you for some time, and John would be here to take me home."

"That was very kind of you," said Diana, unflinching, though the iron entered her soul.

Polly, while talking, had calmly removed her hat and jacket, and now took her place before the glass, quite unsuspecting the dismay she was striking into her beholder. She patted her already too glossy hair with her plump hand, and proceeded to open her bag, in which Diana had caught such a glimpse of lace and ribbons as drove her well-nigh to despair.

"What a mercy it is," she said, complacently pinning in a big silver brooch, "that I came in this dress! I'd half a mind not to, as it was so foggy. And I suppose they are quite *distingué* people, aren't they? How dull you seem, dear; aren't you well?"

"Oh, yes, thank you," said Diana faintly, "but I'm a little afraid whether there will be room——"

Polly pinned on another bow. "There!" she said, surveying herself critically, "I think I shall do very well for an impromptu, don't you—if you lend me gloves? I see you are going to wear them. Room, you say? Oh, that doesn't matter. You need not stand on ceremonies with me, you know. I needn't be armed in, and you can squeeze me in anywhere."



"'There!' she said, surveying herself critically."

It was not in human nature to repress a groan. Polly turned round quickly, and said in rather a sharp tone—

"Oh, of course, if it will inconvenience you for me to stay—— But perhaps you are ashamed of me!" a little attempt at drawing up the short round figure pointing the irony of this last suggestion.

"Nonsense, Polly dear!" said Diana soothingly. "It's very good of you to come and see me, and I will see if I can find some gloves for you."

This was what Diana said aloud, with a forced smile. Inwardly she sought to revive a sinking heart by saying, "I am not a snob, nor is my husband, thank heaven! and I'm not going to be ashamed of my relations, who have always been good to me, nor treat them shabbily, for any grand acquaintances under the sun!"

So Diana led Polly into the drawing-room, feeling more like a victim than the triumphant hostess of half an hour before. She had not even the consolation of communion with Warwick, for he had dressed early, and run out to see a critical case needing a late visit. Things did not appear to mend during the last quarter of an hour in the drawing-room. Polly chatted on in high content, while Diana struggled vainly to lose sight of the fact that her own harmonious costume, even the pretty drawing-room itself, was fatally marred by the intrusion of the little *bourgeoise* cousin, whose dress of maroon was garnished with blue ribbons, a profusion of cheap lace, and a mixture of gold and silver jewellery.

Miss Hastings and her brother arrived first. With the call for action Diana rallied all her forces, and supported her position with the utmost spirit; indeed, it was noticeable that as each dire event came to mark that fatal evening, the hostess rose superior. Miss Hastings cast a shrewd glance at the little cousin, and on introduction included her in the conversation that followed. Mrs. Mountstephen and Mr. and Mrs. Agnew, a young barrister and his wife, arrived at the same time. Then came Warwick, not a minute too soon. Diana knew the signs of haste in the ring and tread. And she was chained to her post! The tears sprang into her eyes with the longing to rush out and forestall the shock that awaited him. He entered, handsome and easy, prepared with apologies for late-coming. His glance fell on Polly, on his wife, and she, accustomed to read it, detected the repressed astonishment, annoyance, and—was it?—reproach. Polly explained her appearance artlessly. John was invited, and so she had come too. "But where is John?" asks he. Polly

says she does not know. He was coming straight from the City, and ought to have been here."

"From the City!" Miss Hastings is listening.

"I shall like to introduce John Day to you," Warwick says, turning to her; "he is editing the new editions of the early English poets of which we were speaking the other night. Have you seen the Beaumont and Fletcher?"

"My dear young doctor, you must excuse me! Your own intellectual energy is sufficiently fatiguing. But to introduce me to an editor of old plays! I see what you are aiming at. You wish to stir us up with a pole, like the bears at the Zoo. But we Ridley people like the bottom of the pit and our slumbers."

It was past seven. Where was John?

"Must we wait?" telegraphed between Diana and Warwick. At that moment the bell rang. The door was thrown open, John stood in the doorway; John the genius, who had gone deep into Elizabethan literature, the editor of old plays, the writer himself of no mean verse. But of what service to his appearance were all such distinctions? He had come straight from the City. The meaning of those fateful words flashed upon Diana's mind. He was not in evening dress. John was tall, with a slouch contracted by long stooping over a desk. His clothes adapted themselves to his figure with the easy fit of long use. This time it was Diana, who, in her despairing look at her husband, conveyed a shade of reproach. In what possible manner had he conveyed the invitation?

John advanced with all the awkwardness natural to his person, but with none additional through embarrassment. His coolness seemed an aggravation. All eyes were directed towards him. Miss Hastings, Diana observed, was positively smiling, in her enigmatic way. But the dinner-bell rang: the position must needs be accepted. Towards the dining-room the ladies swept.

The low hum of well-bred voices passed from one room to the other. Hardly knowing why, Diana feels lurking beneath her air of easy cordiality a chill presentiment that the evening is blighted, a conviction that the affair has resolved itself into a desperate attempt to carry off failure with decency. As in a nightmare she perceives that Polly is "squeezed in;" that the soup might fairly be described as lukewarm water with a little vermicelli floating in it, that in the smelts she has before her a heap of charred bodies, quite cold; while she dimly realises that the waiting consists principally in smothered directions from the housemaid to the cook, who is paralysed with nervousness, to go round the other way, and to hand the vegetables on the left side. In the meanwhile she talks without knowing what she says, and can only hope her phrases seem connected. She is only too well aware, however, that Polly is talking, and that John is not. She casts upon him an appealing glance, to which he replies by one of his sweet, good smiles, which show what a dear fellow he really is. But there he stops, having no notion that her glance means anything but good-will. In vain Warwick works the conversation round to the Elizabethan dramatists. John refuses the bait. He will not shine.

The dinner ends. Diana retires with her flock in an honourable retreat from action. The ladies dispose themselves comfortably. Though not sanguine enough to suppose that the field may still be recovered, Diana reflects that no more reverses need be expected: the worst is over. No consciousness of the state of affairs is betrayed by any of the ladies. Miss Hastings is as vivacious, Mrs. Mountstephen as calm as is natural to each. Mrs. Agnew, a more colourless personage, is being talked to by Polly. Snatches of the conversation come across to Diana, as she discusses with Mrs. Mountstephen her little Edward's excessive delicacy, and have the effect of slightly disturbing her sensations of security. Polly appears to be dragging into unnaturally frequent mention certain great names with which she had been brought into connection. Diana feels her cheeks begin to burn. Poor, well-meaning Polly, she will do some mischief yet! If Diana hears her, so can Mrs. Mountstephen; while Miss Hastings is certainly listening.

Unconsciously precipitating the catastrophe, Diana looks at Polly nervously, catches her eye, and draws the conversation towards herself, while all are attentive.

"Mrs. Agnew knows Lord Weston, Diana, and I am telling her what a great friend he is of yours."

Diana, with her heart in her mouth, makes answer with an almost exaggerated calmness—

"My father had business relations with him, and after his death Lord Weston was very kind to me, and took me into his house as governess."

Looking up by some impulse after resolutely looking down, Diana encountered Miss Hastings' eyes. She could have fancied that lady nodded at her had it not been absurd to suppose it. The talk, momentarily suspended, was resumed. Was the stone that Diana had flung into the pool enringing itself silently with ever-widening ripples? Mrs. Mountstephen, without the shadow of a difference in her well-bred languor, resumed the conversation where it had dropped.

And now indeed misfortune had spent her last arrow destined for these unfortunates. The arrival of the gentlemen resulted in no fresh combination of horror. It seemed possible even that John's tongue might have loosened after the departure of the ladies, for he looked a trifle less abstracted, and Warwick certainly did not appear distressed. "Poor boy," thought Diana, with a little choke, "he little knows!" The torture did not last much longer. Polly and John left first, for they had to catch a train. Diana was standing apart when John shook hands. He smiled out of his bearded face rather humorously for a moment, as he said—

"Little cousin, don't ask me to this kind of thing again. These people are Philistines. But if you do, get old Warwick to give me a hint as to the kind of affair, so that I may avoid shocking Mrs. Grundy. Good-bye; I'll run over for a chat some evening."

At last all was over! The guests, with vague murmurs of "such a pleasant evening," had in turn departed. Warwick and Diana were alone, face to face. They might have been parted a month for

the relief it was. At first each refrained from expressing their feelings, afraid lest they should lose the other's unbiassed sentiments.

"Well!" said Warwick.

"Well!" said Diana.

"What do you think of the evening?"

"Oh, Warwick!"

"I'm afraid it's been rather a failure."

"We have completely lost our position here."

"Nonsense! it can't be as bad as that."

Warwick gave a rather forced laugh, and saying, "We may as well be miserable comfortably," pushed two easy-chairs to the fire. They sat down, and the two usually bright young faces reflected gloom.

"Perhaps things are not so bad as they seem," said Warwick, forcing himself to be grimly cheerful. "Polly, for instance."

"And John," said Diana.

"How in the name of all that's extraordinary could you bring her into the drawing-room?"

"Oh, Warwick, you would not have had me send her away? It would have been a slight to the whole family. In what way could you have given the invitation to John?"

"What do you think she said at dinner?" continued Warwick, absorbed with Polly. "She told Miss Hastings that she had not had an 'invite,' and poured out her cockney vowels by the dozen."

Warwick gnashed his teeth at the recollection. "How on earth came that fine fellow to have such a sister!"

"Yes; but John—why didn't he come dressed? How I wish I had written to him!"

"Was I likely to suppose the fellow would come out to dinner in his office coat? 'To meet some people'—I'm certain I said that. He talked very well after you left the table."

"Oh, that is of very little consequence. The soup and vegetables were cold, and the fish burnt, and cook waited horribly."

Diana groaned. The two faces confronted each other with less affection in the gaze than usual.

"It is the horrible pretentiousness of our having asked them that makes me writhe," said Warwick. "Will Miss Hastings cut us!"

"Perhaps; I don't feel sure. She knew about me before, you know."

"Yes, that's true; but——"

"But she hadn't seen my relations? No."

"*Our* relations. It is folly, and almost bad taste, Diana, to separate yourself from me in that fashion. You cannot think that I would tolerate what is implied."

"I know you are very generous about it, but you have not heard the worst of all—what happened after dinner. Polly spoke of Lord Weston as our friend, and because I thought that snobbish, I explained to them all what was the real relationship. Oh, Warwick! I am a disgrace to you!"

The speech ended in a sob. But the cloud had cleared magically from her husband's brow. He laughed in a genuine merry fashion, drew Diana towards him, and kissed her.

"On the contrary, my dear girl, I'm proud of you," he said; "and not another sigh will we waste over this silly business. It's all my fault from beginning to end—my pig-headed insistance brought about the dinner, and my blunder resulted in John and Polly turning up like this. Never mind: if they cut us, peace be with them! After all, real friends like John, and—well, Polly, too—are worth the lot of them. By-the-by, aren't you getting desperately hungry? If it isn't one o'clock! I shall go and forage in the larder for some supper. I didn't get any dinner, nor, I expect, did you. I'll bring you a bone and some soda-water."

Diana laughed, kissed her husband enthusiastically, and dried her eyes.

Our young couple went about for the next few days under a vague but not the less trying sense of suspense. Nothing transpired, but it seemed as if something must transpire. Were they to be punished for their temerity, and, if so, in what way?

Warwick pooh-poohed the matter. They had done nothing disgraceful, therefore they could not be disgraced: for his part, he could not conceive society to be so paltry-minded as Diana would have it. Diana shook her head, and said he would have to change his opinion.

"How do you know?" asked Warwick.

"I feel it in the air," said Diana; and Warwick, laughing, uttered the one word, "Woman!"

But he was more uneasy than he allowed himself to admit, for he had anxieties that he had not yet found the heart to tell Diana, who existed in the happy assurance that numerous patients meant financial success.

At last, event the first occurred. There dashed up one afternoon, in all its splendour, Mrs. Mountstephen's carriage and pair, from which the footman descended; but instead of opening the carriage door for his mistress, he merely bestowed a card on the doctor's housemaid, and the carriage rolled away again.

Event the second: The arrival of Miss Hastings's sober brougham. Would she also leave a card? Diana watched her from behind her window-curtains with quickened pulses. No; Miss Hastings herself was ushered in. Was she, then, indeed going to prove herself the friend Diana had sometimes imagined in her? There was a mixture of humility and dignity in Diana's address that ought to have touched Miss Hastings's heart if she had one. But who could say whether she had or not, with her dry, quick manner, hard black eyes, and tight line of mouth? The visit passed with nothing to mark it off from any other morning call, until Miss Hastings, noticing on the table a copy of John's edition of Ben Jonson, remarked—

"A very interesting man, your cousin; much obliged to you for asking me to meet him, I'm sure."

Poor Diana! Her feelings on hearing this speech were almost unmanageable. The generosity of it seemed too much. Tears started to her eyes. She looked at her visitor. Had Miss Hastings met the look Diana could not have resisted the impulse to unburden herself. But Diana, with bosom heaving and wet eyes—the very picture of impulsive youth—

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encountered the same impenetrable visage, with eyes roving hither and thither, and her emotion was checked. Her voice faltered a little as she replied, and that was all.

"I shall be at home on Wednesday afternoon as usual, you know," said Miss Hastings, shaking hands at the door; and Diana was left to feel grateful indeed. but bewildered, for she could not understand her visitor.

Should she go on Wednesday? That was a question to be discussed with Warwick, who was of opinion that it would be a good step. She would by so doing take the temperature, as it were, of the Ridley people; and it was better to know at once how they stood. Diana agreed with him, but she had a natural shrinking, and Warwick would not press it. But hardly deciding till the very hour of starting, she then put on her bonnet and went. "After all," she reasoned, "what can be done to me?"

Thus fortified, Diana was shown into Miss Hastings's drawing-room, where guests were already assembled. These were chiefly ladies, as is usual with kettledrums; but Diana was almost immediately engaged in conversation by the Ridley curate, who had a great deal to say concerning additions to the school library for which Miss Hastings had engaged her assistance. Looking up after the talk had gone on some moments, Diana saw what made her cheeks pale and her heart stand still. Every soul in the smaller drawing-room in which she sat, including Mrs. Mountstephen, had deserted it, leaving her there entirely alone with the one black-coated figure of Mr. Pierce. There could be only one interpretation to the manœuvre: the room had been half full of ladies when she entered it, and there was nothing whatever to call them away to the other room. Diana stopped in the middle of a sentence. Mr. Pierce then looked round and stared in amazement. Diana rose, saying—

"Let us follow the example of the others," and with the mixture of stateliness and ease peculiar to her carriage, she passed into the other room and to the side of Miss Hastings, who, without taking any apparent notice of the situation, welcomed her with peculiar cordiality.

Diana walked home that afternoon with burning cheeks, steps winged by indignation, and a mind fixed on only one idea—to get home and hide herself there as in a refuge. A little kindness, and Diana was the humblest of the humble; but the cold cruelty with which the Ridley ladies had sought to teach her her presumption aroused all the pride of her nature. But she had sufficient control over herself to resolve that she would not speak of the matter to Warwick, whose anger she well knew would burn far hotter than hers. But of what use are such resolves between lovers? Cleverly as Diana imagined herself to be acting the part of one who has passed an agreeable afternoon, Warwick said to her before long, "Diana, what is the matter? Something has happened that you are trying to keep from me;" and then Diana had all the comfort of checking the vehement indignation that springs from tenderness.

"As if we needed so brutal a lesson!" cried he, pacing up and down the room; "as if the merest hint would not have been enough. I see the whole thing. But it was an insult to Miss Hastings as well as to you, my darling. Mrs. Mountstephen is the originator, and the Ridley people follow her like a drove of sheep—the ladies, that is, for it is they who have these matters in their hands. As Miss Hastings invited you, and gave them to understand that she would stick by us, this was to show her that she would do so alone; and all because my wife showed true grit in an emergency. Vulgar-minded snobs!" and Warwick clenched his hands.

"Hush, hush, Warwick!" cried Diana; "it was not that: we have brought it on ourselves. We should not have attempted to entertain them. They are only likely to suppose we are young upstarts that need to be shown their proper place."

She herself did not feel so sure of Miss Hastings as Warwick did. Her behaviour might very well be due to truer good breeding, and she might quite possibly be intending to drop their acquaintance more gently.

Diana felt, with a sinking of her heart, that her views received confirmation next day, when a kindly worded note arrived from Miss Hastings, to the effect that the library funds were found not to serve for so many additions as had been proposed, and so there was no need to make use of Mrs. Warwick Hall's kind services in the matter. Diana had valued Miss Hastings's acquaintance more than any other, and she could hardly force a smile for Warwick when he maintained that his idea was not shaken, and that this new step meant only that Miss Hastings wished to spare Diana from further annoyance.

Some days after this Warwick returned from his round with a preoccupied face that betokened some cause for perturbation.

"Diana," he said, "do you know some small houses behind the High Street, just beyond Marks' the chemist, called Cadman's Row? I have not been called in there before, but this morning I was sent for to a child with a bad throat, due, I have no doubt, to drains. It is a dreadful den, and a disgrace to the town; and I believe it's in a very unsanitary state. On inquiry of the landlady I find there are rats in the houses, and a 'faint' smell, etc. They have complained to the agent who collects the rents, and no notice has been taken of the matter. Now, who do you think owns these houses?"

Diana of course could not guess, and Warwick surprised her as much as he expected to do by the announcement that Mrs. Mountstephen was the person.

"I suppose," said he, "she knows nothing about her property, and leaves it all to this agent, who does not care a rap for the comfort of the tenants. Of course, it is my duty to let her know the state of things as soon as may be. It is bothering, for it is rather a delicate business under the circumstances. I don't know whether to write or see her. The latter would be more effective, but the old Adam in me very strongly rises against seeking an audience with her just now."

Circumstances, however, seemed to favour this latter course, when, as Diana and Warwick were walking down the High Street together, soon

afterwards they came almost face to face with the lady in question, as she was passing from a shop to her carriage. When Diana took in the situation she felt herself trembling.

"Oh, Warwick, it is Mrs. Mountstephen; let us turn back," she whispered. But Warwick took her by the arm to prevent any such cowardly proceeding, and saying, "It is the very chance; I wanted to speak to her about Cadman's Row," advanced, hat in hand, to the carriage door as the lady was entering.

But she, with the most admirable *aplomb*, contrived to elude the rencontre, bestowing merely a faint inclination of the head from the carriage window as she drove away. It was a position in which a cut could hardly have been given without awkwardness; but Mrs. Mountstephen managed it, difficult as it was, with perfect grace. The young pair walked on in silence for a few moments. Then Warwick said—

"There is no doubt that they are sending us to Coventry. Well, my dear, it is a fine bracing air, although a thought too shrewdly nipping, perhaps; but our constitutions are, I hope, strong enough to bear it."

Warwick spoke lightly, but with serious meaning, and so Diana understood it, for she replied—

"Oh, Warwick, what does it matter? We have each other, and you have your work, and I can help you with your poor patients. At any rate, I am not a drag upon you there."

"Take care," said her husband, with a threatening glance, "or I shall pay you out for that style of speech in a way you would not like—in public."

It was easy to win Diana back to cheerfulness, and she smiled at her husband in her own hearty way.

"What shall you do about the houses now?" she asked by-and-by.

"I shall see the agent, and try what can be done that way," replied Warwick.

Accordingly, next morning, on paying his visit to the house in Cadman's Row, he questioned the slatternly person who occupied the ground floor and let out the upper portion, as to the agent who collected the rents.

"It's Lord Newby's steward that does it, sir. The houses, I've 'eard say, did belong to his lordship, like a deal of property hereabouts, till Mr. Mountstephen bought 'em, and Mr. Nuttall, the steward, has always been round on a Tuesday (and that is this very day), time out of mind. And he's not a one to listen to no complaints, leastways to attend to 'em. The times I've told him about them rat-holes! and he always says, says he, 'I'll have 'em seen to one of these days, Mrs. Brown; I'll noticefy the matter to Mrs. Mountstephen.' But, bless you, sir, he never do nothing."

"If I were you," said Warwick, "I would let Mrs. Mountstephen know direct, and not wait for this agent."

Mrs. Brown stared.

"Me, sir! I hope I know my place better than to trouble a lady like Mrs. Mountstephen with the like of my affairs. She's very high, is Mrs. Mountstephen, and drives about as fine as if she were a lady of title; a good bit smarter than the real gentry hereabouts, she do, and she's only been in the place, she hasn't, a matter of ten year. They do say her husband's father made his money in trade, but it's all the same now, and there's no one more thought of by the gentry than her nowadays."

"At what time is the agent expected to come round?" asked Warwick, wishing to stop the flow of gossip, and inwardly struck by the echo, in this lower sphere, of the social views of the upper.

"There he is, sir, a-turning the corner now," said Mrs. Brown, retreating from the door; "now, don't you, sir, for mercy's sake, tell him as I've been complaining. *I* don't complain—the rats don't make no odds to me. I do hope and trust as you won't go and get me into trouble with Mr. Nuttall, or I'll be having the rent raised over my head. He's a gentleman as likes things pleasant, and if we makes no complaints, why, he'll wait a bit for the rent nows and thens when it ain't convenient to pay. But he can't a-bear no grumbling."

"Very well, Mrs. Brown, I will be careful not to bring your name into the matter," said Warwick, moving off to meet the agent.

He was a man whose face Warwick disliked at the first glance—a face showing an upper layer of respectability and good-humour, through which it required small penetration to discern a foundation of meanness.

"Your servant, sir," said he, as Warwick requested a few moments' conversation.

"I am a medical man," said Warwick, as they turned to walk up the street together, "and I have to inform you as the landlord's agent that these houses are in an unsanitary condition. Of course, I could put the district inspector upon the matter, but that is unnecessary, as you can yourself acquaint the owner of the houses with the necessity of putting them in repair, and looking into the condition of the drains. You are not, perhaps, aware that they are infested with rats. Now, whenever rats appear there must be mischief, you know."

"You don't say so, sir! No, I had not been told of the rats. People of this class are so hapathetic. Which house was it, did you say, sir?"

"Oh, I believe all the houses want attention. The landlord will no doubt have them all thoroughly overhauled if you direct his attention to it, and I hope you will lose no time in doing so, or the health of the occupants will suffer seriously. There is a child dangerously ill already with a drain throat."

The two exchanged "good-morning," and parted with the promise on the agent's part of immediate attention to the warning, his first step towards which was to inquire at every house with much cordiality after the health of the inmates, and as Mrs. Brown fell into the trap, owing to her love of gossip, she laid herself open to the expected rebuke.

"I am surprised at you, Mrs. Brown," said he, "making complaints to the doctor instead of to the proper party. Why didn't you tell me about the rats? There's a great want of what I call proper feeling in that, now. I shall send somebody in to-morrow to stop up those holes, and another time I hope you'll complain to me."

"Me complain! I never did no such thing, if you'll believe me, Mr. Nuttall; it's the way with them doctors, for ever interfering and poking their noses into a person's back kitchen, and a-smelling here and a-smelling there, and a-hopening other folks's winders as if they was their own."

But poor Mrs. Brown's recantation availed her little. A plasterer was sent in next day to stop up the rat-holes. And on the next rent-day she was informed



"Diana, sitting by his bedside, received a confidence stranger and sadder than any she had ever heard."—*p.* 23.

by Mr. Nuttall, on pretext of the expenses of repairing, that the rent would be raised a shilling weekly. All this came to Warwick's ears in due course.

"And I do hope and pray, sir," was the moral drawn by Mrs. Brown, "as you won't never interfere no more, kindly as you meant it, and axing your pardon for speaking of it to you. Them rats'll be through again in a fortnight's time, and that won't take off the extry shilling I'm rented. What's put on is never took off, as all we poor folks knows."

As may be supposed, Warwick did not take to heart the lesson Mrs. Brown wished to read him. He was more than ever determined to effect the desired reformation, though it was not quite easy to decide what step to take next. He had more than a suspicion that the agent was dishonest, and carried on matters for his own advantage, while Mrs. Mountstephen had probably no more to do with them than consisted in receiving the addition to her income, without any very clear consciousness of its source. In this case she could only be supposed to feel grateful to anyone who would open her eyes to the real state of the case. But, on the other hand, if she took a more active part in her own affairs, she might resent interference, and Warwick felt that his position with the lady was not such as to rob interference of its offensiveness. Previous to the fatal dinner he would have called upon her and explained the matter with all due tact, but under present circumstances a formal letter was all that he felt possible. Would it be better, therefore, to apply to the public officer of health, and set him on the business? In that case he, Warwick, need not appear in it at all, and that would undoubtedly be more prudent in the precarious and very critical position of his own affairs. But was it not a more honourable and courteous thing to address the owner directly than to deal her a stroke in the dark, considering that he had no right to suppose her, in

her character as landowner, other than a right-feeling and charitable person?

On the evening of the day during which Warwick was revolving these considerations he received a visit from a medical friend who had been a contemporary of his at St. James's Hospital, and he laid the case before him, as they sipped their coffee after dinner, suppressing the features in it peculiar to his own position.

"What should you do, Metcalfe?" he asked his friend.

"Do, my dear fellow! Why, simply nothing. Never interfere—that's the one maxim I am more careful to observe in my professional career than any other. It is the only way to avoid endless nuisance."

"That's all very well," said Warwick; "but one can't see things go wrong, and not stir a step to set them right."

"Can't you? Then I pity you. A doctor is forced by the very nature of his occupation to see things going wrong every day of his life. He sees that Mrs. Brown is brought to death's door by the exactions of Mr. Brown; that Jones is ruining his health and domestic happiness by drink; that Robinson is overworking himself to pay Mrs. Robinson's millinery bills; but you would not, I presume, feel yourself called on to rush in and expostulate in these cases. Then why do it in this case? Interfering between landlord and tenant is much the same as interfering between man and wife. The only result is that they both hate you."

"I can't see it as you do," said Warwick, after a few contemplative moments. "I think that *laisser aller* system is cowardly. As well hesitate to divide a couple of street combatants because of the knocks one might get. I am not sure that I see the cases you have put in quite the *ad absurdum* light that you do. I think I should probably endeavour with due discretion to give a hint or so to the parties concerned."

"My faith, Hall!" cried his friend, eying him with extreme astonishment, "excuse me, but with these ideas I'm thinking you will make a pretty mess of it."

Warwick had held his own ground firmly enough against his friend, but after he was gone his remarks recurred to him with unwelcome persistency. If the whole situation had been confided to him, Warwick had little difficulty in imagining the additional force his arguments would have gained. Indeed, he could imagine his friend regarding him as an absolute lunatic, to risk anything in view of the present crisis in his affairs. And Metcalfe was a shrewd fellow and a successful one.

What did Diana think of it? She had been unusually silent during the evening, and had not given her opinion in her usual outspoken way. It was not without an effort that Warwick induced her at last to do so.

"No, dear," she persisted in replying, "it is for you to judge. You must do what you think best."

But Warwick had little doubt with which side her sympathies went, and at last he won her to confess it.

"Oh, Warwick," she said, looking him fully in the eyes, as she had not done all the evening, "I don't understand your hesitation. Of course you should try your utmost to have the houses put in order, and the people made safe and comfortable. I don't like Mr. Metcalfe, nor his way of talking."

"Oh, oh!" cried Warwick, "and this is why that mouth has been so tightly closed all the evening. And which do you say it should be—shall I go to the inspector, or write to Mrs. Mountstephen?"

"That is for you to judge," said Diana, still grave; "but it seems to me that to touch a woman's sympathies would be better for the people than to set machinery at work."

"So be it," said Warwick, and he sat down and wrote the following letter to Mrs. Mountstephen:—

"DEAR MRS. MOUNTSTEPHEN,—I was called in professionally the other day to a house in Cadman's Row, where I found a child ill in a way clearly attributable to bad drains. This led me to inquire further, when I was told that rats are frequently seen in the basement of the houses—an unmistakable sign of mischief. I have spoken to the agent who collects the rents, with no other result than a most ineffective patching up of the mischief in one house only.

"Learning that you are the owner of the property, I have judged it my duty to acquaint you with these facts, in case they should not have been fully represented to you by the agent. I ought to add that, in my opinion, to leave the houses as they are, without a thorough investigation into the state of the drains, is to incur a very serious responsibility.—I am, yours faithfully, "WARWICK HALL."

Diana approved, but wished "united kind regards" to be interpolated. It was better, she thought, to ignore the lady's slights.

No answer came to this letter for so long that Warwick concluded none was coming. In the meanwhile the next Saturday's local paper contained a paragraph which astonished and excited our friends considerably. Diana observed it first, and read it aloud, while Warwick came and looked over her shoulder, as if to make sure that she was not the victim of an hallucination. The paragraph was this: "We understand that a professional gentleman, not a hundred miles removed from our neighbourhood, who is deservedly respected and esteemed for his private character and professional skill during a long and useful career, is about to take a partner to lighten the labours of his declining years and waning health. It is whispered that the party proposed is of unexceptionable merit, both professionally and personally."

Warwick took the paper from Diana's hands and read the patently mysterious announcement again. Could it refer to anyone but Dr. Alloway? That did not seem possible. And was the "party" alluded to Warwick himself? But then what an incongruity that the editor of the *Pottersby Times* should have got wind of the proposed negotiation before the principals had taken a step in the matter! This question of the partnership had been entirely dropped between husband and wife since the dinner-party. Diana, finding that Warwick did not refer to it, had, through some instinct, refrained from doing so. Even now his tongue was not unloosed, though Diana, under the

excitement produced by the *Pottersby Times*, gave vent freely to queries and suppositions.

"Now, see," said she, "don't you think it is as clear as daylight? Mrs. Mountstephen is so pleased with your energy in the Cadman's Row business, that she is acting in the partnership matter just as if there had been no dinner-party at all. You will get a very kind letter from her, I expect, and all will be right again. I have not said anything about it, Warwick, but I have been very much afraid that the partnership would fall through now; but you see it was wronging Mrs. Mountstephen to think so."

Warwick had taken the newspaper to the window, and he did not look round as he replied—

"I don't understand it. It seems to me exceedingly unlikely that this paragraph appears in consequence of private negotiations on the part of Mrs. Mountstephen."

"It *is* very odd, but these editors do get hold of news before anyone else somehow. Don't you remember how the Vicar's engagement got into the paper before he had even made the proposal?"

To this Warwick made no reply but such as consisted in a shake of the head. Diana continued—

"That letter of yours, Warwick, coming after the way in which she has behaved to us, is just what would bring out a person's magnanimity, if there were any in him at all. And there must be a great deal in her if she has taken up the partnership matter now, because, you know, she said the Ridley doctor had always been 'one of us,' and it was therefore important that Dr. Alloway's partner should be a person 'one could know.' Do you remember, Warwick, the way she said it?" and Diana glanced smilingly at her husband, her fine face lit up with pleasurable excitement, and a touch of innocent malice.

"Oh, yes," said Warwick, with unusual irresponsiveness. "Probably if she has done anything about the partnership it was before recent events; but it is unprofitable work to discuss such a problematic affair. It is probably all moonshine. If not, we must soon get some clue to its genuineness, either from Mrs. Mountstephen or Dr. Alloway."

The next turn in affairs took the form of a letter to Warwick, written in a legal hand, and to this effect:—

"Sir,—We are instructed by our client, Mrs. Mountstephen, to reply to your letter, which has been handed on to us. We beg, therefore, to state that the agent who collects the rents of the houses in Cadman's Row is employed by us, and is a thoroughly trustworthy person, having been steward for Lord Newby's property for many years. He has instructions to see that the houses are kept in proper tenantable repair, and we believe him competent to do so. Further inquiries shall, however, be made by us as to the matter referred to by you.—We beg to remain, your obedient servants, "Fowler, Sharp, and Son."

Poor Diana's vision of a 'very kind letter' of gratitude on the part of Mrs. Mountstephen melted away as she read this brief and business-like epistle from the lady's lawyers. But recovering somewhat from reality's slap in the face, she reflected that the letter did not argue displeasure on the lady's part. She had only thrown the responsibility on to other shoulders.

It was one evening at this time that, when the two were sitting together, Diana, looking up from her book to where Warwick sat gazing into the fire, noticed for the first time, with a quick pang, that he was in some way changed.

"My dear boy!" she cried impulsively, "how thin your face has grown!"

"Nonsense!" replied Warwick, though not ungently.

Diana, under pretence of returning to her book, watched him with eyes sharpened by an altogether new anxiety. He, too, had a book, but though he appeared to be reading it, Diana could see that the pages were not turned. Yes, his face was certainly thin, and his eyes had a tired look about them, robbing them of the penetrating, eager expression they had by nature. And now it came to her consciousness that he had been taciturn and grave of late—unlike himself. Was he, then, taking to heart their social failure, which he had outwardly made so light of? It was painful to Diana to be forced to think so, for, mixed with the rush of loving pity, came unbidden a sense of disappointment in Warwick, whose views of life she had deemed too high to permit of his being seriously affected by it. And then that snake that always lay coiled in Diana's Eden raised its head. She dwelt once more on the thought of the cruel disadvantage that marriage with her had been to him. Usually such thoughts, when they came, were expressed to Warwick, and they never survived his wholesome, cheery treatment of them. But, frank and outspoken as Diana was, she was not "leaky-minded," and she refrained, after her first impulsive exclamation, from commenting further upon a state of mind which Warwick evidently did not wish to discuss. But it was perhaps for the first time in their married life that the two sat in physical proximity, yet separated in feeling, each with that veil drawn over the heart that it is the privilege of love alone to dispense with. Diana felt it was so, and grieved a little, as a loving woman will do. And perhaps it was not unreasonable to do so. There is such a thing in love as a foolish disregard of the rights of personal liberty. But love is not liberty, after all—it is a mutual dependence, and the assertion of personal rights may not be carried too far without mischief. Of such a perilously sensitive nature is the sweetest of human relationships.

As an outcome, therefore, of Diana's reflections, and of her prudent resolve not to worry her husband by over-solicitousness, with intent to break upon his evidently mournful reverie, she started the first prosaic topic that occurred to her.

"Warwick dear," she said, "I want some money, please."

Warwick started.

"Money, my dear child!" he exclaimed; "did I not give you some on Saturday?"

Diana laughed. "Yes, of course you did, but that is all gone. I had some bills to pay."

"Why didn't you leave them?"

"Leave them, dear! Why should I? I have always paid for everything at once, according to your wish. Are you short of money, Warwick?"

"Well, I am rather, just now," said Warwick, rising from his chair, and adjusting the ornaments on the chimney-shelf; "you had better not pay ready money just at present. The tradesmen will like it better, you may be sure," he added, as Diana looked rather aghast.

"But *I* don't like it," she replied; "I don't think that plan answers at all. It only postpones the pinch, for when the next money comes in it is sure to be wanted for necessaries, and will not stretch over the debts. Besides, I have three months' wages to pay both to cook and Jane."

"They must wait," said Warwick.

"Oh, my dear Warwick! and cook sends hers home to her bedridden father! It is impossible."

"She understands how to get over you, my dear: and I suppose Jane sends hers for the support of a widowed mother, eh?"

Diana's temper was quick, and she did not like this sneer; indeed, Warwick's tone was one altogether new and most unpleasing. The temper flamed up in her cheeks, which became a vivid scarlet. But her voice she controlled fairly well, as she replied—

"Let us economise, Warwick. You know I have always considered that we were living after too expensive a rate. I don't care how far we stint ourselves, but I cannot have the tradesmen unpaid and be in debt to my servants."

"There is no occasion for heroics, Diana; it is only a temporary measure."

"I do not approve of it," said Diana coldly.

There was an uncomfortable silence, and finally Warwick went out of the room. Of course, after he had gone, Diana burst into tears, of which when he came back there were no traces at all. They were both proud, and being so made every effort to appear quite in harmony on the surface, while the disunion beneath was a torture to them both. Nothing more was said about the money, and as Warwick gave her none, Diana was obliged to adopt the measures she so much disliked. And she was very sore at heart.



"'And how are the poor people going on?'"—*p.* 23.

This state of things had gone on for a day or two when, somewhat to Diana's surprise, she received a call from Miss Hastings. Very shortly after the note concerning the library Diana had received another inviting herself and her husband to luncheon, a kindness which, regarding it as one of the steps of Miss Hastings's considerately declining plane of intimacy, Diana had refused, thereby making it easier, she reflected proudly, for Miss Hastings to quicken the descent. When that lady was announced, therefore, as she sat in a forlorn mood most new and foreign to her, she felt a quick glow of pleasure, which she hardly restrained herself from showing.

Beginning with the most commonplace air imaginable, the visit was not destined to end so.

"Have you heard the Ridley news?" asked Miss Hastings, by-and-by.

"No," said Diana, smiling, though a presaging thrill went through her.

"Ah, you missed the important announcement in the *Times* of Saturday. Certainly the paper is not worth looking at, but we old residents consider it quite a necessary of existence. We think even the vestry ought not to squabble without our hearing of it.

Sooner or later we all get in it ourselves, but we have compensation when it is our neighbours' turn. How the matter of the partnership could have leaked out at all last week would be a miracle if the kind editor had not used us to such things, for it was only yesterday, as I heard from Dr. Alloway, that he made up his mind finally in the choice of a partner. It is a Mr. Stableton, a middle-aged man. It is to be hoped his temper will be less infirm than the poor old Doctor's, or the Ridley sick folk will have a bad time of it."

Thus Miss Hastings talked on, in a somewhat pointless manner, and without fixing her keen eyes on her *vis-à-vis*. Diana kept her countenance fairly well, but her endurance had been somewhat tried of late, and the shock of the news she had just heard entirely upset her inward control over herself. Her indignation turned, unjustly enough, against this cruel woman who sat there impassively and coolly inflicting what she must know to be the death-blow to their hopes. At bay, as it were, and reckless of any need of a mask, Diana sat silent, with pale cheeks and blazing eyes. If, she said to herself, Miss Hastings chose to come there and watch the spectacle of her suffering, she must not expect the smooth outside to be kept that hypocritical good breeding demanded. "If I am plebeian," thought poor Diana, "this cruel woman must take the consequence." The first consequence was such a lengthened silence that Miss Hastings at last turned her eyes upon the girl, who looked so fierce and strange that for a moment the visitor was quite taken aback. She was not, however, a person likely to quail before an angry girl, so she resumed her chit-chat in order that Diana might have time to recover herself, little supposing that Diana had deliberately made up her mind not to recover herself! As each pause ensued in Miss Hastings's flow of words, the situation became more and more strained, till at last there came a dead stop. Then flashed through Diana's mind the thought, "Now, if she *is* anything more than a wooden mask of humanity, she will break through conventionality at last, and ask me what is the matter, and if she does not I shall never believe that she means to be my friend." For one moment Miss Hastings looked full into Diana's eyes. Then she rose, staunch in her determination to save Diana from committing herself, pleaded another engagement as an excuse for a short visit, and withdrew. Diana, who had never opened her mouth, swept her a stately bow in addition to the shake of the hand which Miss Hastings solicited. But just in passing through the door she received the very slightest pat on the arm, such as one might give a fractious child, from the shabbily gloved hand of her visitor. And then she was gone, and Diana was left to the reflection that she had now certainly alienated her only cordial acquaintance in Ridley; but she was not in a mood to regret it. What did it matter, now that all hope for Warwick was at an end? Had Miss Hastings indeed proved herself a friend, she would have grieved, but as it was she took a kind of reckless gratification in what she had done. And now, the glow of indignation fading away, she began to realise the blank disappointment of the new situation, and to prepare herself with what fortitude she might for communicating it to Warwick.

She was, however, spared that task. Warwick, after paying some professional visits that afternoon, stepped into the chemist's shop to write a prescription. If the young doctor had lost his popularity in Ridley, he had increasing measure of it in Pottersby, though not, unhappily, among paying patients. He was not, however, entirely without loyal adherents among this class, and Mr. Marks, the chemist, was one of the most important and the most enthusiastic. Mr. Marks, fat and good-tempered, was, nevertheless, somewhat of an aspiring turn of mind. In his youth he had had dreams of the medical profession, and on the strength of them had come to believe himself half a doctor. He subscribed for the medical papers, and prided himself on marching with the times. Holding contemptuous views of the state of the science, and of the old stagers who practised it in Pottersby and the neighbourhood, he had from the first extended the right hand of welcome to Warwick, who came fresh from an appointment at one of the great hospitals; and from the time when Mr. Marks's little girl, the pet of the family, had a terrible attack of scarlet fever, and Warwick tried on her the new fever treatment, as used by the great Sir Jackson Swallow at St. James's Hospital, and brought her through triumphantly, Mr. Marks's fealty had been unswerving. The regard was to some extent mutual, for Warwick had esteemed it very plucky in the soft-hearted little man to venture on the revolutionary treatment, the risks of which he had duly set before him at the time of his little one's danger.

Mr. Marks came forward from behind his counter to the retired corner where Warwick sat writing.

"Well, doctor," said he, "so the profession [there was only one in the good chemist's eyes] is to have an addition in these parts, I hear."

Warwick wrote out the rest of the prescription with a hand that was just a trifle unsteady, before he replied—

"Oh, yes; Dr. Alloway's partner, you mean?"

Mr. Marks was not deceived by the carelessness of the tone into supposing the matter one of indifference to the young doctor, but he certainly did not imagine that Warwick had only now received the final blow so fatal to his prospects. His good heart informed him of the vein in which he might convey the balm of sympathy without wounding pride.

"Well, doctor, when the paper came in on Saturday, and Mrs. Marks found the piece and showed it to me, I said, 'This is a prescription to be taken *cum granum saltum*, my dear; that's what it is.' However, I needs must get to the bottom of it, so I went over to the editor on the spot, and I said, 'Mr. Parker, ain't this one of your cock-and-bulls?' He stuck to it, but he wouldn't give his authority. So until Dr. Alloway came in here this morning I thought no more about it. However, I asked the old doctor straight out, and he tells me it's true enough. I put him into a rage, poor old gentleman, before I 'd done, for I couldn't help letting fly at the folks about here for taking no advantage of talent and honesty of the very highest horder"—Mr. Marks was getting

excited—"when it comes to their very doors, as one may say. 'The ladies don't like young practitioners,' says the old doctor; 'my future partner is a middle-aged family man!' The ladies and their whims! I'm fairly disgusted, Dr. Hall—I am indeed. And if you feel the same, and should leave us, I should be downright ashamed of my native place, that don't know how to appreciate a good man when it's got him.'"

Warwick smiled somewhat less cheerfully than his wont, as he replied—

"If a place does not appreciate a doctor, you see, Mr. Marks, it is of no use for the doctor to appreciate the place: but Pottersby must show very clearly that it does not want me before I make up my mind to leave it."

"Good, sir! good; that's what I like. If a man shows that he means to succeed, why he's half-way to success. You won't mind my way of speaking, I know, sir, seeing that we're old friends now, in a way, and I mean no offence. In my line of life I'm a bit behind the scenes, you know, and can see further than outsiders as to how things are going with the profession; unless, indeed, it may be with them that do their own dispensing; and for my part I hardly call such members of the profession at all. But, as I was saying, I've seen a vast deal in my time of doctors, of them that fail and of them that get on, and my experience is, that half the battle is in putting a good face on it. If the patients don't come as fast as they ought, why, put a better face on it still—set up a carriage and a man in livery, and they'll come like flies to a pot of honey."

"That method of attracting patients is not quite in my line, Mr. Marks," said Warwick rather coldly.

"No, sir, no; quite so; it ain't in mine either; but we haven't got reasonable folks to do with, that can recognise ability when they come across it. I assure you, doctor," and Mr. Marks leaned over the table that he might speak in a lower key, "that, leaving Ridley out of the question, there's a capital good opening here in Pottersby. There ain't one of the profession here that's worth a half-crown fee, not to speak of the seven-and-six they swindle the gentry out of. The prescriptions that come into my shop—bless you, doctor, 't is so much waste-paper;" and, his good-humoured round face looking ineffable contempt, this daring iconoclast made signs as of tearing up and scattering to the winds the cabalistic documents on which the fates of Pottersby folks might be said to hang.

To describe Warwick's feelings as he walked home would be difficult, for they were very conflicting. At one moment his mind was made up to throw the whole thing over, and to shake the Pottersby dust from his feet, and start afresh elsewhere. But such a step would be no light matter. There had been, necessarily, something like speculation in his starting as he had done in Pottersby; and to start a second time in a fresh place would involve him in fresh expenditure, while depriving him of the slender profits he was now making. Then, again, his pride came in to add force to the arguments in favour of staying where he was. It would be very mortifying to betray utter defeat before Ridley eyes. Far more welcome than that appeared the exactly opposite course suggested by the chemist; and though it was quite opposed to his own judgment and sense of self-respect, Warwick found himself dwelling with so much complacency on the picture presented to his mind, that after the manner of human nature, he soon began to try to reconcile it with his theories. By the time Diana came, with a pale face, into his little consulting room, he had very nearly resolved that that picture should become reality.

Diana was so much relieved to find Warwick was already in possession of the bad news, that she was inclined to be quite merry over it. But Warwick, who sat leaning over his desk with a very careworn face, did not respond to Diana's cheerful suggestion that, now they knew the worst, they would soon forget the very thought of the partnership. Warwick, though cheerful and sanguine by temperament, did not take trouble kindly; and though Diana, when she saw that his grave face did not relax, was very tender, pushing back his hair from his brow, and calling him her poor boy, he did not feel that she quite understood how serious matters really were. That was his own fault, he knew, and now he must enlighten her: as he had hoped never to need to do, for, carelessly as he treated it, he had a peculiar shrinking from Diana's reflections on the disadvantage the marriage had been to him.

"We must have a discussion over ways and means," he said, rousing himself to speak more cheerfully. "Should you object to my borrowing some of your cousin John's spare cash that he offered me some time ago?"

Diana felt as though she had received a blow. She was silent for a moment, and then she begged her husband to tell her all that she ought to have known long before—exactly how they stood financially, and what the incomings and the outgoings amounted to respectively. Poor Diana issued from the inquiry a wiser, though hardly a sadder woman; for failure and retrenchment she could face with equanimity, but distrust of Warwick was the very bitterness of death, and now his strange conduct about the payments of a few days back was explained. Explained, indeed! All that had come to the household coffers from fees during the past half-year had been something under £30, which, with the interest of a small sum inherited from Warwick's father, made £140 as their half-year's income, while their expenses had been just about £200, and only within that by means of Diana's thrift. The deficit had been met by selling out stock.

"Oh, why, my darling boy," cried Diana, "why did you not let me know how things were going?"

"I can't endure fussing about money," replied Warwick. "At first I thought, of course, we should soon get straight when the fees came in faster; and then this partnership came on the carpet, and it was no use to worry over it till that was settled."

And then Diana, in feminine fashion, made a loving moan over her darling boy, who had worked so hard to find the failure of all his hopes as the sole result.

"Except," she added, "the good word of all the poor people—and that is worth something. And

now," she went on, "we must see how we can bring our expenses down, mustn't we? One thing I must do at once—dismiss one of the servants. What else can we do?" and Diana mused.

Warwick, who had begun to look happier under the administration of Diana's sweet consolations, had clouded again when she made her first suggestion. He had risen and begun to pace the room uneasily, with his hands in his pockets.

"I don't think that would be the right sort of way," he said at length; "nothing succeeds like success, and if one is not succeeding one must look as if one were. It would be fatal to my chances to lower our style of living. I am not at all sure that it would not be a good investment to set up a carriage and a boy in buttons; and indeed, I 'm half inclined to do it. I have known fellows who got on in that way."

When anything of principle was involved in a question it was a failing of Diana's to be apt to take things a little too seriously and strongly. So on this occasion she allowed herself to fire up in indignation when it would have been wiser to turn the matter aside with a laugh. Warwick was suffering from long-continued harassment, which his temperament was ill-fitted to bear, and he was just now as irritable as he was usually sweet-tempered. So he responded to Diana's outcries as warmly as she, and as he found himself seriously opposed, began to imagine himself seriously in favour of the scheme. But of course he could not carry it out without Diana's consent, so he had to listen with what patience he could to her schemes of retrenchment. She would send away the cook, so that there might still be Jane's well-known face and trim figure to attend upon the door, and she, Diana, would do the cooking, and put her hand to the housework, and thus no one need be the wiser.

"As if it would not be known the very next day all over the place!" said Warwick.

But Diana was perfectly resolute, and that very day gave the cook warning. As they had no money in hand to pay her wages, she wrote to John, and asked him to lend her £10, which was also a step repugnant to Warwick's feelings, who could have brought himself to solicit a magnificent loan that would float them for a time into deep water, but not a paltry £10 note for a petty domestic dilemma. And so the days went by, and Diana was resolutely cheerful, and Warwick gloomy and miserable, hating to see his wife going about with a duster in her hand, and coming to the dinner-table with a scorched face; irritated, also, in spite of himself, by the absence of customary table luxuries, though less from epicureanism than because it was a symbol of straitened means. Diana was sympathetic, cheerful—in short, all that she should have been—but somehow or other, whether because her respect for Warwick had suffered a little shock, or because he felt that she had somehow failed to understand him, or simply because they had failed to agree as to a course of action, the "little rift" had come in the once perfect relationship. And, in consequence, both of them, whatever the differences of outward demeanour, were alike restless and miserable at heart.

At last there came an eventful day. Diana, on a visit to the kitchen, found Jane, the housemaid, sitting on a chair in an attitude of despair, and sobbing with her apron over her head. On being pressed for an explanation, she long resisted the entreaty, but when Diana, much surprised at this behaviour on the part of a usually self-respecting young person, suggested bad news from home, she was enabled to deny the suggestion, and at last sobbed out that her young man had quarrelled with her, and given her up.

"It's all along of my being a general, ma'am; he says he never have kept company with a general, and he can't lower himself to it," and Jane abandoned herself afresh to emotion.

"He must be a very silly young man," said Diana.

"No, indeed, ma'am; he's most respectable. He's been coachman to Miss Hastings going on for five years, and its mostly on account of what she said that he's taken against me."

"What can you mean?" asked her mistress.

"Why, he chanced to overhear Miss Hastings and Mrs. Mountstephen talking about you and master, and——"

"Diana!" cried Warwick from outside the door.

Diana started, and left the weeping girl. Warwick drew his wife into the consulting-room. It was easy to see from his face that he had heard Jane's last words, and so it proved.

"Look here," he said.

There were flowers and a basket of grapes lying on the table, with Miss Hastings's card attached, doubtless just brought by the faithless swain.

"So our poverty is made the subject of discussion both in the drawing-rooms and the kitchens," he said. "What is the matter with that girl?"

Diana was obliged to tell him.

"This is past bearing!" he said.

"My dear boy," said Diana, putting her arm through his, "why do you take these trifles to heart so? It is so unlike you. Why, at the time of the dinner-party you made nothing of them—not nearly so much as I did."

"Because I am a poor sort of fellow, my dear, I suppose," was the reply. The fact was, that an accumulation of mortifications had fallen on him, of which to-day's was the crowning one. Mr. Marks had taken the liberty of showing that he knew and disapproved of his course of action, and Dr. Alloway's partner had not called on him, which he should by this time have done, according to the etiquette of the profession.

"The fact is, Diana, we must leave this place; it is more than I can stand."

The blood rushed to Diana's cheeks and the tears to her eyes. She gave way to a foolish impulse that she repented immediately.

"Oh, Warwick," she cried, "you don't regret having married me!" She craved a warm denial, but Warwick turned from her almost fiercely, saying—

"For pity's sake don't bring up that old story!" and then he hastened from the room, adding at the last moment, "Send back that fruit, Diana. I won't have it in the house. Say it does not agree with us—anything to show we are not paupers."

He shut the door with no light hand. Diana did not weep on this occasion after his departure. She stood dry-eyed and stunned. It had been something very like a quarrel!

Diana did not send back the grapes. With Warwick's permission, she took them to one of his poor patients, whom she was visiting, and she sent a formal little note of thanks to Miss Hastings, informing her of their destination. After that the lady made no further overtures. Diana had some misgivings that she had behaved ill. Might not the attention have signified that Miss Hastings bore her no ill-will in consequence of her behaviour the other day, and might not the conversation overheard by Jane's sweetheart, and which had really never been reported at all, have been quite innocent of offence? But Diana was tired of puzzling over the Miss Hastings enigma, even had she not been too much engrossed with other matters.

It was now September: a rainy and dreary autumn had set in, and there was not now within Dr. Hall's little red house that lightness of heart that before had been a charm against all depressing outside influences. Jane had gone, unable to retain her self-respect in so degraded a position, and Diana was in the thick of training a raw and inexperienced "general." Warwick was resolved to leave the place, but the house was on their hands till March, and he had as yet no definite plans.

One day he informed Diana when he came home that typhoid fever had appeared in Cadman's Row.

"It has just turned out as I expected," he said; "nothing thorough has been done to the houses. I hear there are four or five cases—two in the same house."

The following day Diana had the pleasure of seeing her husband in such a state of indignation as she had not believed him capable of. He had been summoned to Cadman's Row to one of the fever cases.

"That fellow Groulett wants a thorough good horsewhipping," he cried, "and I should enjoy giving it to him. Did you ever hear of anything so atrocious? The cad has left one of the fever cases in the middle because he has found the poor wretch cannot pay him! He is a lodger, with no one there belonging to him; Groulett left him three or four days ago, and if he gets over the neglect it will be a wonder. Groulett, you know, is the parish doctor; but as he was not summoned as such he refused to attend him when he found he could not pay, until he got an order, and there has been no one to take the trouble to see after one. The landlady thought him dying this morning, and sent off for me in a fright. Surely that fellow is actionable under such circumstances; morally it is a case of manslaughter of the most cold-blooded and abominable kind. I can't keep quiet over this. I must show the fellow up in some way."

"Shall you write to the paper?" asked Diana, with a sensation of relief at seeing that Warwick's attention was for the time quite diverted from his own grievances.

"I'd rather not. I do not like the paper. I shall wait for some other chance. Diana," he continued, "you must go down and see after this man. He has not the slightest chance if he is not nursed."

Diana, who, before her marriage, had spent a year in a hospital that she might be ready for such occasions as this, went to Cadman's Row at once. The patient lay untended in a small, miserable room, in all the suffering of a severe attack of typhoid. But there was much to be done to allay it, and by the time Diana had finished her ministrations, and was walking home again, her heart felt curiously lightened. She had arranged for a woman to stay with her patient during the night, and she returned herself in the morning. Very full days followed. Fresh cases of fever occurred every day, and now all sent for Warwick. It was no wonder, for he threw himself into the struggle with all his native energy, determined to fight the fever with every weapon that science and zeal could furnish. There was from the first far more than Diana could do, and there was no such thing in the neighbourhood as a district nurse.

"Diana," said Warwick, "we must have one, and we cannot afford to pay for it. I think you had better go to the Vicar of Pottersby, and propose that the funds should be raised in the parish. Of course, as the houses are in Pottersby, the nurse should belong to that place."

Diana had no objection to this plan: she had been secretly fearing that Warwick might propose an application to Mrs. Mountstephen. But though Warwick did not propose it, the Vicar of Pottersby did. He immediately inquired as to the owner of the houses, and was so strong on the injustice of Pottersby providing a nurse for Ridley property—there was a good deal of jealousy existing between the two places—that no representation of the service a nurse would be to the parish could move him.

Warwick and Diana discussed the matter. Ridley, as a parish, could hardly be asked to provide a nurse for Pottersby. No, Mrs. Mountstephen must be applied to; that, after all, was the just course. Diana wrote a letter. It was quite firm in tone, and put the matter very plainly as a matter of justice. It was a satisfaction to feel this time there was no need to fear consequences in doing the right thing. The next day a polite note came in reply, enclosing a cheque for £20, to be applied as Diana thought proper. Diana was so delighted that she was ready to declare Mrs. Mountstephen an entirely misunderstood character. But Warwick somewhat dashed her enthusiasm by the sternness with which he recalled the course of injustice which this piece of pseudo-generosity sought to palliate.

"She ought to have spent at least £200 over the houses," he said, "as a matter of common decency."

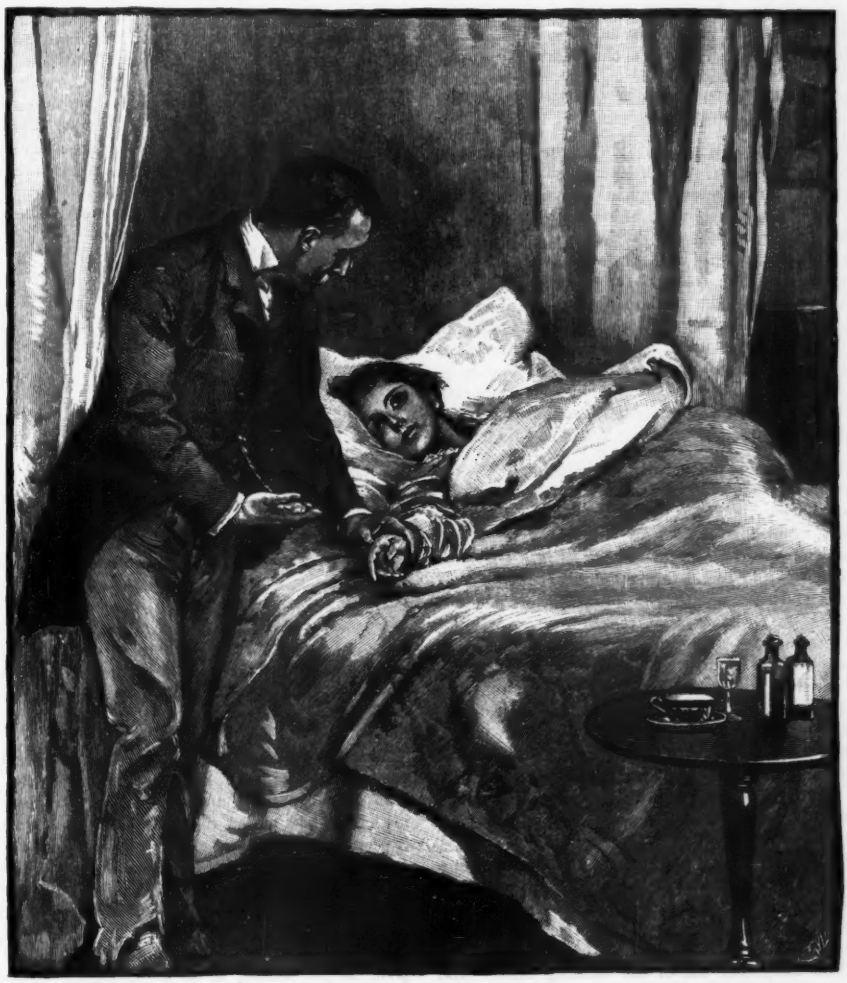
"She probably knew nothing about it," said Diana.

"There is no justification in that," was the reply.

The epidemic had now reached such proportions as to cause general alarm. It got into the London papers. Sanitary inspectors came up from town, and the local officer was very loudly blamed on all hands, which caused him to write to the *Pottersby Times* deprecating the injustice of blaming him for matters beyond his province, which, as every intelligent person knew,

was that of interfering only when called upon to do so. And now that the mischief was done, the floors of Cadman's Row were unplanked by men who dived into the noisome recesses beneath, and the road outside was rendered impassable by excavation to expose the drains. At a special meeting of the vestry a kind of public health committee was elected to superintend matters; and it was in connection with this that Warwick's name was brought up for discussion. There were to be two doctors put upon the committee, Messrs. Mallam and Groulett being those proposed by the general voice. But Marks, the chemist, could not let this pass: he raised an indignant protest against Dr. Hall's name being absent from the list. To this it was replied that only two doctors ought to be put on, and that Groulett being the parish officer, he certainly must be one.

"Then let Dr. Hall be the other," said Marks, his face red with excitement.



"There was Warwick, who came and looked at her and felt her pulse."—*p.* 26.

"Mr. Mallam has been twenty years in the place," put in another voice, "and will be very justly offended if we set him aside for a new-comer."

At this Mr. Marks entirely lost control over his temper, and gave way to unparliamentary language; he said, "If the length of time a man has shown his hincompetence is to be considered in his favour, and to give the go-by to ability and henergy, I've nothing more to say!"

Then the Vicar of Pottersby interposed.

"I must say, gentlemen," he said, "that considering Dr. Hall's present services to the town, I agree with Mr. Marks that it would be an ungracious thing to leave his name out of the committee. From my personal observation and that of my curates, I can testify to the devotion and zeal shown by both Dr. and Mrs. Hall. I assure you the poor people can hardly speak of either without emotion."

The upshot of all this was that Warwick received an intimation of his election to the committee: to which, greatly to the surprise of the vestry, they received the following answer:—

"GENTLEMEN,—While sensible of the honour you confer on me, I feel myself compelled to decline to act on a committee of which Dr. Groulett is a member. I am glad to have this opportunity of calling public attention to the manner in which Dr. Groulett performs his medical duties as an officer of this parish. [Here followed an account of the incident of which the reader is already informed.] This will be enough, I am convinced, to justify in your eyes my conviction that Dr. Groulett and I would not be able to work together. I have only to add that I have no wish that this communication should be regarded as confidential, and beg to remain, gentlemen, yours, etc., "WARWICK HALL."

And now behold our hero and heroine embroiled on all hands! Warwick had no less than three enemies, together with their followings: Mr. Mallam, who, though eventually elected in Warwick's stead, was informed by well-meaning friends of all that had taken place, and found his opinion of Warwick as a green and rash practitioner by no means modified thereby; Dr. Groulett, who took every opportunity of expressing his—to the effect that young Hall was an impertinent upstart, to whom it was a necessary duty to show his place; and the less important but not altogether insignificant Nuttall, the collector of rents, who managed to lay upon Warwick's interference the full blame of the scrape in which he at this time found himself, owing to the strict inquiries now made into his proceedings. All these talked against Warwick in their several fashions. Mr. Mallam said—

"I fancy Dr. Hall is finding out he has made a mistake in settling here. I hear he has to cut down his expenditure; no doubt he calculated on the Ridley practice, but he is too young and inexperienced for them, I take it. There 's no doubt Dr. Alloway's partner will put him altogether out of the running there. And the gossip goes that Mrs. Hall has offended the people there with some *brusquerie* or other."

And this was Dr. Groulett's way of putting it—

"Young Hall will clear out pretty soon, you 'll see; if not, Pottersby will make itself too hot for him."

And Nuttall in his own sphere gave out that Dr. Hall was an officious meddler, who would be sure to make mischief wherever he could do so.

Diana was in little better plight than her husband as far as her own prospects of Ridley patronage were concerned, while the labours of economy at home and the nursing duties abroad were taking the colour from her cheeks and something of the elasticity from her step. But where were the gloom, the sense of failure, the almost discord of a few weeks back? They were utterly gone, dispersed like low-hanging clouds driven by a fresh north wind. Nothing had been said between husband and wife—in a relationship like theirs words are not necessary to effect understandings. But they were at one again, by what means they were hardly at leisure to inquire: it was enough to know it when they looked into each other's eyes, and to know it was to be happy. Warwick had in fact experienced a reaction from the depression under which he had been suffering. He had accepted the inevitable, and while looking forward to a new sphere of action, felt considerable satisfaction just now in his work in the old. He felt particularly elated with the rap he had been able to give Dr. Groulett. Diana was sorry he should not sit on the committee.

"I can do much better work out of it," he said; "besides which, as I should infallibly have disagreed with every proposition, and put up the backs of the old boys every time I spoke, it would have served no purpose but that of adding to my already unenviable reputation."

But Warwick's reputation was not altogether so unenviable as he imagined it. He was winning esteem in more than one quarter. The Vicar of Pottersby, to whom the two, being in Ridley parish, had before been unknown, called upon them at this time, and showed an evident wish to be on friendly terms. He was a fine old man, whose influence in his parish was deservedly great. And when one day he sent for Warwick to see him professionally, it was a day's talk for the whole town. He and his wife, being hale old people, had not required medical aid to any extent, and did not therefore feel themselves bound to any one of the Pottersby faculty. Diana was ready to argue great things from this piece of good fortune, but Warwick shook his head, and said that as one swallow does not make a summer, neither does one patient make a practice.

There had been several deaths among Warwick's patients in Cadman's Row, but Maitland, the man who was his first, and whom Dr. Groulett had neglected, had pulled through so far, much against expectation. Warwick and Diana had given themselves greater trouble and felt more anxiety concerning this case than any other. This did not proceed entirely from the desire to save a life so wantonly endangered. There was something particularly interesting about the man himself. Friendless and poor, he yet seemed to be a gentleman, strange as that appellation sounded when applied to a lodger in Cadman's Row. There was also a patience and gratefulness that went to Diana's heart as she ministered to him. It was evident that he had gone through much suffering, for, though extremely reserved, one feeling was clearly betrayed—that of weariness of life, which made the contest with disease a still more unequal one, and helped to render the ultimate result doubtful. At last, one evening, after a relapse had brought him to almost mortal weakness, Diana, sitting by his bedside, received a confidence stranger and sadder than any

she had ever heard, and that sent her home to Warwick with winged steps and thoughtful brow.

Before telling our readers as much of the story Diana had just heard as it is necessary for them to know, we must state the facts with regard to Mrs. Mountstephen's opinions and demeanour, which have hitherto only been viewed in the light of our friends' conjectures. Not that these had not come pretty near the truth, except in so far as they very naturally imagined that what had affected them so nearly had occupied a larger share of Mrs. Mountstephen's attention than had in reality been the case. It had been a very slight though an unpleasant matter on the horizon of such a lady to have found it necessary to drop the acquaintance of a charming young woman to whom she had taken a fancy. Necessary she found it, and the more to her regret, inasmuch as she felt herself to blame in having committed herself to intimacy with people of unestablished social standing, and in having raised false expectations as to the partnership. But who could have foreseen that such unexceptionable and charming young people would have possessed—not so much the unpresentable relations: that, thought Mrs. Mountstephen with a sigh, may be the case with any of us—but the want of *savoir vivre* shown in displaying them, and the blunt perception implied in inviting Ridley people to meet them. It was, however, very fortunate that the partnership matter had not gone too far to be stopped. The thought of an ill-connected and ill-judging young man established as the Ridley doctor by her own agency was highly disagreeable. The only kindness she could do the young couple, under the unfortunate circumstances, was to retrieve her error in the quickest and sharpest possible manner, that there might be no lingering on of false expectations. It was true enough that she was in the habit of taking no part in the management of her affairs, but she would probably have taken more interest in Warwick's communication had it not immediately followed the rebuff she had given in the High Street. As it was, she turned it aside with her white fingers, to be sent by-and-by to the lawyers, and thought of it as an excusable bit of spite on the part of the rebuffed one. So far she had not lost her equanimity one whit; but when news of the fever outbreak reached her ears she was very much disturbed. She held sickness and death in peculiar horror, and her conscience was pricked by the recollection of Warwick's warning. She wrote to her lawyers, scolding them for neglecting the orders she had not given, and she sent her little boy away, as if she felt there would be a terrible fitness in her being punished through him, that would almost bring the catastrophe upon her. The sending of the cheque to Diana was, however, a considerable relief to her mind; and she was on the point of sending another when Diana, early in the morning after the sick man's communication, rang at Mrs. Mountstephen's bell.

Mrs. Mountstephen, past-mistress in the science of manners, regarding it as a proof of very bad taste to call personally after all that had passed, received her with a due hostess' graciousness, in which was infused an element calculated to set the visitor at an immeasurable distance.

"Ah!" said she, "you have come for some more money, Mrs. Hall, for the poor people; and I was just sitting down to write you a cheque."

"I have still money in hand," replied Diana, who sat looking at Mrs. Mountstephen with a serious, direct gaze. Her errand was one that precluded any care as to how she was treated, and which sank all such matters to trivialities. The two women threw each other into strong relief as they sat there; Mrs. Mountstephen, a well-preserved beauty, of much "manner," and with complexion tended, and jewelled white hands, and faultless toilette; Diana, absolutely natural, with fine, unstudied pose, and large, clear gaze, her brilliant looks somewhat dimmed by her recent toils, and her dress rather careless.

"But you will be wanting it soon, no doubt," continued Mrs. Mountstephen. "And how are the poor people going on? It is so extremely good of you to go amongst them, and I am delighted to help in my way, which I feel is a very poor one compared with yours. You know I have a particular interest in the matter, because these houses are my property. When Dr. Hall's letter came—you know he kindly wrote to me—I instructed my lawyers to set things right, and it seems they did not do so. From their carelessness all this sad business has arisen."

"They could not be expected to take such an interest in the welfare of the people as the owner would do," said Diana.

Mrs. Mountstephen faintly coloured.

"People in my unfortunate position are obliged to have their property managed for them, you see. I did not even know these houses were in my possession until I received your husband's note."

"I should not like that at all," said Diana.

She was succeeding in making Mrs. Mountstephen exceedingly uncomfortable, if that were her object. There was not very much in what she said, but it gained weight from what she had done. There was a perceptible sort of rebuke in her very presence, and Mrs. Mountstephen could not help wishing that she would come to her point and depart. But she smiled as she said—

"No, I dare say not. One has one's appointed lot, and would find it difficult to fit oneself to another where the duties are of a different nature."

There was a long pause, and Diana began to look agitated. She had come to the interview filled with such strength of indignation against Mrs. Mountstephen that what she had to do seemed nothing to her, but now that she came in contact with the woman herself she faltered, and was ready to pity rather than condemn, realising that wrong-doing in the abstract and wrong-doing embodied in flesh and blood like her own were quite different things.

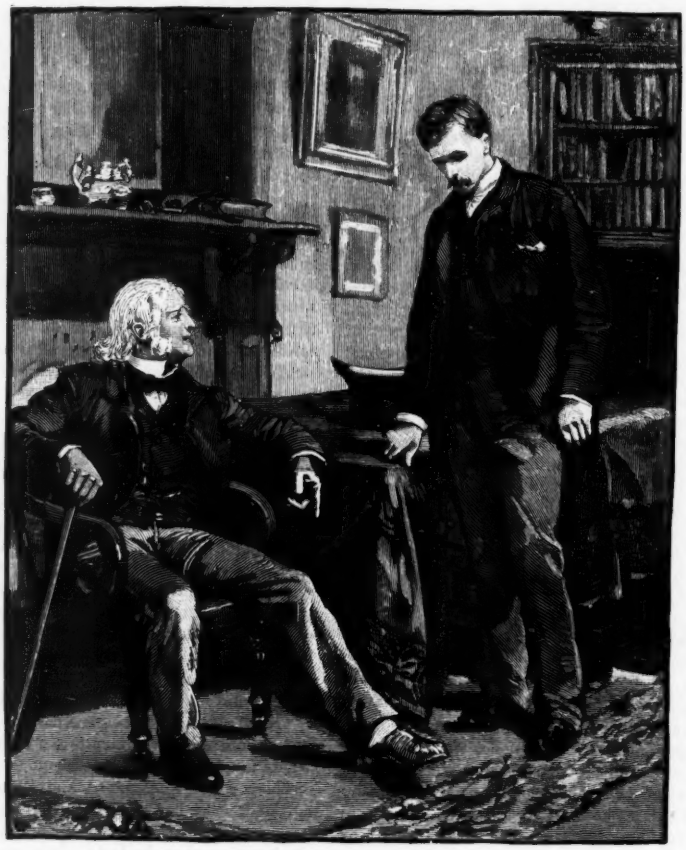
"I am finding my duty this morning very difficult," she said at last, while Mrs. Mountstephen gazed at her in extreme surprise. "But I think perhaps it is better to tell bad news at once than to try and break it."

"Edward?" gasped Mrs. Mountstephen, in the unreasoning impulse of sudden alarm.

"Oh, no," said Diana; "but is there no one else whom you love or have loved very dearly?"

Mrs. Mountstephen, who had turned extremely white, grasped the table for support, but uttered not a

word, while Diana went on to tell the story of her patient, who, believing he was dying, had declared himself the night before to be Mrs. Mountstephen's only brother. When scarcely more than a boy he had fallen into disgrace, owing to some scrape more foolish than wicked, and, in consequence of his father's severity, he ran away from home and enlisted as a soldier. Occasionally he wrote to his favourite sister her brother, gathering himself up with a stern look. Then saying, "Don't distress yourself; you shall have no occasion to be ashamed of me," he went straight out of the house, passing Mr. Mountstephen in the hall, whose questions his wife evaded as she best could. From that time to the present Mrs. Mountstephen had never seen nor heard from him. But the episode had made a terrible wound in her conscience, in time



"The old doctor pointed to the foot in question."—*p.* 27.

Nelly, but his father had forbidden his name to be mentioned, and the family were ashamed of his very existence. Seven years afterwards Nelly, who had made a brilliant marriage, was dressed to go out with her husband to a dinner-party when she was summoned to see a stranger. It was a man in uniform, who saw her enter in shining silk and jewels, and who took her in his arms and kissed her. Nelly kissed him in return, cried a little, and then she heard Mr. Mountstephen's voice in the hall.

"Oh! what shall I do, Percy?" she cried; "it is my husband—he must not see you."

"He does not, then, know of my existence?" asked

buried deep beneath the deadening worldliness of the passing years, but still there, and liable to throb on occasion. And now she heard of him once more as a dying man, a pauper, lodging in the property fever-stricken through her own carelessness. Permanently invalided by a gunshot wound before he had had time to rise above the rank of sergeant-major, he had since lived on the wretched pittance allowed him on his discharge. He had never ceased to love his sister, and sick, miserable, and lonely, he had, after many wanderings, come to the town where she lived, that he might see her, himself unseen. Though professing to abide by his resolve never to disclose himself to the sister

who was ashamed of him, it is probable that his resolution had failed him now, and that when he confided in Diana he had hoped she might overrule the matter, and manage for him the meeting that wounded pride had forbidden him all these years to seek.

Mrs. Mountstephen, as Diana ceased speaking, making a strong effort, rose from her seat, saying half incoherently—

"Thank you. Tell me where it is; I must go to him at once."

She made a few steps across the room, but so staggeringly that Diana ran to her only in time to prevent her from falling to the ground; she had fainted away. Diana rang the bell to summon assistance, and did not leave till Mrs. Mountstephen was well enough to be put into her carriage and driven to Cadman's Row. They parted with a very earnest shake of the hand, and a look from the elder lady which expressed more than she seemed to be able to put into words. Diana, having declined Mrs. Mountstephen's offer to drive her, walked home alone, glad of the solitude and fresh air, both grateful to a head that was aching sadly. When she had reached home and had seen after household matters, luncheon-time came, and Warwick being absent, she was glad of the excuse for eating nothing, and at last went up-stairs and lay down upon her bed, half vexed with herself for giving way to feelings of lassitude so unusual with her, but against which she had been struggling for days. As she lay, her thoughts were full of the brother and sister whom she had been the cause of bringing together, and she longed to tell Warwick how Mrs. Mountstephen had after all proved herself to possess a heart that could rise and assert itself in spite of the formidable mass of worldliness under which it lay. How hot and burning had been her anger as she had set forth on her errand that morning! and now she felt only pity for the woman whose cruelty had seemed so hateful. But all these thoughts were very confused; her brain would not think connectedly, and by-and-by she fell asleep. She awoke to find the servant knocking at her door to say that Miss Hastings was down-stairs. She rose at once, wondering, as she did so, to feel herself no better for the sleep. Having hastily arranged her toilette, she descended, conscious of a dull longing to be left alone that did not seem likely to be gratified. How she acquitted herself during the preliminaries of the interview she could not remember afterwards. The fact was that her appearance gave her visitor a shock, so worn and wide-eyed and dazed did poor Diana look as, with burning hands, she mechanically pushed back her hair, as if by so doing she could clear her confused brain, and respond properly to her visitor's remarks. Very soon Miss Hastings rose, and Diana thought how kind it was of her to go so soon. But instead of going she came over to Diana and took her hand, saying, in a voice with an altogether new tone in it—

"My dear, you have a headache, haven't you?"

"Oh yes," said Diana simply, looking up into the face which had always seemed to her like a mask, though now and again in times past she had fancied there had been a momentary half lifting which had revealed a glimpse of the real woman beneath. But now there was no mistaking it. It was a face full of kindness and solicitude that bent over her—so much so that Diana gave a quick gasp of relief in the sensation of relaxed strain.

"Lie down on the sofa," said Miss Hastings; "you look really ill; and let me sit with you till your husband comes in."

"Oh no," replied Diana; "no, thank you; there are things I must do before dinner." In reality she knew that there would be no dinner if the new maid-of-all-work were left to herself.

"Nonsense!" said her visitor, "there is nothing you must do, and that simply because you cannot. You do not look as if you could stand."

Diana smiled in a bewildered fashion, and rose to confute the observation, but the sensations of giddiness and illness had gained upon her so far that she could do no more than stagger to the sofa, where Miss Hastings placed her, and then coolly rang the bell.

"Let me know," said she, when the servant appeared, "as soon as your master returns. And fetch a shawl to put over your mistress."

Before the shawl came, Diana was once more in so drowsy a state that she did not feel it strange, but only soothing, when Miss Hastings covered her with it, kissed her on the forehead, and then took a seat by her side. Still in the same drowsy state, she by-and-by discovered it was dusk, and that Warwick's bell was sounding at the door. Miss Hastings left her, met Warwick in the hall, and giving him a grip of the hand which very much astonished him, she said—

"Your wife is ill, and I fear it looks as if she had taken the fever. You have been letting her run down, Dr. Hall."

Warwick said never a word, as, brushing past her without ceremony, he hastened to Diana's side. It did not take many minutes to ascertain the state of pulse and temperature, and when he had done so he simply said, "You must go to bed, Diana."

"Oh," said Diana, with a most weary sigh, sinking back on the cushions, "I suppose I have the fever. Then I shall be able to rest now."

This was not a pleasant speech for poor Warwick to hear, and the pang it sent through his heart was not the less keen because it was obvious that Diana was only half-conscious of what she was saying. Indeed, afterwards she could not recall what happened after the sharp sound of Warwick's bell, which had smote clearly on her ear, and did not know that Warwick put her to bed, and that Miss Hastings stayed with her till late that evening, when a professional nurse arrived, telegraphed for by Warwick.

The next day came Mrs. Mountstephen to call upon Diana. The maidservant, with the want of tact common to the class of "generals," introduced her to the drawing-room without saying that her mistress was ill. When the visitor rose at the opening of the door, it was Warwick who entered. It was long since the two had met, and then it had been the lady's task to give a check to a courteous and cheerful address. Warwick now was neither courteous nor cheerful.

He bowed stiffly, and, standing, awaited the lady's pleasure with a pale and stern face.

"I trust I shall see Mrs. Hall," she began, after a greeting as easy as some agitation of manner would allow; "I have so much to say about my brother—so much gratitude to express. And to you too, Dr. Hall. Your wife has told you the sad story?"

Warwick bowed again, and said, "I am sorry Mrs. Hall is unable to see you. She is ill."

"Ill! since yesterday? I trust it is only fatigue?"

"My wife has typhoid fever."

"Oh!" almost screamed Mrs. Mountstephen, staring blankly at Warwick, with all the colour fading from her face; and then, after a long pause, "This is too much," she murmured, sinking into a chair and covering her face with her hands.

Warwick stood silent.

"My punishment is too great; my brother is dying, and how many poor souls besides! and now your wife, your beautiful, good wife! Oh, Dr. Hall, do not you think it is more than my carelessness deserves?"

"If you ask me, I am afraid I can only say that I think not," said Warwick; "because what led to it is just the root of all mischief—call it worldliness, egotism, or what you like. We are all guilty of it in some form or other," and Warwick smiled mournfully.

Mrs. Mountstephen learned from Warwick's face that there was nothing further to be said, and they parted almost in silence.

What strange weeks they were that passed now for Diana! Sometimes, with identity quite lost, she lay wandering in mazes of feverish pain, or sunk in weakness so deep that all her sense of outward things was obliterated. Even when conscious of existence she seemed no longer to have a part in life, but only to be a passive observer of what was passing in her bedroom. Outside its sphere all was a blank. Within it she watched certain figures moving to and fro. There was the white-capped and aproned nurse, always quiet, watchful, and alert, with gentle, firm hands, and never-failing help for all moments of need. And there was another figure often there, and not always recognised as Miss Hastings, though with the child-likeness of extreme illness she did not marvel at the stranger's kindness nor shrink from the services she rendered her.

And, above all, there was Warwick, who came and looked at her, felt her pulse, and often stooped to kiss her or to push back the hair from her brow, which one day, with tenderest fingers and firmly set lips, he cut all away. In his pocket that morning lay a letter that added somehow to the poignancy of the pangs with which he saw the scissors close on the long tresses of dark hair. It was from the Vicar of Pottersby, and contained an expression of sympathy on the writer's part, together with the copy of a resolution passed at the last meeting of the Committee of Public Health, to this effect:—"Resolved, that this Committee express, on behalf of the town and neighbourhood generally, its strong sense of gratitude to Dr. Warwick Hall and Mrs. Hall for the valuable and devoted service they have rendered during this time of public need, and also its deep sympathy with Dr. Hall in the trial he is called upon to undergo in the illness of Mrs. Hall, which we all so greatly deplore." The Vicar continued, "The resolution will be poor comfort to you, my dear sir, but I can assure you that the feeling it expresses is one that I meet with on all hands, and believe to be very sincere. Your best comfort, however, will undoubtedly be found in the consciousness of your noble wife's devotedness, and in resignation to the Divine Will on her behalf. If, as we all hope, she be restored to you and to us, I trust that Pottersby and Ridley will long keep you in their midst, and that the rumour that has reached my ears of your leaving us is without foundation."

What anguish was Warwick's that morning, knowing as he read this letter that the probability was that Diana would never hear it; for the fever had taken such hold on her that at times he gave up all hope. And Diana knew nothing of his anguish, she who had shared his every thought and feeling! Was this the foretaste of a still more terrible separation? Sometimes she felt a vague pity for him, but it was but vague. Every care had melted away, or was removed to an infinite distance.

At last a day came when Warwick brought Dr. Alloway into the room with him when he paid his morning visit, and this roused Diana to feel that she must be very ill, and the thought of death came to her for the first time. And the first keen feeling she had known since her illness smote through her, as she thought of leaving Warwick. The tears started to her eyes and rolled down her cheeks—she was too weak to brush them away. But someone moved behind the curtains and then came to her side. It was Miss Hastings, who was looking down at her, and Diana knew it was she. With an appealing look she coaxed Miss Hastings's hand to come to hers, and said—

"Am I going to die?"

Miss Hastings gently wiped the tears from Diana's cheek and said, "No, no, my dear; we hope not."

"But you are crying yourself," said Diana; "why?"

"Because you have been so ill, my dear, and you know I am very fond of you."

Diana smiled, and said, looking up into the eyes that at this moment were no longer hard and restless, and at the mouth whose lines were quivering with feeling—

"Then, after all, you really *were* my friend?"

Miss Hastings thought at this that Diana's mind was wandering again, and bade her cease talking and try to sleep.

Down-stairs at the same time the two doctors, very grave and silent, had shut themselves into Warwick's room. Warwick asked the elder man no questions, but in spite of himself his anxious eyes did it for him, and learned more than he wished from the way in which the doctor avoided meeting them. But Dr. Alloway knew better than to express any unfavourable opinion. He made some trifling suggestions to which Warwick listened respectfully. Then there was a pause, which was soon broken by the old doctor, who began in a cheerful key with the observation, "I suppose you know, Hall, that Stableton and I are parting company?"

Warwick started; there was a suggestiveness in the doctor's tone. "No, he had not heard."

"The fact is, we don't quite pull together. He

is too set in his ways to fall in with a crabbed old fellow's whimsies. I must try to get a younger man. The ladies have suggested you might be willing to think of it. You are a favourite, it seems, Hall, in some quarters," and the old man tossed back his white hair, and gave a sly look with eyes that twinkled in an expanse of choleric red face. "Now, my bark is, I believe, always worse than my bite; and when I thoroughly respect a man, as allow me, my dear fellow, as an old man, to say that I do you, I don't think he'd find me unbearable. Particularly if he saw his way to humouring me a trifle in consideration of this crippled limb," and the old doctor pointed with a humour that had a touch of pathos to the foot in question, which was encased in a slipper of enormous dimensions.

Warwick had said not one word. The doctor, pausing for some reply, glanced at him, and saw how it was. Warwick was within a very little of betraying emotion to an extent abhorred of men. It was too much! *This* to have come now, at such a time!

"Think of it, think of it," said the old man, hastily making preparations for departure.

"If my wife——" began Warwick, making a violent effort over himself.

"Yes, yes, of course; when your wife gets well we will talk of it again; quite so, quite so," and Dr. Alloway made his way to his carriage without further delay, attended by Warwick, who now showed a face perfectly set and rigid. The old doctor drove away with that face still before his eyes, and ejaculating below his breath murmurs of compassion. Warwick, after closing the door on the doctor, shut himself again into his room, where he remained for some time. When he came out—after what conflict!—his face was as composed as it was sorrowful.

But this, though Warwick did not recognise it, was that darkest hour that precedes the dawn. When he returned to the sick-room, Miss Hastings put her finger on her lips and showed him Diana sleeping so naturally that an almost unbearable rush of hope surged through his heart set to endurance. And from that hour she began to recover.

November had but commenced when Diana had fallen ill. And now tedious days of struggling convalescence brought her at length to Christmas morning. Like a happy child she lay and heard the Ridley chimes ring through the frosty air. Round her were many tokens that had come that morning to show her that her place was no longer outside the circle of social love and sympathy. Some came from Cadman's Row, and the gaudy cards, the shell pincushion, and the bunch of finely berried holly gave no less pleasure than the Ridley flowers that made her room a fairy-land. And as she lay, very weak, but very peaceful, on her couch, for the first time she questioned Warwick, who sat beside her while her nurse went to church, of the world outside her room. Warwick had waited for this, watching jealously the daily advantage gained over weakness, and knowing that questions would come as soon as strength came. Even now, with the self-control born of love, he kept under the emotion that rose as if it must burst all bonds; joy so keen as to be almost pain, relief so exquisite that his heart could scarcely bear it; and it was only in the passionately strong pressure of his hand that Diana could tell he was not as calm as she.

"Was she well enough to hear all that had passed?" he asked, and Diana said, "Yes, provided it was only ordinary bad news. She supposed there were few patients and no money: *that* she could bear; but she would like to hear first about the fever patients."

And then she learned the fate of those she had been nursing, and that the fever had almost died out: that Mrs. Mountstephen had taken her brother to Brighton, where she was devoting herself to the task of restoring his shattered health: that she was having Cadman's Row pulled down, to be rebuilt after the most approved modern fashion, with baths and washhouses for the lodgers.

"That is better," said Diana, "than all the grapes and flowers and kind notes she has sent to me."

"But it is not better, or at least not more genuine, than the warmth of her gratitude and regard for you, my dearest," replied Warwick, "which has won me to forgive, and even to like her."

Diana gave a sigh which with difficulty Warwick forced her to account for. She rested her head upon his arm, and whispered that it was the thought of leaving Ridley, and of losing her dear Miss Hastings, and all the kind feeling that people seemed now to have towards her, and of beginning again in a fresh place.

"It is only because I am so weak, Warwick," she said. "I shall not be so foolish when am stronger."

And then Warwick told her his great news. Diana cried.

In a deep undertone Warwick said, "I owe it to you;" and his own eyes were not dry.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

ACROSS a moor, amid the driving snow,
Four horses drag a heavy lumbering wain,
And bravely toil through a deep drift, when lo!
A trace breaks 'neath the all-unusual strain,
And from their seat the drivers swift alight,
Murm'ring at their hard fate on such a night.

But when at length one blindly gropes his way
To hold the foremost horses for a space,
He staggers back in horror and dismay,
For there he sees, scarce distant now a pace,
A yawning pit! The trace had snapped to save
Horses and men from a most certain grave!

Type this of God's o'er-ruling Providence!
For little trials, troubles, hindrances
We think so dire, are sent for our defence
'Gainst unseen perils, unknown enemies,
To stay our footsteps when we blindly roam
From the one road that leads to heaven and home!
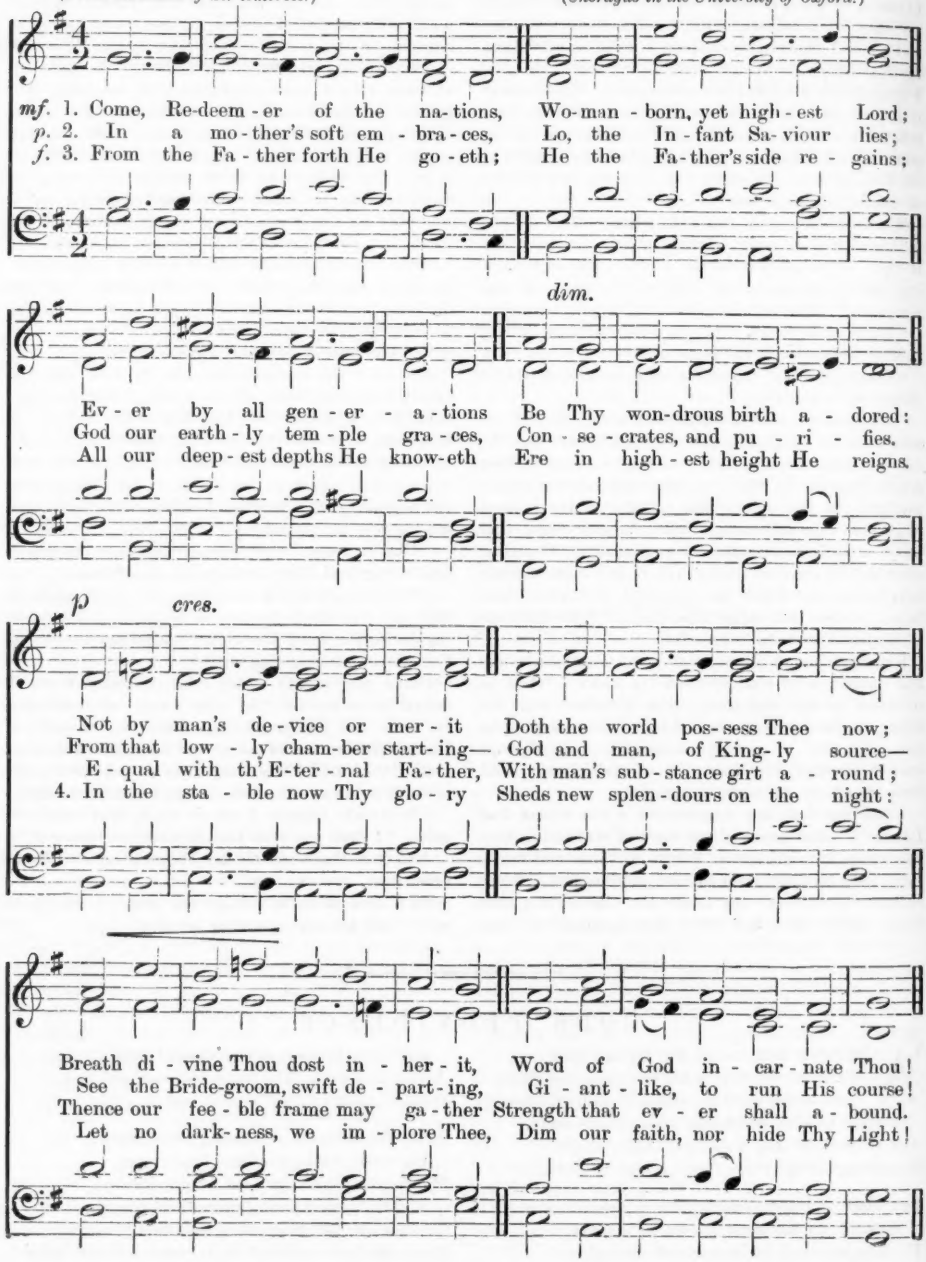
GEORGE WEATHERLY.

Come, Redeemer of the Nations.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

Words Translated by the Editor.
(From the Latin of St. Ambrose.)

Music by C. HUBERT H. PARRY, Mus. D.
(Choragus in the University of Oxford.)



THE STORY OF THE INCARNATION.

BY THE REV. HENRY ALLON, D.D.



THERE is nothing in literature more perfectly simple, beautiful, and delicate than the narratives of our Lord's birth which St. Matthew and St. Luke have written. It is difficult to touch such an incident without offending taste, and yet these men have done it with most exquisite delicacy. They artlessly, and with intuitive delicacy, say just what the revelation of the great mystery demands. It is difficult, moreover, to touch such an incident without rhetorical excitement and amplification; these writers are neither timid nor diffuse in description; their reserve is as marvellous as their narration; they do not express surprise; they do not indulge in comment, as the apocryphal Gospels do; they tell their story with simple, natural feeling. It is not for them to express surprise at its wonderfulness, to dilate upon its greatness. They live in the atmosphere of the Incarnation. It is as if Michael the archangel wrote about the supernatural things of his familiar experience. In the same calm, unostentatious manner the entire history of our Lord is written. However marvellous the event recorded, it excites neither comment nor surprise. No solicitous explanation is given, no loud exclamation is uttered, no timid feeling of misgiving is expressed. The brevity, simplicity, and quiet assumption of the Evangelists are in wonderful contrast with all other literature. The more we ponder this, the more the wonder grows.

Scarcely can it be accounted for by mere literary genius. You would thus create the marvel of four contemporaneous biographers, all endowed with this great faculty of literary imagination and recital, this marvellous power of self-control. Only by the assumption of the supernatural character of our Lord, and of Divine inspiration of all that is here recorded of Him, can any rational explanation of the artless character of these narratives be given.

For another of the striking characteristics of these Gospel histories is, that from first to last they are perfectly congruous and harmonious. They narrate a supernatural manifestation of Jesus Christ. Everything that they say relates to Him. The Gospel Histories are not theological treatises—they simply tell us what Jesus Christ said and did. Ideas are there—doctrines about God, about human life, about the life to come, more profound and sublime than any to be found elsewhere. Moral duties are enjoined—duties of piety and brotherhood, more holy and elevated than any elsewhere propounded. But these ideas and duties are not set forth in a system of theology, in a code of precepts. They are embodied in the life and teaching of the Christ. Christianity was complete before a word of the New Testament was written. Christianity was in Christ; the Revelation was not in a book of doctrines, but in a personal life. He who saw Christ saw the Father. Jesus Himself was not a mere teacher of doctrines. His revelation of God was not what He said, so much as what He was. It was embodied in His life. Every great Christian doctrine, therefore, is simply an explanation of what Christ was and did. The doctrines of the Incarnation, of the Atonement, of spiritual life, of the Resurrection, expounded in the Apostolic writings of the New Testament, are simply explanations of unique facts in the person and life of Christ.

And the thing to be noted is, that from first to last these facts and doctrines are in perfect harmony. Some childhoods are made romantic by reflected lights; a manhood in which genius has developed causes the imagination to construct a wondrous childhood. Romulus is suckled by a she-wolf; Herakles strangles serpents in his cradle. It is difficult to conceive of the boyhood of Shakespeare or Milton without romantic colouring. How often youth gives no promise of manhood; how often manhood falsifies the presage of youth!

From first to last the history, the character, and the mission of Jesus of Nazareth are in perfect keeping. Had He proved but an ordinary man, how incongruous and preposterous such a story of Incarnation would be! As the recognised Christ of God, what unassisted imagination could have invented His temptation, His life of poverty and sorrow, His death on a cross as a malefactor? And yet how perfectly they accord with His mission! Who could have connected the Incarnation and the Cross, and have imagined this wonderful harmony of the two?

Can we imagine these stories of the birth of Christ, so exquisite in their simplicity and delicacy, to have been an after invention?—the magnificence of the house demanding that such a portico to it should be built—the marvellous character of the Christ so impressing His disciples as that they invented these stories of His miraculous birth to account for it? Could any human genius have produced, under such circumstances, records so simple and so perfect, and which have grown in the beliefs of men from that day to this? As intelligence has grown Pagan myths have been exploded; they could not bear the lights of exact history, the criticism of cold reason. Belief in Christ's Incarnation has grown more and more. It alone accounts for the Christ Himself. If He was such a Christ, such an Incarnation is most congruous with Him. But the harmonies of the marvellous story are wonderful. If it be an invention, the author of it is a

greater miracle than his hero. Here the story of the Incarnation lies before us—the annunciation of the angel; the attitude of the virgin mother; the circumstances of the birth, full of exquisite touches of human feeling and beauty, etherealised by a modest and perfect piety—the mother and the angel; the mother and her affianced husband; the mother and Elizabeth; the mother and the stable; the mother and the babe; the mother and the shepherds; the mother and the Magi—each incident not only picturesque in its beauty, but laden with great Messianic meanings, just slightly hinted and delicately touched, but all in such profound and wonderful harmony that the keenest and most hostile criticism has not yet pointed out an incongruity. Legend or history, the divinest, the most human, the profoundest thoughts are in it.

I think these subtle harmonies and spiritual beauties count for a great deal; they are evidence of truthfulness that cannot be disregarded, when Science, with its hard methods of pure reason, scoffingly says such a thing as the Incarnation is impossible. In any case we are entitled to ask, Why impossible if there be a God? and in this instance, Why incredible, when it is impossible otherwise to account for the records, and when everything else seems to require it? Clearly, if we reject the Incarnation we must on the same grounds reject the whole of the four Gospels: nay, the whole of the New Testament writings. They not only affirm the Incarnation, but their entire feeling is imbued with it; they base upon it all their teaching about Christ. Extract from the New Testament the Incarnation of Christ, and you leave it a dismembered heap of fragments: the foundation upon which it rests, the keystone of its structure, the animating and harmonising principle of it, is taken away. I could much more easily reject the New Testament entirely than I could eliminate from it the Incarnation.

Neither of the Evangelists alone gives us the complete history of the Incarnation; but, with the exception of St. Mark, who begins his Gospel with Christ's public ministry, each contributes something distinctive, making still more wonderful the harmony of the whole. Each, too, looks at the Incarnation from a peculiar standpoint. While they are one in recognising the miraculous fact that God was thus manifest in the flesh, and that the child was the immediate product of Divine creative power, St. Matthew, from his Jewish standpoint, shows how old Hebrew prophecy thus finds its fulfilment in the Christ as the Messiah—the ancient prophetic hope of the nation; St. Luke sees in Him the hope and salvation of the Gentiles; St. John, the glorious union of man with God. Again the diversity issues in a marvellous harmony; these various men, with their different interpreting ideas, do not start a single discord. It is the Divine light of God falling upon an infinite diversity of things and thoughts, and illumining them all. Again we say, A great *moral* miracle if the history be not real. Each writer rises above his special standpoint into the greater universal idea of the Christ. One scarcely feels the Jewish aim of St. Matthew, or the broader human aim of St. Luke. Above all, He is the Christ, the Son of the living God; born of a woman made under the law; the Saviour of men from their sin; the reconciler of men with God; the great religious Redeemer and Hope of the world.

In the Gospels we have the history of the Incarnation; in the Epistles we have the explanation of the history. It is a new revelation of God; the advent of a strong Son of God; a new religious hope for sinful and sorrowful men. This is the great note of all the New Testament writers, this is the great central fact and inspiration of Christianity. However Jewish the prophet, the great human mission of Christ overpowers the Jewish feeling—Israel sees the "light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as the "glory of His people Israel." It is the advent of a Redeemer whose Gospel is to be preached to every creature—whose Kingdom is to have no end. This is another great and wonderful harmony of the New Testament writers: how did they get it? How did these peasant Jews rise so grandly above the pride and prejudice and exclusiveness of their nation? There was nothing in Judaism, as there was nothing in Paganism, out of which such a world-conception as the Christian Incarnation could have grown. Almost every religion had cherished the idea of an Incarnation. It appears in Greek mythology, in Hindoo avatars; but the Christian Incarnation as told in the Gospels is so radically different and transcendent, that it could not have grown out of these. Human nature confessed its need of an Incarnation if it was to be redeemed; it had perhaps faint traditions of the first promise; only Christianity realises a rational and moral idea of it.

Of necessity, the Incarnation cannot be testified like ordinary historical facts. No witnesses can record their evidence; reason cannot demonstrate it by argument. From the very nature of the case, its only proof is—(1) Authoritative testimony in a book that we know to be Divine; (2) The fitness of it to meet the conditions and necessities of human nature; (3) The harmony of it with the entire life and mission and character of Christ. We must believe it in order to account for Christianity, and for the great practical effects that Christianity has wrought. The proof is from moral fitness, from moral harmony, from Divine attestation, from the entire assumption of Christianity.

We cannot speculate about its possibility or its philosophy. Metaphysicians cannot deal with it, theologians cannot expound it. It is simply an alleged fact, attested by its proper evidence, to be used as a practical and vital element in our religious life. The place of reason is to examine the testimony to the fact, and if attested sufficiently, implicitly to receive it for practical uses. Reason is never so reasonable as when it recognises the limits of its own powers.

It cannot pry into the mystery of God, into the mystery of life. It can only receive these as attested facts—facts made indubitable by practical experience. We cannot explain the production of life even in a plant, or in an animal, or the incarnation of a soul in a human body. We cannot give more formidable advantage to sceptics and scoffers than by propounding theories of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, of the New Birth, of the Inspiration of Scripture. Ignorant or inadequate theories are easily confounded; and men think that by overturning these they have discredited the facts of which they are only the suggested solutions.

We may rationally affirm that the Christ was both God and man, Divine and human, for the fact is attested; but when we attempt to explain how, we are soon confounded. "The wind bloweth where it listeth. Thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth." So is every Incarnation of the Divine.

All that we say, then, is that besides the attestation of Scripture, we can see that the Incarnation is in perfect keeping with the sinful needs of men, and that it is also congruous with the perfect character and the redeeming work of the Christ. If He is to be a sinless man, if He is to make a holy atonement for human sin, the sinless life and the sinless sacrifice demand His sinless birth. It is the only congruous conception of such a life, of such a death. He who did no sin was made a sin-offering for us.

But besides these great theological teachings, there are beautiful human lessons to be learned from this story of the Incarnation. A Nazarene peasant and wayfarer—so humble, so obscure, so disowned, but with a manner and indications of Divinity about Him. It is indeed a wonderful array of Divine attestation: the annunciation, the guiding star, the angelic song, the marvellous direction of Providence, the fulfilment of prophecy—it is a manner of coming in harmonious illustration of His character and history.

What sanctity this story of the Incarnation throws around childhood! Wonderful is that manger. He might have assumed an adult and perfect manhood. But He would not exclude childhood from His human experiences. Childhood therefore has part in His actual sympathies and blessings. He hallows the cradle as well as the grave. It is a gracious law of life that we are children before we are men—that our rough manhood is preceded by tender childhood—that, taking our children into our arms, we bless ourselves more than we bless them. The Christ was a child before He was a man—a partaker and a pattern of filial duty and tenderness.

What sanctity this story of the Incarnation throws around poverty!

He was born a poor man's child; He "made Himself of no reputation." He, who might have chosen a palace, was born in a stable; His infant bed was a manger, not a costly cradle. And through life He remained the poor man that He was born. In His life, as at His birth, He "had not where to lay His head." For thirty years He toiled for His daily bread, probably supporting His widowed mother by His toil; for the three years of His ministry He was dependent upon the generosity of others. To Him, in His amazing stoop of condescension, the difference of earthly grade could not count; but to us, in the toil and sorrow of poverty, the comfort is unspeakable.

What imaginations of life rise up as we bend over that manger!

Who may prognosticate the future of a child? Who would have sought the Messiah of the world in the stable at Bethlehem? Did not Herod impersonate the greatness of his day? would not his be the abiding renown? Where now are Herod's throne and kingdom? The spiritual glory and power of that obscure Child rises above the loftiest thrones of the earth, and survives the most lasting.

"What manner of child shall this be?" Simeon may vaguely prophecy that "He shall be great," but who shall imagine all the reality? Who, as he listens to that infant wail, can forebode the words that will fall from His lips? Who, as he gazes upon that infant's face, can imagine the intelligence and moral grandeur with which it will be charged? Who, as he looks to the feeble beauty of an infant's hand or foot, shall say what deeds it shall do, what ways it shall tread? Think of the latent powers in that infant Christ! What thoughts are to illumine that mind, what emotions are to swell that heart, what visions are to fill that eye, what words are to be spoken by that tongue! These feet will tread the unyielding wave, these hands will open the eyes of the blind, that voice will call the dead from their graves. He who lay in the manger an unconscious infant will come again as the Judge of quick and dead. What contrasts were enfolded in Him: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

"Because there was no room for Him in the inn!" So the world receives her Messiah. How little the host, or the precedent or more pretentious travellers surmised Whom they thus excluded!

This also is a parable. In how many places, in how many hearts of men is there no room for Christ? His Gospel finds no place; He Himself is excluded, to find a refuge in whatever stable may be vacant. Christ comes; the world is preoccupied; human hearts are full of worldly passions and cares; there is room for many things—for trade, for learning, for wealth, for ambition—there is no room for Him: "He came unto His own, but His own received Him not." What an apt beginning of His Kingdom! It is not that men persecute Christ, crucify Christ, put indignity upon Christ, formally reject Him: this they do sometimes. More commonly they are simply indifferent to Him, their hearts have no room for Him,

their worldly interests and cares and passions absorb them. He may take any bye-place in our lives that He can find. We do not make room for Him.

Even those who honour Him most—inscribe His cross upon their banners, build cathedrals for His worship—often so fill their hearts with superstition and selfishness that they have no room for Him. Christ is farther from no men than from many whose loudest vaunt is that they are His. Science has no room for Him. In the name of law it denies the Law-maker. Much of our theology substitutes doctrine for Christ, philosophical beliefs for love and service and fellowship. Christ asks for room in our hearts, for room in the Church, for room in the world. We do not honour Him as the Lord of our life. We do not admit Him to the chief place in our affections.

Let us royally receive Him, clear away from His path and dwelling the rank crowd of incongruous things, receive Him in spiritual simplicity and sympathy, and give to Him our whole hearts; challenging every inimical passion, excluding every intolerant thing, until we are "filled with all the fulness of Christ."

Let it be our daily summons and challenge to every thought and affection, to every home and fortress of human souls:—

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in."

WHITER THAN SNOW.

BY F. M. F. SKENE.

CHAPTER I.

"YOU are rather stronger to-night, are you not, dearest mother?—it will not fatigue you if I speak to you for a few minutes on a subject that is of great importance to me?"—and the speaker, a young man of about nineteen years of age, looked up anxiously into the worn, pallid face of the lady at whose side he was kneeling. Mrs. Ashton was lying on a couch drawn towards the open window, and the soft light of the summer evening fell on her delicate, refined features, to which an expression of unearthly peace had given a fair, ethereal beauty, though the brightness of youth and health had long since departed from them. Her son and daughter, strikingly like each other, were a strange contrast to her, in their radiant, blooming youthfulness, with their animated countenances and dark, flashing eyes. Paul held his mother's fragile hand in his as he fixed his eager gaze upon her, and his twin sister Pauline, seemingly as anxious and ardent as himself, had passed her arm round his neck, while she too knelt beside him.

"Yes, dear child," said Mrs. Ashton, in low, feeble tones, "I do feel strangely better this evening—my cough has ceased, and all my pain is gone; I am quite able to hear anything you wish to say, and to give you my best advice. Is it of your future career you would speak, my Paul? You have been so silent on that subject for the last few months, that I felt sure there was some grave thought in your mind concerning it."

"You guessed rightly," he answered eagerly; "I have thought of little else night or day—I have only waited till you were better to tell you that I have formed a resolution which I hope and trust may have your approval, though I dare not expect that my father will be pleased with it."

"Your father's purpose for you has never changed," said Mrs. Ashton, rather sadly; "and he has had you educated from first to last with a view to it. He wishes you to wear the Queen's colours like himself, and serve your country in the army."

"I know," said Paul, his bright face darkening; "and in my boyish days I might have been content to do so—but not now, when a great light has pierced my soul and shown me a higher life. I want to be a soldier of Christ, my mother, and to fight for Him alone in that beautiful land of my birth, where the people sit in darkness and the shadow of death."

The invalid started up from the pillows on which she was reclining, and turned towards him with a gleam of joy in her eyes—

"O my son, do you mean——?" She stopped, breathing quickly.

"I mean to be a missionary in India," he answered firmly. "I want to follow, at however vast a distance, in the steps of the great Apostle whose name I bear, and, like him, to give my whole life for the conversion of those to whom the glorious Gospel of our God is yet unknown."

A moment longer Mrs. Ashton kept her wide-open eyes fixed on her son's face; then she fell back on her couch pale and silent. Paul turned with a pained expression to his sister, and Pauline, quickly moving forward, laid her bright young head caressingly on the pillow beside the invalid.

"Oh, darling mother," she said, "do not disappoint dear Paul; he always thought you would be pleased with his decision, whatever father might be, and you do not know how he has lived upon this hope for many months past. He has entered into the whole



"The trace had snapped to save
Horses and men from a most certain grave!"



matter with a good missionary from India, whom he met at Sandhurst; he has learnt all the details of the life and its difficulties from him, and is ready and willing for the sufferings it may involve—only he wants your approval, dear mother, because you first inspired him with that love of Christ which constrains him to this devotion of himself in the service of his Lord."

"And he has my approval," said Mrs. Ashton, stretching out her hand to her son. "You mistake me, Pauline: if I was silent at first, it was but that I might secretly thank God for having granted me the desire of my heart. I have wished nothing so much, my Paul, as that you might be in some special way devoted to the service of our Redeemer—only," she added, her lips quivering with emotion, "I cannot hear of your resolution without trembling, for I fear—I fear——"

"You fear my father's displeasure," said Paul; "but surely when I tell him how certain I feel that our Father in Heaven has called me to this work, and that I have dedicated my whole being to it, he cannot refuse his consent."

Mrs. Ashton shook her head sorrowfully. "You do not know your father's firmness of purpose," she said. "Still, if God has indeed called you to this work, He will make the way plain for you in time; but, my Paul, that is not my only fear;" and she turned on him a look which he understood too well. He flushed scarlet as he answered it.

"I know what your dread is, mother; you think that my peculiar and great temptation—my fiery, passionate temper—may betray me into acts unbefitting a minister of God. I can but say that I know my danger in this respect, and will guard against it."

"And it is so long since he has had any sudden outburst of anger," exclaimed Pauline eagerly; "I am sure he has quite subdued his hot temper now."

"Not so long, Pauline," said her brother sadly; "you forget that hasty blow, only a short time ago, which killed the poor dog that was barking at my horse's heels; but I had not then solemnly dedicated myself to this sacred work, as I have done now; and I hope much from the restraining influence of such a resolution."

"And better still from the promise, 'My grace is sufficient for thee,'" whispered his mother faintly. "But now, my children, I must rest; this great news has exhausted me. If I remain quiet for a little time, I may recover the special strength I seemed to have to-night, and I wish to use it in writing your father a long letter of entreaty that he would not thwart you in your good and holy purpose."

"Oh, thank you, mother!" exclaimed Paul fervently, kissing her hand; and then Pauline drew him away into another room, that Mrs. Ashton might be left to sleep, as they hoped she would for a little time. And there they remained happily together, talking over Paul's high career, with all the enthusiastic ardour of their youth, and with full confidence that their mother's letter to Colonel Ashton would certainly win his entire consent to his son's desire.

That letter was never written. Before the dawn of another day the pure and gentle spirit of their mother had passed into the Light which shines not from sun nor moon, but from the Divine Presence that makes for ever glad the heavenly City of our God.

Colonel Ashton had served with the army in India from the time that he first took his young bride there, only occasionally coming home with her for a few months on leave. His twin children had been born at Naini Tal, and in the comparative healthiness of that beautiful spot they had not suffered from the climate, and had only been brought home by their mother when Paul was of an age to require the English education which could alone fit him for the military career to which his father had destined him. Thus his early associations were all connected with the Hindoo servants and other natives, many of whom had shown him great kindness. He remembered their idolatrous practices and the temples of their false gods with horror, when, in the first years of his opening manhood, the Sun of Righteousness had shone upon his young soul with so keen a ray, that thenceforth he could know no peace nor joy save in striving to bring others to that Light Divine, and those, above all, who had been his childhood's friends. How thankful he was that his pure-minded mother had in the last hour of her life approved and blessed his purpose! and both he and his twin sister, who shared his every thought and wish, felt sure that the knowledge of this fact would insure his father's agreement to the plan.

Colonel Ashton had been preparing to resign his command and retire on half-pay, that he might come home to his wife, whose delicate state of health caused him much uneasiness, though she made as light of it as she could in her unselfish letters to him; and when the news of her death reached him by telegram, he at once completed his arrangements and hastened home to the two children who alone were left to him in the desolation of his loss.

Until their father's return the twins remained in the pleasant country house where they had lived with their mother; and the one theme that occupied them through the long summer days, and often far into the night, was still the noble career which Paul had chosen for himself, and the hope that at some future time Pauline might be able to share it with him. The brother and sister seemed to have but one heart and soul, so closely were they knit together in that special love which is so often found to exist in the case of twins.

Paul had settled all his plans subject to his father's consent, without whose pecuniary aid he could not carry them out. The experienced missionary who had so strongly influenced him, intended to return in the autumn to the scene of his labours

in India, and Paul had arranged to accompany him, in order to be trained for the work under his guidance and to share in it, so far as he could, till he was old enough to be admitted to the ministry. He was told that his knowledge of Hindustanee, which he had in no degree forgotten, would enable him to be at once very useful. Pauline knew that so long as her father lived it was her duty to remain with him and make his home as happy as it could be without his cherished wife; but she resolved if ever a time came when he no longer needed her care, she would join her brother and work in the zenanas, where the help of English women is so much required.

CHAPTER II.

ON a bright autumn evening the brother and sister stood at the entrance to their home, watching with beating hearts the carriage, driving up the avenue, which was bringing their father back to them. How well they remembered the tall, soldierly form as he alighted and quickly advanced towards them—and yet both were struck with the change in him. It was five years since they had seen him, when he had been in the prime of life; and though always austere and dignified, so that they had stood somewhat in awe of him, there was now a deeper sternness and gloom in his aspect, while his whole appearance was that of a man whom toil and sorrow had rendered prematurely old. His hair was grey, and his stalwart figure bent, while his somewhat feeble step indicated a great diminution in his physical strength. He greeted his children affectionately, and looked with evident satisfaction on the son whom he had last seen as a boy, and who now met him in all the strength and vigour of his early manhood; but he spoke very little, for the sense of the loss he had sustained seemed to come upon him with overwhelming force, as he entered the house where his beloved wife had died.

During the first few days after his arrival Colonel Ashton was much occupied with business matters connected with his retirement from the army, and had no time for conversation with either his son or daughter as to their future arrangements. Paul was burning with desire to speak to his father of his own solemn purpose, but Pauline held him back till some favourable opportunity should occur for entering on so momentous a conversation. They were both, therefore, rather painfully startled when their father turned towards them as he was leaving the room one morning after breakfast, and told Paul to hold himself in readiness to go with him to London on the following day, in order that he might pass through certain necessary formalities, to enable him at once to enter on his destined career as a soldier. The Colonel did not wait to give his son time to say a word in answer, before he hastened to the outer door, where his horse was waiting for him, and in another moment the twins heard him ride away at a quick pace on the road to London. They looked at each other in consternation: Paul vehemently regretted that he had not found means to state his purpose to his father earlier, while Pauline grew pale as she recalled the set, stern look on the Colonel's face when he announced his arrangement for the next day; it was evident to her that no doubt had ever crossed his mind as to the profession his only son was to adopt.

"At all events, there can be no more delay," exclaimed Paul; "I will speak to my father the moment he returns home."

Their house was only a few miles from London, but the Colonel did not come back till the dinner-hour, and nothing could, of course, be said in the presence of the servants. When they had withdrawn Colonel Ashton rose to go to his study, according to his usual custom, and then Paul, springing to his feet, said in a voice quivering with excitement—

"Father, will you wait a few minutes? I must speak to you."

The Colonel turned in some surprise, and they stood facing each other—the father and son—looking strangely alike in the firm, determined expression which was the characteristic of both. Pauline had risen also, and waited trembling and breathless, glancing from the one to the other in overpowering anxiety. Then Paul plunged into his subject, and with all the ardour and vehemence of his intense desire told his father that he could not follow out the career he had designed for him, because he had been called of God to a higher work—even the service of the Prince of Peace, for whom he would do battle indeed, but only with the powers of evil and the false gods whose hideous worship desecrated the fair Indian land. Colonel Ashton stood so rigidly silent, with his stern look fixed on the glowing countenance of his son, that Paul did not cease to speak till he had explained all his plans to his father—how he had solemnly devoted his life to the conversion of the heathen, and had settled to accompany his missionary friend to India in the course of a few weeks; how he meant to work under his guidance till he had reached the proper age for ordination, and then he would enter the ministry, and give himself up heart and soul to the career he had chosen. When he had fully detailed all his arrangements without drawing forth a single word from his stern, silent father, Paul added, in a lower tone, that his dear mother had approved of this plan, and promised to help him in carrying it out. He was not allowed to finish his sentence; the moment the name of Mrs. Ashton passed his lips the Colonel stretched out his hand towards him, and said, in a voice of thunder—

"Stop! do not dare to use that sacred name in connection with this insensate folly and insolence: your mother would never have aided you in disobedience, and in humiliating, unmanly schemes, the very thought of which is a degradation to yourself

and to me. Let me never hear another word of such despicable madness. Your career is fixed; you enter the Queen's service to-morrow, and you have but to take care that you do not show yourself unworthy of the honour." He turned to leave the room, but Paul sprang after him, crimson to the temples, and evidently mastering himself with great difficulty.

"Father, stay; you must hear me—I cannot do as you wish—I cannot give up my vocation; God has called me to the life of a missionary, and I must—I will embrace it: I cannot take service in the army."

Colonel Ashton turned and looked at his son from head to foot with an expression of scorn, which made Pauline tremble for its effect on her fiery-tempered brother.

"Do you expect me to tell them at the War Office that my son is a contemptible coward who has not courage enough to stand fire, and prefers to sneak through life under the safe cloak of a missionary parson? You shall never shame me so far; you go with me to-morrow, though I have to drag you after me by force, and you shall soon be curbed with bonds you will have no power to break."

These scathing words seemed to lash the high-spirited boy to a momentary frenzy; he succumbed to the temptation of indulging the naturally hot temper he had so resolved to resist: he lost all control over the passion that burned within him; his eyes blazing and his very lips white with rage, he dashed towards the door, exclaiming, "You call me a coward—you would coerce my will and bind me to a service I hate! You shall see that I have at least the courage to defy you, and carry out my own purpose."



"'I must leave home for ever.'"—*p.* 38.

He was about to rush from the room, but his father strode between him and the door to bar his exit, and Paul, almost frantic with anger, lifted his hand, and thrust him aside with so much force, that the old man staggered back, and, losing his balance, fell heavily to the ground, striking his head against the corner of the table in the act of falling.

With a wild cry Pauline flew towards him and strove to raise him up, seeing with terror that his forehead was cut and bleeding; and almost instantly two of the men-servants who were in the hall outside, and heard her shriek, came hurrying in, and at once lifted their master from the floor and placed him in a chair. They soon saw with thankfulness that he was merely stunned, and he was able to swallow the restorative which they offered him—while

the wound that had been inflicted by the sharp edge of the table was evidently quite superficial.

Meanwhile Paul stood rooted to the spot, while a change that was almost appalling in its effects had passed over him. His fierce, uncontrollable passion had subsided like a flame quenched in ice-cold water, under the unspeakable horror and remorse that overwhelmed him when he realised that he had actually raised his hand to his father, and, however unintentionally, struck him to the earth! He had been literally beside himself while the fire of his hot temper held possession of him, but now that he had come to his senses, all that was good and noble in his character—his high principle and strong sense of religion, rose in revolt against his own act of madness, with an anguish of remorse which made him feel as if the very power to live after it was passing from him. White as death, with the cold dew standing out on his forehead, he remained motionless, only murmuring through his trembling lips, "What have I done? O merciful God, what have I done?" while his petrified gaze was riveted on his father and the bleeding wound which Pauline was tenderly stanching. So he remained till Colonel Ashton, recovering quickly from the momentary effects of the fall, which had in no way seriously injured him, turned slowly towards his son, apparently to cast a look at him or speak. But Paul, frantically hiding his eyes with his hand, as if he felt that he could never again bear to meet his father's gaze, rushed impetuously out of the room.

Pauline saw him go with a sinking heart, for she knew that his sensitive conscience would cause him to take an exaggerated view of his own act and its consequences; but she could not leave her father to follow him.

Colonel Ashton was, however, soon himself again, and thanking the servants for their attention, he dismissed them, saying that he would go to his room for the night, and expected to be quite recovered in the morning. When Pauline saw that she was alone with him, she flung herself down on her knees at his feet, and clasping her hands pleadingly, while tears fell from her sorrowful eyes, she exclaimed—

"Dearest father, forgive—oh, forgive poor Paul! What he did was terrible, I know, but he never meant it—he did not even know what he was doing. When his fierce temper gets the better of him, he is like one out of his mind for the time; and he has so struggled against it of late, and hoped he had overcome it. I know that now he must be in utter despair; oh, take pity on him, father, and forgive him!"

Colonel Ashton stooped to kiss her forehead as he said, very sadly, "Yes, Pauline, I ought to forgive him for the acts of the passionate temper which he has inherited from myself. I, too, had lost my self-control, and scarce knew what I said—I ought not to have called him a coward. I know too well what fury such a word would have raised in me, if applied to myself. I will not see him to-night, for I must have time to think over all that has passed; but tell him to come to me to-morrow, and you need not fear that I shall be harsh with him. Now good-night, my child; I am going to my room, and you must take care I am not disturbed."

Pauline went with him to the door of his bedroom, carrying his candle for him; and there kissing her tenderly once more, he dismissed her and locked himself in. It was evident that he wished to have time for quiet reflection, and the softened expression of his countenance gave good hope to Pauline that he greatly regretted his violent opposition to his son's wishes, and bore no resentment against him for the fall, which might in truth be considered simply as an accident. The warm-hearted girl was delighted to be able to take this consolation to her brother, whom she well knew must be suffering keenly from remorse. She flew to Paul's room, and receiving no answer to her gentle knock, opened the door and looked in. He was not there, and on his table lay a note addressed to herself. Her heart seemed to stand still in terror and dismay as she tore it open—it was a mere scrap of paper, containing only these words, scarcely legible from the haste with with which they had been written:—

"DEAREST PAULINE,—I must leave home for ever. I can never look my father in the face again. I know he cannot forgive me—tell him to forget he ever had a son. He need not fear that I will attempt to be a missionary now—unfit, unworthy as I am! Good-bye, darling Sister.—Your unhappy PAUL."

This was all, but the brief lines spoke volumes to Pauline; she knew too well her brother's impulsive, excitable temperament, and the sensitiveness of his conscience, which always plunged him into despair, for a time at least, when he had given way to any outburst of his fiery temper; and never before had a moment's passion on his part led to such a terrible result. Where might he not fly in his agony! He might disappear from their knowledge altogether, if she could not prevent his escape. She looked hastily at her watch: he could not have been gone more than half an hour, and there was but one railway-station within several miles of the house. Wherever he might intend to go, he must start from thence, and it was probable she might yet be in time to find him there, as the distance was not great. Not an instant did she delay; merely looking to see that she had sufficient money in her purse, in case she had to follow him further, she flung on her hat and mantle, and in another moment was speeding across the fields by a short cut to the station.

It was already late in the evening, but the twilight lingered in the clear sky, and Pauline soon found her way to the railway platform. Her heart sank when she saw it was almost deserted, as if a train had just been despatched; but her brother was well known there, and the first official she met told her that Paul had just started by the mail train for Portsmouth. For Portsmouth! Then Pauline knew that he must indeed

have given up all thought of being a missionary, for the friend who was to have taken him to India was then in London. Could he mean to go to sea, or to emigrate? If so, his poor father, ready even then to forgive him, might too surely never see him again, and she would for ever lose the brother she loved so devotedly! She must stop him, she must go to him, be the consequences to herself what they might.

"When is the next train to Portsmouth," she asked quickly.

"In a quarter of an hour; but it is a slow train—it does not reach Portsmouth till the morning."

"It matters not," she answered; "I must go. Is there anyone here who can take a letter to my father, Colonel Ashton?" A messenger was soon found, and Pauline enclosed her brother's hasty note in a few lines from herself, begging her father to pardon her for following Paul without waiting to ask his leave, as the delay of an hour might cause him to be lost to them for ever, if, indeed, as she feared, he meant to leave England.

In another half-hour Pauline was well on her way to Portsmouth, having secured a carriage to herself through the kind attention of the station-master.

When the necessity for immediate action was over, and she had time to face her position, a great depression and terror seized her at finding herself starting alone on such a quest—she who had never before left the shelter of her parents' protection in all the years of her young life. How was she to find Paul when she did get to Portsmouth? Yet surely her adventurous course was the only hope of staying him in his fatal flight. She could but look upward and implore the Divine help and strength which alone could carry her through her difficult task.

CHAPTER III.

Pauline Ashton reached Portsmouth in the early morning, and she found herself standing bewildered on the railway platform, in the grey dawn, hardly knowing what answer to give the porters who asked if they should call a cab for her. Gathering up her courage, she began to question them as to the passengers by the night train, describing her brother to them, and begging them to tell her if they had seen him, and knew which way he went. One or two of them thought they had noticed such a young gentleman, but none of them had observed where he went to. Poor Pauline stood helpless, with eyes full of tears, and a failing heart, when she suddenly perceived that a grey-haired, weather-beaten man, whose erect bearing marked him at once as an old soldier, was gazing very intently at her. She turned to look at him, and there was an instant flash of recognition in her eyes. She darted towards him, exclaiming—

"You are Denton—dear old Denton, are you not? Were you not my father's standard-bearer in India when we were there?"

"Yes, indeed," he said, grasping her outstretched hands effusively; "and you are the Colonel's pretty little missie that used to beg me to let her look at the Colours and handle them many a time—and what a fine young lady you are grown to be sure!"

"Oh, I am so glad to have met you!" she said; "I am in such trouble, and I am sure you will help me."

"And that I will, if it is in the power of man to do it! I was pensioned off when the Colonel left the army, but I would serve him and his to the last day of my life, if I could."

Quickly drawing him aside from the crowd, Pauline told him that she was in search of her brother, fearing that he meant to sail from England that day, in consequence of a misunderstanding with his father, and that she must prevent his rash purpose, and bring him home, if possible. What steps could they take to find him?

The business-like soldier was on the alert at once.

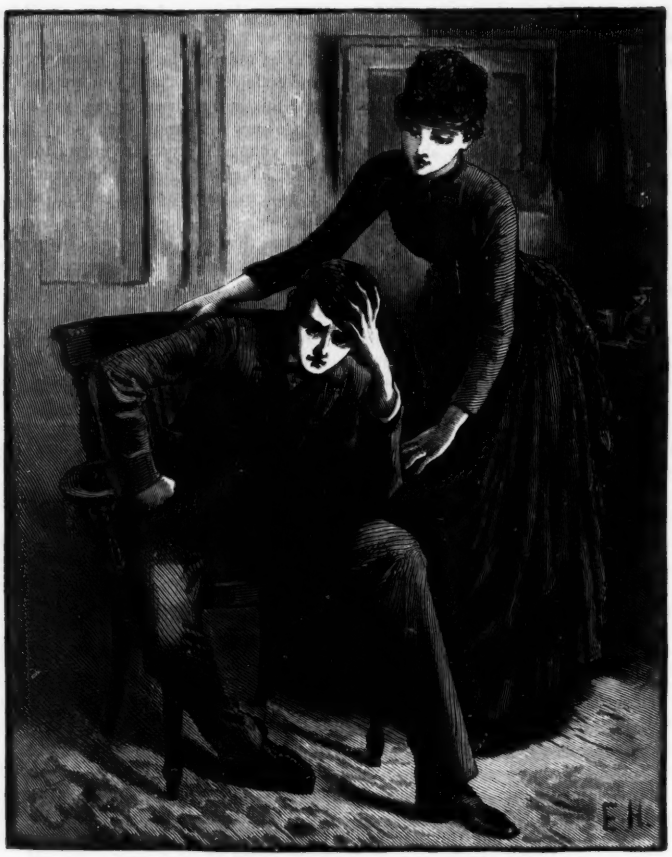
"We'll go to the shipping agents," he said, "and ascertain what vessels are sailing for the colonies to-day. It's there he'd be like to go, if he wants to hide himself, and there's numbers sail from here to New Zealand and Australia."

Before an hour had passed, Denton's scheme had proved successful, and they had found the name of Paul Ashton among the lists of passengers in a ship bound for Melbourne, which was to sail that day at noon. It was then only eight o'clock; but the agent told them he had recommended Mr. Ashton to go to an inn near the wharf, as the best place in which to wait for the sailing of the ship; they would probably find him there. So it proved; they were soon on his track. But when they reached the door of the parlour where the waiter told them he was, the old standard-bearer drew back respectfully, and said he would wait for Miss Ashton outside. She was glad to go in alone. Softly she opened the door and closed it again, without having attracted her brother's attention—for he was standing at the window, lost, apparently, in his own sad thoughts, and with a look of such utter misery on his haggard young face as she had never seen there before. With one bound she was at his side, and had flung her arms round his neck.

"Oh, my brother, my Paul! Thank God I have found you! Come back! come home! father will forgive you!"

He started, utterly amazed, and it was some minutes before he could speak, while she explained to him how gently his father had spoken of him, and how much he seemed to regret his own harshness towards him, and how she had herself started off without leave, and travelled all night to find him, and bring him back to his home.

"My Pauline," he said mournfully, "it was dear and noble of you to risk so much for me; but I can never face my father again. Even if he could forgive me, I cannot forgive myself. Think how great has



"'I am not worthy so much as to be called his son.'"

been my sin! I, who dared to aspire to the highest service of God, allowed my brutal passion so to master me that I raised my hand against my own father! I might have killed him in my wicked fury. No, Pauline, nevermore can I claim a right to enter his house. I am not worthy so much as to be called his son." He sank wearily into a chair, and turned his face away from her. Pauline knelt down by his side, and twined her arms round him.

"Paul," she said softly, "have you forgotten what a welcome *he* met from his father, who first used those words? He, too, had sinned and repented. Oh, say with him, 'I will arise and go to my father,' and he will receive you even as that erring son was received. He will prize you all the more that he has risked to lose you."

"And what right have I to such a welcome, supposing I could win it?" answered Paul, almost sternly. "I am no longer worthy to hold a place even in the army, as he wished—far less to be the soldier of Christ, to which I aspired in my presumption. Do you forget my sin before God, the stain upon my soul of such an act of violence to a parent? Do you not remember the terrible denunciation against those who set lightly by their father or their mother?"

"Yes, I know it; but have not you forgotten, Paul, the blessed assurance, given once for all, that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin'? Do you not remember the words of the Psalm which our mother made us repeat night after night, 'Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow'?"

"Whiter than snow!" echoed Paul, letting his head fall on his hands with a groan. "Oh, that I could ever hope these words might be true of me once more!"

"Can the words of God's own truth ever fail? My Paul, if you go back to your father, and humble yourself before him, confessing your fault, and promising to submit to his will for the future, it will

be like the bitter hyssop purging your soul, and making it able to receive the heavenly washing that shall render it whiter than snow. Is not this what our mother would have bid you do? In her name, brother, I call upon you to make the promise of these words your own."

He lifted his head and looked at her, not ashamed of the tears that dimmed his eyes, while he said, humbly—

"I believe you are right, Pauline—at least, I will trust to your guidance, for I am sure that you are nearer to God than I am. I will arise and go to my father."

Colonel Ashton had received his daughter's note early that same morning, for he had risen with the dawn after a sleepless night. The tidings of Paul's flight gave him a cruel shock, and brought home more keenly than before the unjustifiable harshness of his own conduct towards his son. It cut him also to the heart to think of his delicate young daughter travelling alone through the night in search of her brother, though he did not blame her for having taken so bold a step when delay might have been fatal. Oppressed with bitter thoughts, he could not rest in the house, but wandered out on the road that led to the station, though he well knew there could be no hope of their return till many more hours had passed for him in dreary solitude. It was a lovely morning, and most of the cottage doors were open as he went through the village. In the rustic porch of one small house a little girl was seated with her Bible on her knees, apparently conning the verses she would have to read in school. Just as Colonel Ashton passed, he heard her say in her clear young voice, "*Then Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.*"

The old man stopped short, for the solemn words smote on his very heart; it was as though a voice had spoken to him from heaven. Had it not been so even with his own son, who felt that he had received a Divine commission?—and what was he that he should dare to fight against the Lord?

That evening witnessed not only the perfect reconciliation of Colonel Ashton and his son, but a contest of generosity between them as to which should most completely give way to the wishes of the other. Paul confessed most humbly that even in the first instance he had been wrong in disputing his father's will, and that he who had indulged in such lawless anger was not fit to be the guide of others in the way of holiness—he was ready, therefore, to join the army at once; while Colonel Ashton declared that he had been very wrong in resisting the manifest call of God, and that he was at last perfectly willing to give up Paul to be a minister of Christ.

The discussion ended in a compromise suggested by Pauline. She saw that her father shrank painfully from the idea of the final parting with his son, which would have been involved in Paul's entrance at once on mission life in India, and she proposed that her brother should simply decide to take holy orders, without any special destination in the future, and that he should go through the ordinary studies for ordination in England, most of which could be conducted near home. They could determine later in what direction his work was to lie.

So it was decided. Two happy years were passed by the united family in great peace and harmony, during which Paul gave ample proof that the terrible lesson he had received had effectually subdued the violent temper that had been such a snare to him; never even in the faintest degree did he give way to it again, and his consistent gentleness was a source of constant admiration to Denton, who remembered him in the days of his fiery, impulsive boyhood. The good old standard-bearer was never allowed to leave Colonel Ashton's house again, after the great service he had rendered him in assisting so materially in Paul's return, and he became a devoted servitor to Pauline, who employed him on many little charitable errands.

Before the time for Paul's ordination arrived, his father had passed away in a death full of heavenly hope, asking with his last breath for a fervent blessing on both his dutiful children.

There was no longer, therefore, any reason why Paul should not carry out his original vocation as a missionary, and he gladly accepted Pauline's offer to accompany him to India, and devote herself to a similar life. There the young man's blameless career and pure self-sacrifice gave good hope to his loving sister that his soul had indeed, through the Great Atonement, become whiter than snow.

CHRISTMAS GUESTS.

WITH her shawl around her drawn,
Forth amid the crispèd snow
Goes dear Gretchen with her fawn
Where the leafless branches show;
To her feet, with frozen breasts,
Running come her Christmas guests.

Ah! methinks in Gretchen's heart
Dwells another Christmas Guest
She has sought the better part,
She has yielded Him her best;
And her love she lives to share
With Christ's creatures everywhere.

S. S. McCURRY.

DOUBLE-DUTCH.

DONE IN PEN AND PENCIL BY W. RAINEY.

CHAPTER I.



LITTLE Double-Dutch she was always called, but what her name really was, it would be difficult to say; she herself seemed to be very uncertain on that point.

Brought up among people who commonly indulge in an alias or two, she evidently had little idea that a person should be possessed of one name, and keep to that through thick and thin.

Sometimes she called herself Sarah James, and perhaps a day or two afterwards, looking up in your face with perfect innocence, she would confidently affirm that her name was Mary Rodbarts. The fact was, that if she took a violent fancy to anyone, as she often did, after lovingly dwelling on their name awhile, she would adopt it as her own.

How she came to be called Double-Dutch, and who christened her, are facts lost to history, but the name seemed to express something in her incoherent little character, and for that reason, no doubt, it clung to her.

Little Double-Dutch was a London street-arab, poor and neglected, but with something in the expression of her face that was pathetic and sweet, and yet at the same time extremely comical. She had nothing to cover her head but the disordered thatch that nature had given her, beneath which two large grey eyes looked out at you in an anxious, questioning manner, as if they would ask were you friend or foe.

More articles of dress she had than a fine lady, but they were bits and scraps, hopelessly ragged, and for the most part pinned together, or tied about her with string.

The top attic of a tumble-down house near Drury Lane was her home. There she lived with her mother. Her father, after being out of work for many months, had gone away, they knew not where, and the poor mother had struggled on, doing the best she could to get a living for herself and little Double-Dutch. She was employed as an occasional hand at a manufactory of jam and pickles, but as the work was not regular it was a very scanty living for mother and child.

Double-Dutch might often have been seen making one in the groups of children that eagerly turned over the heaps of rotten fruit and other refuse that was swept out of the adjoining market, and scrambling with the rest when some prize was turned up.

One day when she was thus engaged seeking for hidden treasure, she was startled by hearing a voice close beside her; she sprang up quickly, expecting to see the dreaded policeman, or what was equally fearful, the "School Board man," but her fears were soon set at rest by the kind face and manner of the stranger. He asked her where she lived, and, putting a penny into her hand, begged her to show him the house. Then as she walked beside him, he told the astonished child that if her mother would allow him, he would like to paint her portrait—to make a picture of her.

So a visit was paid to the attic, the mother's permission obtained, and little Double-Dutch found herself in a strangely bewildered state of mind, trotting by the gentleman's side.

Double-Dutch's world of dingy courts, costermongers' barrows, and squalid men and women, was soon left behind, and a new world opened before her; broad streets and beautiful houses, large squares where real green trees were growing; there were grand carriages passing to and fro, and numbers of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen.

At length they stopped before what seemed to Double-Dutch a very grand house indeed, and after ascending a great number of stairs—flight after flight, till she thought they would never reach the top—they stood panting for breath on the topmost landing. The gentleman opened a door and bade her enter.

Oh, the wonders of that room! There were pictures just commenced, pictures nearly finished, pictures quite finished, and framed in beautiful gold frames; drawings on the walls and all about the room; curious chairs and tables such as the little street child had never set eyes on before, and numberless beautiful things of which she did not even know the names. Soft draperies hung about the room, and in every niche or corner stood some treasure of art—some elegant vase or statuette. She was quite afraid to put her dirty little feet upon the bright rugs that covered the floor.

XUM

Oh, if only her mother had been there to see that enchanted spot!

She was greatly startled, in her admiring survey, at beholding the life-sized figure of a man—a lay-figure, as artists call it—which, clad in a yellow robe, held out a menacing arm towards her. The artist with some difficulty allayed her fears, but it was many a day, after this first visit to the studio, before she could quite persuade herself that the figure was not alive.

The marvels of that day, who could tell them? How different from anything she had seen in garret or gutter! To watch the artist painting his picture! and then the lunch they had together, the ripe fruit he gave her, and the music he played on the violin! and when she went home in the evening the proud owner of a bright silver shilling! The very lights in the street seemed to dance round her in her delicious bewilderment. Then to put the precious shilling into mother's hand, and try to tell her all about it, brought to an end the most wonderful day in the life of Double-Dutch.

CHAPTER II.

Double-Dutch now became a frequent visitor at the studio of the artist.

Day by day she quietly sat whilst he was painting her picture, and many and strange were the ideas that passed through her mind.

The thoughts of a child before it has become accustomed to the order of nature and the conventionalities of life are indeed curious. How full of religious faith and hope, and yet withal how grotesque are its imaginings!

Convention had had very little to do in the training of Double-Dutch; her mind had grown in its own wild way, unchecked, undirected. An imaginative child naturally, she had observed and pondered the people she met and the scenes she had witnessed, and very startling and heterodox was the little philosophy she had shaped to herself.

How little did her artist friend, whose eyes were earnestly fixed on her face day by day, dream that she also was studying him, and that she had built up at least a dozen short romances of which he was the central figure. But so it was.

Sitting there, so silent and demure, her mind was taking the wildest flights—"How grand all these things are, the rich-coloured carpets, the beautiful furniture. He must be rich. I wonder where he gets all the money to buy them; we haven't got anything like them, and mother earns a lot of money sometimes. Mother says he sells the pictures when he has painted them, but he hasn't got a shop, and nobody comes here to buy them. I don't believe he gets the money that way at all. I expect that's only what he says. I believe he robs people, that's what I believe—goes out at night and robs rich people. I expect he's one o' them what Johnnie Dicks tells us about—a highwayman, that's what he is. But then he's always very kind to me, and gives me shillings and things, and I think he's a good man. Yes, he must be a good man, and good men don't steal——" Brought thus to a knotty point, she would have to start from the beginning, and construct a new theory.

The artist, on his part, was much interested in Double-Dutch, and when her shyness had somewhat worn off, he was greatly amused at her funny ways, and at the queer remarks she let drop.

In the morning, about ten o'clock, there would come the tread of little feet without, and a timid knock at the door, upon which the artist would call out, "Come in!" then, the door opening a little, in would creep Double-Dutch. When her eyes met those of the artist, she would expand into a smile, shuffle her feet, and exclaim, "Hallo!"

This was her usual mode of greeting until the artist endeavoured to teach her to say "Good-morning;" but she never quite mastered the lesson, for when the right moment came, she quite forgot, and "Hallo!" would come out, and then, recovering herself, she would add, "Good-morning."

Of course, she took great interest in the progress of her picture; but her great delight was when the artist, resting awhile from his work, took his violin, and drew his bow across it; then she would stand quite entranced, with tears in her eyes, lost to everything but the plaintive tones of the music.

At such times the artist would encourage the little maiden to sing to him, and he was much pleased to find that she had a very sweet voice. Shy as she was in many things, she sang to him without reserve the scraps of hymns and songs that she had picked up, and her pathetic little voice often moved him deeply.

The artist was one who had known many a sorrow, many a disappointment. There were those whom he had loved and trusted, who had proved themselves unworthy of his trust, and his heart was a sad one. Disappointed in his profession, disappointed in his friends, and living a life of seclusion, he had nearly lost all faith in man, and (must it be acknowledged?) almost lost his faith in God. There were times when such black doubts gathered round him, that the strength that faith gives, and the light of hope, were well-nigh extinguished.

Was there not One who, with holy wisdom, took a little child, and set him in the midst of His disciples?—in their midst, to be a teacher of teachers. And this little street-arab, in her rags and ignorance, became a preacher of many things to the artist—the man of refinement, the man of culture. The scraps of hymns she sang seemed to lift the weight of years from his heart, and brought back something of the child-like faith and peace which ambition and distrust had driven away.

But what a strange preacher was this! What a strange teacher of high truths! Behold her sitting at the foot of the lay-figure, which she still half believed to be alive, her hands clasped before her as she sings—

"There is a happy land."

Now, though Double-Dutch had a good ear for music, and always sang a tune correctly, the words she sometimes put to it were quite astonishing, and her ideas on the subject still more so.

The artist sat quietly listening.

When she came to the second verse she sang out boldly.

"What is that you are singing?" said he, with a smile; and she repeated, with perfect gravity, the words—

"Bright in that happy land
Beans every height."

The artist found, to his astonishment, that one of the child's most vivid impressions of heaven was, that there was a high fence around, with beautiful scarlet-runners climbing up it. Now, what a strange preacher was this! and yet she had lessons to teach that went to the artist's heart.

One day little Double-Dutch came to the studio looking very downcast indeed. Although plied with many questions, she would not disclose the cause of her sorrow.

During the morning the artist had occasion to go into an adjoining room, and so left her alone awhile. On returning he was surprised to hear her voice raised to a high pitch, expostulating with someone. Judge of his amazement when, on looking in, there stood Double-Dutch in front of the lay-figure, looking up in its face, gesticulating vehemently, and thus addressing it—

"Oh, yes! You don't care. Why don't you speak, old man? You don't care if he did steal my shilling. It doesn't matter to you, I suppose. You don't care if my mother is cross, and we have to go without, do you?"

This very one-sided argument was interrupted by the entrance of the artist, and the child had to confess to him her troubles, and found in him quite as sympathetic a listener as the lay-figure.

She narrated how that the night before, when she left the studio, she was waylaid by a boy who lived in her court. He told her a piteous tale—how that he was very hungry, and had not had anything to eat all day long; that he was afraid to go home because of his father, and begged her to give him a penny of her money to buy some bread. Poor little Double-Dutch had a tender heart, and could not resist his appeal, for, as she said, "he ain't got no mother, you know."

She entrusted her precious shilling to him to get change; and to her horror he ran away with it.

"And I wouldn't tell mother who it was as stole it," she added, "'cause she'd tell his father, and he beats him dreadful, and he's a poor boy, and ain't got any mother, he ain't; and, you know, my mother was so cross, and she beat me," she said, beginning to sob; "and we didn't have nothing to eat."

Though she was but a poor little street child, God had given Double-Dutch a loving, unselfish heart.

Unheeded in the slums and gutters of our great cities lie many gems; but they are all known to Him, and in His sight are of great price.

That same evening, when the light was fading, and little Double-Dutch, shilling in hand, stood ready to go, as was her wont she lingered a few moments prattling in her quaint way to her artist hero.

"Double-Dutch," said he, "mind you take care of your shilling this time, and see that no one takes it from you."

"I'll hold it tight in my hand," she replied, "'cause mother wants it bad; she hasn't got any work now. I'm the only one in work. She's got to buy some bread and tea with my shilling; she ain't got none; she's very poor, she is." Then, looking up at the artist, she added, "You're rich, ain't you?"

"No," he replied, speaking more to himself than to the little maiden, whilst a vision of tax-papers passed before his mind; "I'm not rich; I'm poor—very poor."

Double-Dutch started, and stared vacantly at him a few moments, and then in an incredulous voice burst out—

"You ain't poor! you don't mean it! you 're only larfin'; you're as rich as rich."

"No," said he, smiling at her vehemence, "I'm very poor, Double-Dutch."

She gazed at him in amazement; she had thought him possessed of all the wealth of the Indies. Could it be true?

She stood thunderstruck for some moments, then the tears began to gather in her eyes, and she sprang forward and thrust the shilling into his hand, exclaiming—

"Here you are, take it," and rushed from the room. But the shilling was not lost this time; the artist overtook her on the stairs, and with some difficulty made her take it back again.

CHAPTER III.

SOME days after this incident a change seemed to come over little Double-Dutch; she was strangely quiet, and the artist fancied that she looked paler than before; the sad look in her eyes deepened, and when he talked with her and tried to arouse her, she would for a moment flash out into something of her former self, but soon settled down again with a sigh into silence. Moreover, he noticed that every movement of her little body was attended with weariness and pain. To all his inquiries, however, he received no answer. He could not think what ailed the child.

A week passed; and then there came a day when the artist sat down to his easel, but no Double-Dutch appeared. Hour after hour he waited, but there came no shuffle of little feet, no timid knock at the door, no Double-Dutch. He put his canvas aside, and sketched out something fresh. The next day passed, and the child did not appear.

The artist felt sure that she was ill, or that something had happened to her. He now called to mind her changed manner and appearance, and resolved to call at her garret home the following day.

XUM

So it came to pass that the next morning he found himself once more among the dingy courts of Drury Lane.

Struggling through the barricade of costermongers' barrows and empty fruit-boxes that blocked the way, he entered the court where she lived.

A number of children of all sizes were playing about and shouting lustily, but Double-Dutch was not among them.

In the middle of the court stood two untidy women with bare arms and tangled hair, shouting abusive things in one another's faces; whilst a drunken man was looking on, with more than half his body out of a first-floor window, singing with an air of stupid benevolence—

"For he's a jolly good fellow;"

and to add to the horrid discord, a dog set up barking at the stranger.

Our friend for the moment was quite stunned; nor could he make out which was the house that Double-Dutch had taken him to; and it did not make matters any better when the man hanging out of the first-floor window ceased his song and began addressing him with the greatest affability.

At last he made his way to a group of women who were watching with pleased interest the gladiatorial two; selecting the most promising of the number, he made inquiry as well as he could, seeing that he was not acquainted with Double-Dutch's real name, as to which was the house that she and her mother lived in.

"Oh! it's Mrs. Johnson you mean—Pickles we call her—her as works at the jam and pickles—why, she's left here."

No, she didn't know where she'd gone to. "Here! Mrs. Howell, here's a gennelman wants to know where Pickles' gone to."

"Well," shouted a harsh voice, "he'd better go and ask old Sawdust; he turned her out, he did."

"She's gone second floor at Mrs. Green's up Billingses, so they say," shrieked another.

Here a big-boned woman with arms akimbo struck in with a leer—"Why, they do say as her uncle's dead, and left her a lot o' money, and she's gone to live in her willa in the country, and keeps her carridge now."

This seemed to be considered a very good joke, and was received with bursts of laughter.

All this shouting and cross-shouting was quite unintelligible to the artist, but the woman he had at first addressed kindly vouchsafed him a word of interpretation.

It seems Double-Dutch's mother, having had very little work of late, had got behind with her rent, and was quite unable to pay it.

The landlord, who owned all the houses in that court, and let out the wretched tenements in rooms, had remorselessly sold her scraps of furniture, and turned the poor woman out of doors.

"P'raps he'll want a place to lay his head in hisself, one o' these days," added the woman.

It appeared that Double-Dutch's mother had held herself somewhat aloof, and had not made friends with the people of the court; they had not seen her go, and they had not cared to inquire where she had gone to. They had heard, however, that she had taken furnished apartments in Billing's Court, on the other side of Drury Lane, but they could not say for certain.

"Here, Bill," said the woman, turning to a thin, ferret-like boy, who had been playing tip-cat, and showing at the same time a remarkable talent for cheating, "Here, Bill, you go with the gennelman, and show him Mrs. Green's in Billingses Court."

With this guide the artist left the place, clambered over the barrows and fruit-boxes, and had reached Drury Lane before he had quite lost the shrill voices of the women and the top notes of the gentleman at the window.

He was conducted to the residence of Mrs. Green, and inquiry was made, but all to no purpose. Neither Double-Dutch nor her mother had been seen in that quarter.

So the artist returned to his studio, wondering what might be the fate of little Double-Dutch, and musing on that great multitude against whose names in the roll-book of life must be written the dread word—Missing.

CHAPTER IV.

It was a very wet evening, and the streets looked almost deserted as Mr. Mason, the artist, closed the door of his house, put up his umbrella, and walked rapidly away.



He saw nothing of a boy who was crouching down in the shelter of the adjoining doorway. With a quick look at the retreating figure of the artist, the lad arose and darted after him.

Presently Mr. Mason heard a voice at his elbow, and looking down, saw in the gaslight a thin, pointed face, with pale hair and light eyes. The face seemed familiar to him.

"Please, sir, ain't you the gennelman as went to Billingses the other day?"

"No," said the artist, not, for the moment, remembering the name.

"What went to try and find Mrs. Johnson," added the boy, trotting beside him.

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed the artist, coming to a standstill, "Oh, yes, I remember; and you are the boy that showed me the way. Have you found out where she has gone to?"

"Well, no," replied the boy; "but I know where her little gal is."

It was now raining hard. The artist, looking around him for some shelter, espied a small, shabby-looking coffee-shop, that hung out its dull lamp just two doors down the street at the corner of which they were standing.

"Come in here," he said, "and tell me all about it," and he pushed open the swing-door and entered.

It was a place much frequented by omnibus drivers and cabmen, who came to snatch a hasty meal, and, like most places of its class, was distinguished by a strong odour of well-boiled tea and cabbage-water.

It was rather late in the evening, and with the exception of one of these knights of the road, they had the place to themselves.

This was a huge fellow, encased in a multitude of coats and wrappings—a veritable rhinoceros.

Steaming before him stood a monster cup of coffee, and when they entered he was engaged in a struggle with some of his outer garments, and now succeeded in extracting an enormous parcel of bread and meat, which he spread out before him on the table, and eyed with great satisfaction.

Mr. Mason took a seat in one of the pews at the further end of the room.

"Now," said he to his companion, "are you hungry?"

"Pretty fairish, sir," was the reply.

The artist turned to a woman who had the appearance of having just tumbled out of bed and into her clothes, and ordered a cup of coffee and some bread-and-butter.

With some fear lest the boy should dislocate his jaw, the artist sat watching him demolish the pile of bread-and-butter that was brought him. When with a final gasp the last piece disappeared, and he wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, he said, "Now tell me all about it."

"Well, sir, you see, sir, you give me sixpence for showing you the way to Billingses, and I knowed you wanted Mrs. Johnson's little gal to draw her pottigraph, so I thought as if I found out where she was, you might give me another sixpence, or p'raps a shilling."

With this, uttered in an absent-minded way, the boy, who certainly was a 'cute one, looked up at the artist with an expression laboriously innocent.

"Well, perhaps I will: go on."

"Well, yer see, sir, she's in the 'orspital, she is. Yer see, that boy Johnnie Dicks, wot stole her money, yer know—well he kicked her in the leg, and she wouldn't tell on him; so she didn't say nothing about it, and then she was awful bad, and was took to the 'orspital, and some of 'em says she's going to have her leg cut off, or else she'll die. That's all I know, so I come and told yer."

So little Double-Dutch was in the hospital—perhaps dying. Poor little thing!

Mr. Mason gave the boy his shilling, and, dismissing him, left the shop.

It was very little he could do that night. It still rained; and, sad at heart, he walked to the hospital gates.

From the porter he learned that the visiting-days were Wednesdays and Sundays.

Two days to wait before he could see little Double-Dutch!

"Poor little children of the courts and alleys!" he sighed, as he walked homeward, "how sad are the openings-out of life with you! Early inured to wretchedness and brutality, you struggle into life, and find little worth the struggle; whilst other little ones born into this world of ours open their eyes on gentle, loving faces, and grow midst all things bright and kind, so tenderly guarded."

On the following Sunday the artist sought admission to the hospital, not without some fear lest his visit should prove too late.

To his joy, he found on inquiry that it was not so, and being told the name of the ward in which Double-Dutch lay, he made his way there.

Glancing down the row of white beds that ran the length of the room, he could not at first recognise his little model. There were two or three children in the ward, but he could not make out either of them to be little Double-Dutch.

At last he was startled by a faint cry from one of them, and a little figure struggled to sit up in bed—such a poor, thin, little figure!

Yes! it was Double-Dutch; her pale face was radiant with joy as she exclaimed, in her old style—

"Hallo! Good-morning, sir."

So pale, so thin she looked! Her hair, which usually hung about her face and neck, had been combed back, and tied with a piece of ribbon.

It was no wonder that Mr. Mason did not at first recognise her.

"Poor little Double-Dutch!" he said, "how are you?"

"I've been awful bad," she replied, "but the doctor says I'm getting better now. Oh! but I'm so glad you've come! There ain't been nobody to see me for ever so long. Mother came once, and brought me

some oranges, but she cried and cried so, and she said the landlord had taken all our furniture and turned her out; and she hadn't got nowhere to go to—and she was going right away, and she didn't know if she should see me any more."

Poor Double-Dutch sobbed violently, and the artist, to comfort her, produced a bag of grapes he had brought with him. She soon dried her tears, saying, "But I prays to God every night to take care of her, and let me see her again; and so He will, won't He? I thought I shouldn't see you any more, nor come to the studijo any more, neither; and, you know, I did cry so. I was so ill, and I nearly died, you know," she said, with a curious, self-important little smile, as if "nearly dying" were a great achievement. "But I 'm getting better now, and it is nice here, ain't it? And my doctor is kind! he gave me sixpence because I didn't cry when he cut me; and he does laugh at me, and calls me all mander of names, and I calls him Sawbones. Oh! but they are kind! and, d 'ye know, we have concerts; ladies come and sing, and the doctors sing. The nurses wheel our beds out into the hall, and we do have it nice——"



"'Why don't you speak?'"—*p.* 44.

Here one of the nurses coming up, with kindly words bade her be quiet and not talk so much.

In talking with the child Mr. Mason was astonished at the way in which her generous little heart tried to find excuse for "that boy Johnnie."

Poor child! it was clear that she had, from what she had seen around her, come to consider that it is man's prerogative to kick the weaker sex.

For many, many weeks little Double-Dutch lay in the hospital; but, thanks to good food and careful nursing, her wound was healing, and her strength rapidly returning.

Every Sunday afternoon Mr. Mason took his seat beside her bed, and the delicious fruit and beautiful flowers he brought made her eyes dance with delight.

Ah! those days spent in the hospital, sad and weary as they would have proved to most children, were some of the brightest in her life.

One day, after his usual visit, the nurse informed Mr. Mason that the doctors considered little Double-Dutch quite restored. "And a dear, patient little thing she has been," said she. Her bed was wanted; they were greatly pressed for room, one ward having been entirely closed for want of the funds to carry it on. In a few days Double-Dutch would be discharged cured.

"But there!" she said, with a sigh, "what she wants is a thorough change—to go to the sea-side or into the country for a few weeks; that would quite set her up. But I suppose it is no use talking like that. We have the poor little things here, and when with care and doctoring they get well, they have to return to their wretched homes, and what with exposure and the want of proper food, their complaints break out worse than ever, and often enough we have them back again, poor things! She tells me she has got no home to go to now, so what we shall do I don't know. I suppose she 'll have to go to the workhouse, poor little thing!"

These words spoken by the hospital nurse haunted the artist.

What was to become of poor Double-Dutch?

Weak as she was, she could not possibly return to the wretchedness of Drury Lane, and find out for herself some hole or corner to live in. Must she go to the workhouse, as the nurse suggested?

Oh! if he were a rich man, or even fairly off in this world's goods, then he would send her for a time to the sea-side, to regain her strength.

If he were but rich, what great things he would do! Bitter thoughts awoke within him as his mind dwelt on the wealth and luxury of the great city.

"If he were but rich!" Who has not nursed such vain thoughts? and with this we put away from us present duties and responsibilities, and still the voice of God in our hearts. When shall we learn



(p. 46.)

the lesson that it is not the rich that have blessed the world the most?

He was poor—very poor, as he had once told little Double-Dutch. No, he could do nothing. The little waif must take her chance, like hundreds of others.

But the matter was not so easily dismissed from his mind; other thoughts were at work within, and a still small voice took up the theme—"Inasmuch as ye did it not to the least of these My little ones, ye did it not to Me."

His brow was clouded with thought, his head bowed upon his breast, as he gazed at the unfinished portrait of the little street child.

Gradually the light faded, and the studio was shrouded in gloom—still he sat there.

At last he rose from his chair, and with a heavy sigh walked across the room.

He groped about in the darkness, until he laid his hand upon his violin—his dearest friend, his closest companion, one to whom he told all his sorrows in a language truer and deeper than words, and one who answered back again in soothing and melodious sympathy.

He took it from its case, and held it tenderly in his hands.

It was a genuine Stradiuarius, of beautiful workmanship and of great value; to him priceless, for had it not been his father's? Around it gathered a thousand holy memories.

That loved father had been a musician of no mean order, and his life had been like the splendid pathetic music that the violin had given forth at the touch of his skilful fingers. For—

> "There are in this loud stunning tide
> Of human care and crime
> With whom the melodies abide
> Of th' everlasting chime,
> Who carry music in their heart
> Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
> Plying their daily task with busier feet
> Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

All this was in the artist's mind as he placed the instrument to his shoulder and drew the bow across it—a wail so wild and sad cleft the air that the artist himself was startled.

Again he drew the bow, and music deep and passionate filled the room, telling of yearnings, aspirations, disappointments.

Presently the mood changed, and the music fell to a low murmur as of chastened grief, and then rising in firm tones of faith and manly resolve, died on the air.

Tears were in the artist's eyes as he put the violin back into its case, placed it under his arm, and went out into the night.

CHAPTER V.

AMID the noise and bustle of a London railway station stood a gentleman with a little girl beside him.

Though poorly dressed, the child was clean and neat. Her fragile figure and thin, pale face told all too plainly of recent illness.

With large grey eyes she gazed in wonderment at the confusion around her—passengers hurrying and jostling one another, half-frantic with the Londoner's dread of losing a train—porters with huge barrow-loads of luggage dashing along the platform—and sounds many, from the shrill cry of the news-boy to the clang of the great bell; and when, with a snort and a scream, the train dashed into the station, the child started and clung closer to her companion.

The passengers hurried to take their seats, and the gentleman lifted the little girl into a third-class carriage. After a glance to see that his luggage was not forgotten, he took his seat beside her.

In the tall, slight figure of the artist, and his pale, sensitive face, there could be no mistake; but anyone who had been acquainted with the little Double-Dutch of Drury Lane would hardly have recognised her in the prim little miss who sat bolt upright on her seat, considerably embarrassed by the new dignity of respectable clothing.

But she it was, though she could scarcely believe it herself, so novel and undreamed-of were these new circumstances that were opening around her.

Now the door is shut with a bang, the guard's whistle sounds, and the train moves out of the station.

Double-Dutch looked out of the carriage window, astonished at the wilderness of roofs and chimneys through which they were passing.

All her life had been spent in the narrow courts, hemmed in by tall houses, with but a small strip of sky overhead: but to be above all those houses, to look down upon their very roofs, to see them stretching out before her as far as the eye could reach, with here and there a church spire or giant factory chimney—she was speechless with amazement.

She looked down into the streets, that opened out like cuttings in the solid blocks of houses, and saw the people hurrying to and fro, and they seemed no bigger than her finger.

At every jolt of the carriage she held on to the seat with both hands, much to the amusement of some of the passengers.

"What, haven't you been in a train before, missie?" said a jolly-looking man opposite.

"No," said Double-Dutch; "ain't they funny! I

didn't think they was like this. I've been in a 'bust, though."

"What, an omnibus?" said the man.

"Yes," was the reply, "an omnibust. Oh! I say, ain't we going along now, though!"

The train had quickened its pace, and seemed to the child to be flying over the house-tops.

She held on to the seat with all her might, her teeth fairly chattering in her head.

"Ain't it going!" she gasped out. "I should think we've nearly got there, ain't we?"

"Got where?" said the jolly-looking man.

"Why, to the other end," was the reply.

The jolly man burst into a fit of laughter that made his red face still redder, and threatened to suffocate him; two or three others joined in, and Double-Dutch, somewhat abashed, relapsed into silence and drew nearer to Mr. Mason.

"Well, Double-Dutch," said the artist, when she had recovered herself, and was becoming used to the motion of the train, "how do you like this?"

"Well, I don't know; it's the funniest thing out. And is the country at the other end of this?"

"Yes," he replied.

"And how far off is the country?"

"Well," said the artist, "the place we are going to is about thirty miles from London."

"Thirty miles!" exclaimed the little girl in surprise. "But it is the country where we are going to, ain't it?"

"Yes, my child, we are going into the country; but the country is a very large place, and we are——"

"What! larger than Common Garden Market?" broke in the child.

"Yes, a very great deal larger; but what do you think the country is like, Double-Dutch?"

"Well," said she, with a thoughtful pucker in her brow, and screwing up her lips, "there's trees in it, ain't there?"

The artist nodded assent.

"And there's green grass in it, and flowers, and a pond, and apples and oranges growing, and lots of little birds; and there's a great big glass roof all over the top of it."

The artist smiled at this odd notion; but he found that her ideas of the country were chiefly derived from large posters she had seen setting forth the attractions of the Crystal Palace.

Presently the train stopped, and the jolly man, who had for some time been studying a greasy-looking pocket-book, got out for refreshments. When he returned, he brought back something in a paper bag for little Double-Dutch.

The child was soon busy with the contents of the bag, and did not notice that they had left behind them houses and chimneys, and were now flying through fields and market-gardens. When she did again turn her eyes in the direction of the window, she gave such a shout of astonishment, that the eyes of all the passengers were turned upon her.



"'Are you hungry?'—'Pretty fairish, sir.'"—*p.* 46.

"Ain't it lovely!" she said.

The jolly man seemed to enjoy her surprise greatly.

"You wait till we get a little further," said he, "and then you may say 'Ain't it lovely!' if you like."

An over-dressed person of vulgar appearance, who with her huge bustle took up at least the room of two, sat next to Double-Dutch. She seemed very indignant at the child's frequent dashings to the window, and when some of the crumbs from the poor child's bun fell upon her dress, she evidently could bear it no longer, but, with sundry shakes and sniffs, was heard to remark something about "a parcel of children" and "a perfect nuisance," and thought "the railway people ought to have a carriage on purpose for them—annoying everybody in the train."

Whereupon the jolly man, nothing loth, took up the cudgels in the defence of Double-Dutch, and with a wink at the other passengers, said—

"Well, they don't annoy me; I like to see the young ones enjoy themselves. We were children ourselves once upon a time, though with some of us perhaps it is such a long time ago that we've forgotten it; and as far as I can see, there are a good many other people besides children, who ought to have a carriage to themselves."

The lady with the bustle gave another sniff, and said something to the effect that she did not travel often, but when she did she was sure to be insulted, and then retired into dignified silence.

And so this lady—one of a very large family, by-the-by, outwardly arrayed in all the colours of the rainbow, but inwardly a dull and colourless creature, one whose mission in life it is to damp and chill, to check enthusiasm, to nip the bright spirit, to freeze the affections, and turn this world into an Arctic Zone of heartless propriety—did her work, and little Double-Dutch, who had gathered sufficient of the meaning of this passage of arms to regard herself as a culprit for the rest of the journey, managed to repress the exclamations of wonder and admiration that rose to her lips as she looked out at God's beautiful world opening to her eyes for the first time.

At length the train drew up at a small country station gay with geraniums and nasturtiums.

"'Ford, 'Ford," cried out the porter.

"Kingsford," said the artist: "this is our station, Double-Dutch."

And so good-bye to the jolly man, and good-bye to the lady with the bustle.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT different thoughts were in the minds of the two travellers as they neared the village of Kingsford!

To the little street child each step revealed new marvels.

Is there anything more delightful than the entrance for the first time, on some bright summer's day, into an old-world English village?

The spirit of adventure and discovery is upon one, the imagination works busily, the mind is wide open to receive impressions; we are children again, and walk in wonderland.

The Squire's park—the church—the cosy vicarage—the village inn with its red blinds and swinging sign—and then the humble post-office, fitted up in some small window, displaying beside the royal arms and postal regulations an assortment of tops and balls and sugar-sticks. Rambling bits of garden project themselves out into the pathway—gardens that have outgrown their fences, and that make the air fragrant with the scent of flowers. Now and again some odd picturesque corner catches the eye and raises a smile; and as one wanders down the sleepy little street, the expectant mind keeps inquiring, What next? and again, What next?

A corner turned, and maybe we find a little rattling stream with its tiny bridge, of an evening the favourite lounging-place of the villagers.

Everything is peaceful, everything is lovely, and one fondly dreams that those who pass their lives in such secluded spots must needs be simple, good, and true.

Perhaps such thoughts were not in the mind of little Double-Dutch as she trotted along by the artist's side, but she felt the beauty and surprise of it all. Her little mind had drunk in so much this memorable day, that it could scarce receive any more.

But the artist—of what was he thinking? His head was bent, but he saw it all—the Squire's park, the church, the inn.

He seemed almost to have forgotten the presence of his companion.

He stood still to look with wistful eye at this, at that, then hurried on again.

It was not the first time he had trod this village street, though all the people they met eyed him as a stranger. The gates at the entrance to the Squire's park had shrunk full half since last he saw them; the little church, with its grey tower and shingle spire, was a grand cathedral then; the village shop, a great commercial centre, and the inn—could it possibly be the same?

An amused smile flitted across his face when they came to the stream, and found the broad river of his childhood dwindled into a little brook that he could almost spring across.

How many other things that had then seemed great and noble—firing his boyish ambition—were now dwarfed, poor, contemptible!

They crossed the bridge and walked on for some distance, until they reached the outskirts of the village; here, apart from the rest of the cottages, and built upon a bank above the road, was a small house with a plantation of fruit-trees at its back.

Mr. Mason opened a little gate and led Double-Dutch along the garden path.

The door was open, and a tall, thin woman whose hair was streaked with grey, came out to welcome them.

"And so you have really come, sir?" she said, with a cheerful smile. "And to think of seeing you once

again down in the old parts! not that I should have known you, though, with all that whisker. It makes one feel quite young again. And this is the little girl, is it? Poor dear little thing! But I'm chattering here, keeping you outside all the time. Come in, sir. Come along, deary."

The kindly old lady showed them into the best room, and then retired.

It was a cosy little parlour, that overlooked the garden, well stocked with old-fashioned cottage furniture, and spotlessly clean. A tall eight-day clock ticked sedately in the corner, and some curious old prints hung around the walls.

The table was spread for a substantial tea, and showed that their hostess had a truly English idea of what constitutes a hearty welcome.

There were home-made bread, preserves, and cakes, new-laid eggs, and a fresh-cooked ham in its paper collar; and when without more ado in came the teapot and a dish of steaming chops, Double-Dutch thought that she had indeed come to a land flowing with milk and honey.

Tired, hungry, and thirsty, how they did enjoy their tea! It was, in fact, a feast for the mind as well as for the body; everything seemed so fresh and sweet and homelike.

The old clock ticked with sober good-humour, and the song of birds and the scent of sweetest flowers came in at the open window. Outside was the coolness and hush of evening, and all things seemed to whisper of quietness, peace, content.

After all that has been said and written against it, what a blessed institution is the tea-table, with its serenity and smiling sociability! How the world got on so long without it is a puzzle to us. Dinner seems a gross or at best a very business-like affair, when all are seriously engaged in taking in fuel for the day; but when the carver is deposed from his seat, and the gentle lady holds sway, these are among our happiest times, and cheerful conversation set to the music of tinkling tea-cups domesticates and humanises us.

Tea finished, tired little Double-Dutch was taken to her chamber under the thatched roof, and, tucked up in snowy-white sheets fragrant with lavender, was soon busy living the day's wonders over again.

CHAPTER VII.

DAY after day was spent by little Double-Dutch in uninterrupted happiness at Mrs. Winter's cottage.

It would take up far too much time to tell of all that she did and all that she saw.

The weather was fine, and she wandered unchecked through garden, meadow, and wood; each day—nay, each hour—revealing some new attraction.

The wild-flowers, the birds, the flowing brooks, the little creeping insects and the many-coloured flies—the exhaustless treasures of beauty to which so many are blind—were to her, ignorant as she was, an infinite source of wonder and delight.

Moreover, she had in the artist a teacher who could point out, in a way that she could understand, the wise utilities and marvellous adaptations of natural objects, the endless variety of form and colour, the ebb and flow of life in this world which the great Creator has prepared to be man's dwelling-place—the schoolhouse of human character.

Oftentimes whilst the artist was taking advantage of the beauty around him, and industriously plying his craft, she would stand by, not speaking a word lest she should interrupt him, only begging leave the while to hold his brushes or the jar of water he was using. These were happy days!

How delicious it was in the early morning to walk out into the garden and pick the ripe fruit with her own hands—how different from the "haporths of damaged" which had been her delight in Drury Lane!

Her one great sorrow—her only sorrow—was that her mother was not there to share all this happiness.

Sometimes, in the old days, she had heard her speak of the country, and country life; and she remembered how her eyes would brighten, and her pale, worn cheeks flush with colour. Oh! where could her poor mother be? Should she indeed never see her again? Then the eyes that were turned to the sky would be full of tears; but the oft-repeated prayer would bring relief—"God, bring my mother back."

In Mrs. Winter Double-Dutch found a kind friend; she was one who had herself passed through much sorrow, and bore in her countenance that expression of patience and sweetness which bespeaks a character made perfect through suffering.

Her motherly heart was drawn to the poor little London child; and Double-Dutch, always passionate in her attachments, clung to her from the first.

Pleased was the child to help her in the household work, to run on errands to the village shop, or to put into her hands wild flowers and grasses she had gathered; and the lone woman would tell of her own little girls, the three that lay in the little churchyard, and the one that had grown up, and gone—she knew not where.

She would take out of the old bureau her store of treasures, and would tenderly show the copy-books, the faded miniatures, the samplers which the little fingers had worked, and, with fond reverence, the four ringlets of hair.

Before Double-Dutch had been in the country a fortnight, she had lost the lameness from which she had suffered since her illness, and was becoming quite stout and strong; the weary look had almost vanished from her face, giving place to a more child-like expression of openness and joy.

It was a great pleasure to Mr. Mason to note this improvement, to watch her gaining strength day by day, and extending her walks to greater distances without fatigue or pain.

Sometimes he would start away early in the morning, with easel and canvas, to a little hamlet that lay among the hills, about three miles distant. Taking his lunch with him, he would stay all day long at his

work, and return in the evening. He had not thought Double-Dutch strong enough to accompany him on these expeditions, though she begged hard to be allowed to go. But now, as she seemed so much stronger, he consented.

So one morning, to the great delight of Double-Dutch, they sallied forth together. The day was warm and bright, and the child trotted by the artist's side, chatting gaily. Now and again she would burst out into snatches of song, and the artist, who felt quite another man among the trees and fields, would join in with his deep bass.

"I do wish you had brought your fiddle with you into the country; it would have been nice, wouldn't it?" she said.

A look of pain shot across the artist's face, but he said nothing.

Then, with a child's quickness in turning from one subject to another, she cried, pointing upward—

"Oh! look, what a beautiful sky; they don't have such lovely skies as that in London, do they?"

It was a deep summer blue overhead, and large white masses of cloud were drifting across it, whilst here and there small feathery flecks were sailing in their wake.

"Ain't they lovely!" she said; "they're like what the hymn says—'whiter than snow.' Do you know what I call them? I call 'em big saints, and little saints; those big ones are like big grown-up saints going to heaven, and the little ones are little children saints and baby saints, and they're all going to heaven. Sometimes I used to see them going over the houses in London, but we only saw them just for a minute, and they were gone; and they wasn't such beautiful whiter-than-snow ones, like these. Our little baby what we had, died, and went to heaven. I didn't see him go, though. God took him, you know; but the next day I saw a little white saint, all lonely like, go over the houses, and I wondered if that was our little Benny going to heaven."

Turning off now from the main road, and passing through a gate, they began to ascend a rather steep hill, and all Double-Dutch's breath was required in the struggle to reach the top. Arrived there, they sat down to rest and look at the beautiful prospect spread out before them.

The valley through which they had just passed, lay beneath; there, through the meadows, flowed the stream bordered with willows and alders. The little village lay snugly among the trees, with its tiny red houses and church spire; then away the eye wandered over fields and hop-gardens in chequered sunshine and shadow, right away for miles and miles, to the distant hills, grey and hazy in the shimmering sunlight.

Little Double-Dutch heaved a great sigh of satisfaction.

"Isn't it lovely!" she said; "it's like a beautiful garden, and all the fields with their hedges look like garden beds; and there isn't any ending to it—it goes right up into the sky. I didn't think the country was anything like this—it beats heaven, I think."

"Beats heaven, Double-Dutch! what do you mean?" laughed Mr. Mason.

"Why, I think it's ever so much nicer than heaven. Our teacher used to say that heaven was all gold and precious stones, and had got a lot of gates to it; but I think all these green fields and beautiful trees are better than gold and all that, and this hasn't got any gates at all. I think there must be two heavens, you know. When I die I should like to go to one something like this, with flowers, and trees, and birds. And, d'ye know," she said, in a mysterious whisper, "I dreamed about a heaven something like this; but that was a long time ago; and there were beautiful birds and trees and flowers, and all the people had kind faces, and they were all good and happy."

By this time they had turned away from the scene, and taking a narrow path through the wood that crowned the hill-top, soon found themselves in the village of Wellsfield.

Mr. Mason had been engaged for some days on a painting of the village street in broad sunlight, and as the weather so far had been favourable, he had made rapid progress. He was very anxious to get it completed, as in a few more days he would have to bid farewell to the country, and return to London and the drudgery of painting for bread.

He had not been working on this particular day for more than an hour, when unfortunately the sky became overcast, and he had to discontinue his work. After waiting some time to see if the sun would break through, he saw plainly that he would be able to do nothing more to his picture that day; a thick gloom had spread over the whole face of the sky.

For a while he occupied himself with his sketch-book, and then they sat down in a field near the road to eat their lunch.

"Now, Double-Dutch," said the artist when they had finished the last sandwich, "do you think that you could walk on a little further, to a place I want to see? I used to know it well when I was a boy, and I should like to see it once again."

So off they trudged across the fields for full two miles, until they came to a quaint little hamlet nestling in the shade of tall elm-trees.

Here the artist found much to sketch, and it was quite late in the afternoon before they thought of turning their steps homeward.

"I don't think," remarked Mr. Mason, "that it will be necessary for us to return to Wellsfield, for, if I remember aright, there is a shorter road home from here."

"The nighest way to Kingsfud?" said a native of whom he inquired. "Well, zur, you see those elems; keep on straight past 'em for a mile or zo, it may be a mile, it may be more, then you 'll come to a five-went-way. Take the one to the right and keep along that there road till ye come to the 'Dog and Duck;' then about half a mile or zo further on you 'll



"'I like to see the young ones enjoy themselves.'"—*p. 50.*

come to a heap o' stones and a break in the hedge; you just go through that break, and make for a clump o' firs, and when you get anighst 'em you 'll see old Kingsfud Church off to your left."

Trying to keep these directions in mind, the travellers started homeward.

They found the five-went-way, they passed the roadside inn—the 'Dog and Duck'—but here the directions given by the rustic proved somewhat at fault, for they were much puzzled at discovering many heaps of stones and several breaks in the hedge.

Meanwhile the sky had become darker and the air more close and heavy—the artist feared that a storm was coming on.

He looked anxiously at the sky and then at his companion. Double-Dutch seemed tired, and he noticed that her lameness had returned.

He now began to reproach himself for his thoughtlessness in bringing her so far out of the way. Bidding her sit down by the roadside and rest, he retraced his steps as far as the inn, to inquire the way.

This caused delay, and the day was getting far advanced before the identical opening in the hedge was found.

Slowly they made their way by a footpath across the fields; for though she made no complaint, the artist saw that Double-Dutch walked in pain. She bore up bravely, however, and resting every now and then, they managed to get a considerable distance.

Stretching before them they saw a fringe of woods, and away further on the clump of fir-trees.

They now came to a part of the way where the ploughman had for a considerable tract completely obliterated the footpath. Here walking became difficult, and little Double-Dutch was ready to faint. Then, without further warning, the storm commenced.

The heaven above seemed to join with the earth beneath to vex the poor travellers.

A vivid flash of lightning, a crash of thunder that made the little maiden spring to the side of her companion, and then the big raindrops began to fall.

Mr. Mason was dismayed.

Down—down came the rain.

Another flash—another crash—and he seized the child in his arms, and made for the dangerous shelter of the trees.

On over the ploughed field he went—stride and stumble. The child lay heavily on his shoulder; she had fainted.

Dripping-wet he reached the wood, and placed the little one in a sheltered spot, but only for a moment to take breath, and he again lifted her in his arms, and through the tangled undergrowth, made in the direction of the firs.

But the darkness of the storm was fast becoming merged in the darkness of the oncoming night, and the clump of firs was no longer to be seen.

The thunder rolled away into the distance, but the rain still came steadily down.

The artist's heart sank within him. He had brought this poor child, weak from long illness, away into the country to give her new life; and here, through his folly, she was broken down with fatigue and wet through. Moreover, the night was fast coming on, and he had lost his way.

Gloomily he trudged on in darkness for what seemed to him hours.

The rain was beginning to abate. Presently, to his unspeakable joy, he saw before him a light: it must be a cottage. Perhaps he was near Kingsford, he thought, and quickened his pace.

As he neared the light, he heard the sound of voices, and two or three dogs sprang out barking furiously about his legs.

At a glance he saw that the light he had taken for a cottage window came from a gipsy's fire, around which were three or four rough tents: the whole was in a sort of inclosure, the entrance to which was now blocked by three dark, threatening figures. With a torrent of oaths and exclamations, they demanded what he wanted there; one of them—a short, thick-set fellow—seemed inclined to lay violent hands on him.

The artist told how he had been caught in the storm, and tried to arouse their pity for the little dripping figure that lay motionless in his arms. He begged that he might be allowed to rest a while, and recover her from her swoon, and to dry her clothes at the fire.

A woman now joined the group, and in a carneying voice took the gentleman's part; so, after some demur, the men sulkily consented. On Mr. Mason remarking that he was willing to pay for any trouble he might give them, they more readily made way for him. In the firelight he fancied he saw the men give a quick glance at one another, but did not attach any importance to it at the time, so anxious was he about the little limp form he held in his arms.

Now the men rapidly began to grow agreeable. The woman who had interceded for the travellers took the child, and with the help of an old bent creature—who had all the appearance of being a centenarian—placed poor Double-Dutch in a warm, dry place near the fire, removed some of her wet things, and speedily brought the little waif to consciousness. Opening her eyes, she looked round vacantly for a minute or two, and whispered, "Where is he—where is he?" But when her eyes rested on the face of the artist, she lay back satisfied.

The wrinkled old woman, who by the way had a short pipe in her mouth, now brought some broth in an old beer-can, and made her drink it.

Mr. Mason was delighted to see his young charge coming to herself. He asked if she felt better—if her leg pained her. She made answer, with a brave smile, that she was all right, and ready to go home; but the artist saw that it would not do to think of moving her that night, so he resolved to make the best of their position.

The rain had now quite ceased, the clouds were clearing off, and the stars beginning to peep out. "It will be a fine night after all," he thought, "but still it will not do to move Double-Dutch;" and the men assured him that he had come a great distance out of the way—that the village of Kingsford was at least five miles distant.

The broth given to Double-Dutch was a foretaste of the supper which the women had been preparing over the fire; and now they all sat down to partake of it. The artist, pressed to join them, felt nothing loth, as the scent from the pot to a hungry man was very inviting; and he soon found that the taste did not belie the smell.

Mr. Mason had now a good opportunity of studying his strange companions, and as seen in the flickering firelight, though they were undoubtedly picturesque, and calculated to inspire the mind of an artist, still he could not help acknowledging to himself that they certainly looked a villainous crew. Their swarthy complexions, small, fierce eyes, broad cheekbones and massive jaws, did not give them the appearance of being men of lamb-like disposition. The women, too, poor things, were not at all the gipsy women of romance; there was very little even of womanhood about them, except, perhaps, the vanity of jewellery. Their faces were hard and coarse, bearing manifest signs of ill-treatment. The visage of the centenarian, poor old soul! was a study in itself. Nature seemed to have been making an experiment as to how many wrinkles she could possibly score in one poor human face.

The short, thick-set man who had at first struck the artist by his ferocious appearance, certainly did not now appear less fierce than when seen as a silhouette, with the glare of the fire as a background; his little tigerish eyes were as cunning as they were fierce, his nose was small and insignificant, but it was quite made up for by the size of the mouth beneath. He wore a red handkerchief tied loosely about his thick neck, a long waistcoat with sleeves to it, and a pair of cord trousers, loose about the thighs, and fitting tightly to the calves. His voice was thick and rough, as between his mouthfuls of broth, and sometimes with a lump of bread in his cheek, he entertained Mr. Mason with an account of his travels in the provinces.

The other two men seemed less communicative; one, a tall, ill-looking fellow, the youngest of the trio, seemed especially surly. But, after having remarked to the artist, apparently without any provocation whatever, that he supposed "they was as good as them that had got a black coat on, and a sight better too," and receiving no support from his companions, he relapsed into silence; only now and then, when the bull-necked gentleman introduced some of his personal adventures, which, to say the least of it, slightly taxed the faith of his audience, and Mr. Mason said mildly, "Indeed!" he coolly remarked, "What 'll you bet it's a lie?"

Undisturbed by these critiques, the bull-necked gentleman continued his narrative.

"I've seen some rummy things in my time, I can tell you," said he, with a shake of his head. "Things ain't what they were, you know, and it's hard to get along anyhow, nowadays; it ain't often a feller gets wot I call a real stroke of luck. Why, once—it was down in these very parts—I got in

for a job that brought me in a couple o' hundred pound, down on the nail. Let me see, that must 'a' been in the year '61. Yes, the Exhibition up in London was '62; this was the year afore, '61. A couple o' hundred down, beside other things, I made out of it. You see, a cove I'd met up in London—fact, I'd had a little business with him afore; when I was in the prize-ring that was, but that's all done away with now, you see; they 've all had to take up with some other line—the public mostly. There was Smasher Jim, and the Little Crusher, and a lot of others; I knew 'em well, and could tell you some rare funny bits about 'em too, but that ain't neither here nor there.

"Well, this young gent, he says to me, 'Corney, I want you pertickler to do a job for me, and the figure's two hundred pound down, and no gammon.' Course, I was always willing to oblige a friend, so we settled the bargain there and then. Seems he wanted me to go down to a place in the country, and it wasn't a hundred mile from here, neither; I was to go as a valley to an old gent, as was a relation of his. Well, I soon see what the job was. The old gentleman was the grandfather of my man, you see, and there was another grandson in the case, but I never see him—he was away in foreign parts; and you see, the old gent was getting childish-like. He had made his will, so they said, leaving a half to each of these grandsons—he was wonderful rich, you know—and my man wanted to wheedle the old gent into making it all over to him; of course, I was to help him. I guess the old lawyer was in it too, but I can't say for certain; at any rate, if he was he kept himself pretty close.

"What a time I did have of it there, no mistake! I lived like a fighting-cock, had anything I liked to name, and drank champagne like water. I took charge of the old man, and we managed the job between us. We got up some letters, making out they was from the one in foreign parts; the old 'un swallowed it all; took on fearful—for he'd got a temper, I can tell you—and got quite set against him. Course, I was only a servant, and I just obeyed orders.

"About six months I was there; and no mistake, I lived on the fat o' the land; and when the old man died, he left everything to my man, you see. The other one shouldn't have been out of the way. First come, first served's my motto. All I know is, I landed a couple o' hundred pound, and now if I wanted a fiver bad, I know where I could get it."

The bull-necked gentleman ceased. "That's a lie now, I reckon," grunted the surly one.

Mr. Mason had been listening with breathless interest to the story, a spoonful of broth half-way between the basin and his mouth. After the man had finished he still continued to look fixedly at him; at last, in hard, cold tones, and with a strange look in his eyes, he said, "That old gentleman's name was Sir James Gorse, and the younger man was Walter Beale."

The effect of these words on the bull-necked man was magical. He grew purple in the face, and seemed about to choke; then, springing to his feet and clenching his fists threateningly, he turned upon the artist and demanded with oaths what he knew about it. Then, recovering himself, with a loud laugh, "Ha—ha—ha! There's some funny things happen in gentlemen's houses, ain't there?"

He told no more of his exploits, however, but addressed himself in silence to his supper, every now and then casting furtive glances at the artist.

Supper ended, the bull-necked gentleman, with the help of a bottle which he carried with him, as he said, "to aid digestion," recovered his good-humour, whistled merrily, and sang an old love-song from beginning to end. The surly man also sang a song, "Old Dog Tray," and gave it as his opinion afterwards that "it was a real good song." Said he, "Look at all them new songs that come out. Why, they 're all rot, that's what I call 'em. There ain't nothing in 'em; now 'Dog Tray's' a real good song, and no mistake. There's 'Champagne Charlie,' now; why, there's nothing in it—nothing in it; and then there's 'Tommy, make room for your Uncle,' wot some of 'em make such a fuss about; why, I call it a regular silly thing, that's wot I call it."

The surly one had also been aiding his digestion, and seemed inclined to quarrel on the subject of the old songs and the new, so the bull-necked man broke up the party. He lit his pipe and conducted his guests to a small tent in which there was a plentiful supply of dry straw, and told them they might make it their quarters for the night. After patching up some holes in the side, by way of making it more comfortable, he left them.

As may be supposed, the artist was not very favourably impressed with his gipsy entertainers, so when he had packed Double-Dutch snugly in the straw, he resolved to keep watch.

Strange to say, almost in the act of resolving he dozed off to sleep. Once, with an effort, he roused himself, but in a few moments was asleep again—fast asleep.

Whether by fair means or by foul, he seemed to sleep more soundly than ever he had done in his life before.

* * * * * *

The morning light was blazing into the tent when he was awakened by being violently shaken. Looking up, he saw Double-Dutch with white face and frightened eyes bending over him. The rag of a tent was still above his head, but all the rest of the gipsy encampment had vanished like a dream of the night.

He sprang to his feet, feeling quite dazed. Double-Dutch, trembling in every limb, caught him by the coat and endeavoured to drag him from the spot.

"What is it, Double-Dutch? What is it? Are you mad?" he exclaimed.

"Come on, come on," she cried, with ashy lips, still struggling to drag him away.

His head throbbed from he knew not what, as he followed her across the space where the encampment had been the night before. Nothing was to

be seen of it now but a few scraps of rag and straw littered about, and the black embers of the fire.

Through the gap in the hedge the child sprang, and sped along like one possessed.

Presently he overtook her. "What is it, Double-Dutch? What does it all mean?"

"Oh, come on; do come on, else they'll be back and kill us!" was all the explanation he could get from her.

At first he thought that the child had indeed taken leave of her senses; but then, the mysterious disappearance of the gipsy camp—what did it mean? He was quite bewildered.

At last, taking hold of her shaking arm, he said, "Now, Double-Dutch, you shall not go a step further. Tell me all about it. What has happened? What has frightened you so?"

But the shock she had sustained was too much for the little maiden; she sank exhausted in his arms.

Taking her up, he made in the direction of a church spire seen among the trees about a mile distant.

He strode on: the country round about seemed strangely familiar to him. It now flashed upon him that the spire among the trees was none other than that of old Kingsford Church. They were close on home.

Soon they were in the little old-fashioned front parlour, the old clock quietly ticking as if nothing had happened, and Mrs. Winter flustering about the room in a state of great excitement, whilst poor Double-Dutch's weary little figure was laid upon the sofa

"Well, Double-Dutch," said Mr. Mason, sitting down beside her, and taking her hand, "do you feel better now? Tell me what it was that frightened you so."

The child shuddered from head to foot, and hid her face in her hands. After a moment she turned to Mr. Mason, and burst out passionately, "They was thieves and robbers, they was, and they wanted to kill you."



"She would take out her store of treasures."—*p.* 51.

"Thieves and robbers, were they?" and his hands went involuntarily to his pockets. He turned pale.

"Mrs. Winter," he said, "they have indeed robbed me; they have taken my purse. There were ten sovereigns in it—all that I had," and, sitting down again, he buried his face in his hands.

"Good gracious, sir, don't take on so; now, pray don't," said the tender-hearted widow.

Little Double-Dutch said nothing, but quietly slid down from the sofa, pulled out a rather dirty pocket-handkerchief, and commenced vigorously, with teeth and fingers, to untie a big knot in the corner. This accomplished, she drew out ten bright golden sovereigns, and held them out in her hand to the artist, saying—"Here you are—I saved them for you."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE artist gazed in amazement at the glittering coins held out before him.

"Well, I never!" exclaimed Mrs. Winter; and Double-Dutch found herself the heroine of the hour.

Then came breakfast; and nothing would do but Mrs. Winter must sit down to the table with them, and Double-Dutch narrate the adventures of the night.

The bacon was frizzled to a cinder, and the eggs were hard-boiled; then Mrs. Winter would persist in pouring the tea into the slop-basin, and emptying the cups into the sugar; but who would notice such trifles as these? Why, Mr. Mason himself was detected eating Mrs. Winter's bread-and-butter, and endeavouring to spread marmalade on his rasher of bacon.

Double-Dutch, quite recovered, was the only one who seemed at all self-possessed.

"You see," said she, commencing her story, "after you tucked me up, and put your great-coat over me, I went straight off to sleep; and I was a-dreaming that the old man—you know, what's in your studijo in London——"

"My lay-figure," put in the artist.

"Well, I dreamed he was making faces at me, and whispering all mander of things in my ear; and I woke up and heard somebody a-talking outside the tent, and they was whispering and talking in a funny sort o' way, like I've heard some of the men down our court; so I could understand 'em, you see; least, I couldn't at first, but I did after a bit.

"One of 'em asked the other if they was sure they had given you something. Then a woman whispered you was all right.

"Then one said he was sure you had some chips—that's money, you know—and then they talked some more, and I guessed they was going to steal your money. One of 'em comes whistling to the door of the tent, with a light in his hand, so I shut my eyes and pretended to be asleep; then they all went away.

"I opened my eyes and looked at you; you was fast asleep. I tried to wake you, but you wouldn't wake up; I shook you, and pulled your arm; but you wouldn't wake.

"I was awful frightened, and I said, 'O God, save us from these thieves and robbers. O God, don't let 'em kill us.'

"Then I heard 'em coming back, and I shut my eyes tight, and tried to keep still; and they come creeping into the tent. One of 'em had a light, and I just opened my eyes a little bit, and I saw a man standing over you with a big stick, and a woman was a-turning out your pockets.

"I felt as if I should 'a' screeched out, but I shut my teeth tight; then they all went away.

"So I laid there a minute or two, and I did feel bad, *I* can tell you. Then I crawled up and looked out of a little hole, and I could see 'em outside. One of 'em had got the light, and the fat man, you know—the one that told the tales—he'd got your purse, and they was a-looking in it and counting the money. Then the fat man shut it up, and put it in his coat pocket; and they went away.

"Then I tried to wake you up again, but it was no good; you wouldn't wake. I thought, 'O God, perhaps they've killed him.'

"I waited and waited. Oh, it was awful! After such a long, long time, it began to get a little bit light; then I crawled over to you again, to see if they had killed you; but I saw you was all right. Then I went and looked out of the hole in the tent, and I could just see them all moving about; they was taking down the tents, and putting all the things into a cart.

"Then two of 'em went away to catch some horses, and I saw the fat man take a spade and come towards our tent. I was frightened, I can tell you; but he didn't come. When he got to where the fire was, he raked away the ashes and began digging.

"After a bit, he took off his coat and threw it down on the ground beside him, and dug away with all his might. Then he went away and fetched a great big box, and put it down the hole, and he went away again to fetch something else.

"Then I says, 'O God, help me,' and I crawled out of the tent on my hands and knees, and crawled to the place where he'd left his coat. My heart did beat when I thought p'r'aps he'd come back quick and catch me. I put my hand in the pocket and pulled out your purse, and emptied the money into my hand, and put the purse into his pocket again, and crawled back to the tent. So I tied the money in my handkercher, and I think I must 'a' gone off, for when I woke up it was quite light, and the gipsies had all gone. Then I shook you and shook you till I woke you up."

Such was Double-Dutch's account of the night's adventures, and Mr. Mason and the widow vied with each other in expressing their admiration of the youthful heroine.

"To think, now! and such a little thing, too!" said good Mrs. Winter. "Why, it's wonderful! I don't think I've ever heard anything like it, except in a story-book, or the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' When you didn't come home last night, you may be sure I was in a state of mind. As it was such a storm, though, I thought perhaps you had stayed at Wellsfield; but to think of all that happening, and I sleeping quietly in my bed the while, and that poor little child out there! I must give her another kiss; I couldn't feel more proud of her if she was my own child." And Double-Dutch must needs submit for the twentieth time to the vigorous embrace of the worthy dame.

"But, there," continued the widow, "I haven't had time to tell you the awful things that have happened here while you've been away. They do say troubles never come single, and sure enough it seems like it. The whole village has been up in arms. Such doings I never did hear of in all my life. Would you believe it, sir? the Squire's place, up

at the Hall yonder, was broken into by burglars, last evening about six o'clock, as near as they can reckon, and I don't know what they haven't taken in plate and other valuables. And the Squire, poor gentleman, was found on the floor in his study with a shocking cut across his head, and they do say there isn't much hopes of his recovery.

"Mrs. Burnett, whose daughter Bessie is under-housemaid up at the Hall, she called in, and she says however the thieves got in they can't make out. Not a trace did anyone see of them, and not a mark to show where they got in. The detective that's come down from London says that the burglars must have been well acquainted with the house and known all its ins and outs. Suspicion seems to rest on some of the servants, so Mrs. Burnett says, which of course makes it very unpleasant for her daughter Bessie. As for the Squire, she says he's been unconscious ever since they found him, and hasn't spoken a word."

This was indeed startling news, and though it could not possibly concern the artist personally, yet he wore a troubled look upon his face as he went about his work that day. He noticed that—as Mrs. Winter had remarked—"the village was all up in arms." Groups of men stood about the street discussing the exciting topic, and whenever two persons chanced to meet, instead of the usual "Morning, Jarge," or whatever the name might be, as they passed, they would stop and enter into earnest conversation. Gossips darted from cottage to cottage, bent on making the most of the occasion. It was quite evident very little work was being done that day.

Many theories were started respecting the robbery, and there was much head-shaking, but all agreed in one thing—that the burglars must have come from London, for "there was never a man in Kingsford that would have had a hand in such a thing."

In the course of the day there appeared in the village a stranger who attracted a great deal of attention. This was a tall gentleman, who wore a high hat tilted over on to the bridge of his nose, a black frock-coat, and tight-fitting black trousers, and he carried under his arm a very tightly rolled up silk umbrella. There was a lamb-like simplicity and gentleness about him, which would have led one at first sight to take him for a Methodist preacher; but a glance at his long nose, tight lips, and keen, watchful eyes, effectually put that notion to flight.

Remarking the cross-glances and the awe-struck hush that fell upon the groups of villagers as he passed down the street, the artist at once came to the conclusion that this gentleman with the investigating face could be none other than one of the detectives from London.

On coming to the spot, he seemed much interested in the sketch that Mr. Mason was making, apologised for looking over the artist's shoulder, but stated that from a child he had always taken a deep interest in pictures. He then went on to speak with considerable appreciation of the beauty of the surrounding scenery, and of some of the most striking pictures in the exhibition at the Royal Academy.

When little Double-Dutch made her appearance with some sandwiches for the artist's lunch, he gently patted her head, remarking—

"Your little daughter, I suppose, sir?"

"No," replied the artist; "a little friend of mine who is staying with me."

"Oh! indeed," said the detective, and begged pardon for his thoughtlessness in keeping the artist from his work so long, wished him "Good-day," and passed on.

How often after a long period—perhaps of many years' duration—in which we have kept the even tenor of our way, with no circumstance of special interest arising to disturb life's monotone, suddenly—as if under this veil of calm tranquillity events had been slowly accumulating—surprise upon surprise, shock on shock, bursts upon us, like repeated thunder-claps upon the startled air.

The atmosphere seemed now to be in this electrical condition.

Our friends had just finished tea that evening, and Mrs. Winter was removing the cloth, when Double-Dutch, who stood near the window, exclaimed, "I think there is somebody come to the door, Mrs. Winter."

Now you must know there was no passage to Mrs. Winter's cottage, but the front door opened straight into the little parlour. They listened—there was a timid knock. Mrs. Winter wondered who the visitor could be that should come to the front, instead of going round by the usual way to the kitchen. She opened the door.

There, in the evening light, stood a woman with careworn face and hollow cheeks. She was still young, and had been pretty, but sorrow and privation had left their marks upon her: her lips were parted, and there was a wild, pleading look in her large grey eyes.

The artist was thinking to himself that surely he had seen that face before, when suddenly both Mrs. Winter and Double-Dutch sprang forward. A double cry rang through the room—

"Mother!"

"Ellen—my poor girl!"

The poor creature sank down on the floor in a swoon.

Tenderly they lifted her head and put some moisture to her lips; then, with a deep sigh, she opened her eyes and saw the old lady and the child bending over her. A look of ineffable peace fell on her face, and smoothed out all the marks of care and pain.

They bore her up-stairs to the room beneath the thatch, and laid her in the soft bed—the bed she lay in when a happy young girl.

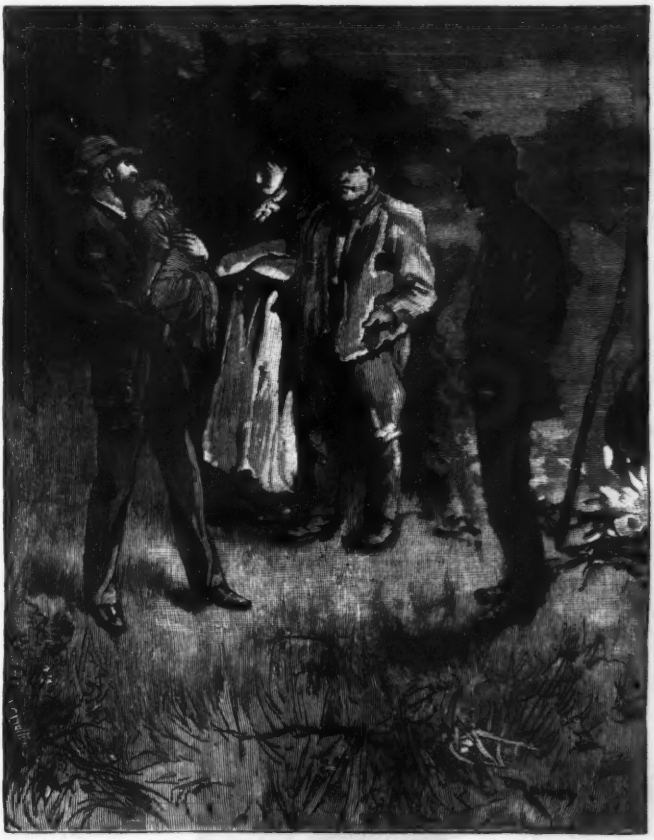
Double-Dutch, who would not for a moment be separated from her, sat on a chair by the bed-side, and held the poor thin hand in her own.

"God has sent my mother back!" the little girl muttered, "God has sent my mother back!"

XUM

"Yes," whispered the widow, "and God has sent my Ellen back—my poor girl—my poor girl!"

And tears were shed in the darkening room, but not tears of sorrow; for the rough things of life were being made smooth, and the crooked things made straight.



"They demanded what he wanted there."—*p.* 54.

CHAPTER IX.

A WEEK passed. The doctor had stood by the bedside of Double-Dutch's mother, and had pronounced his opinion that with good nursing and plenty of nourishment the patient would soon be restored to perfect health. And in truth good nursing she had; the only danger was lest the nurses should quarrel as to who should do the most for the invalid; but when there seemed a likelihood of this taking place, the discussion was generally settled by the widow making a dash at Double-Dutch, taking the child in her arms, giving her two or three sounding kisses, and exclaiming, "Bless the child! bless the child!" and Double-Dutch had her way.

By-the-by, it now transpired that Double-Dutch was not Double-Dutch, but Lucy. Mr. Mason declared that this was monstrous, and could not possibly be tolerated; so in spite of all the legalities, Double-Dutch remained Double-Dutch.

What a happy day it was when the mother got up from her bed for the first time. Seated in the large chintz-covered arm-chair near the window, she seemed to delight to look out through the little diamond panes, and could not drink in sufficiently the quiet beauty of the scene—the dear old well-remembered garden, the glimpse of the village street, the hill beyond. How little she had valued in the days gone by the peaceful loveliness of the old home! Yes! and how little the disinterested love of a mother's heart.

How lightly had she flung them away! Ah, me! but sorrow is a wonderful teacher.

Still happier times followed for little Double-Dutch, when in the warm summer days she walked with her mother in the garden, or sat on a rustic bench beneath a large apple-tree, in the plantation at the back of the house.

How joyous was the child to see on that loved face a bright colour and a look of peace, which she at any rate had never seen there before. Then the old lady—her grandmother, her very own grandmother—would join them when her household work was done, and sit down with her knitting beside the invalid. Double-Dutch's cup of joy was quite full. God had indeed answered her prayers, and had given her double for all she asked.

She could scarcely bring herself to believe that they were to stop there, at the cottage—always to stop there, and no more return to that wretched attic in Drury Lane. No more was she to see her mother, worn and weary, come in from her work at the jam factory; no more to see her tremble when the landlord came for his rent; never again to scramble in the gutter for damaged fruit, and never to go to the studio; but here a compromise was made, for the artist had gained her mother's consent to allow Double-Dutch to return for a week to London, that he might complete the unfinished picture. "For," said the mother, "through God's blessing, sir, we owe everything to you."

"And you know, Double-Dutch," said the artist, "you will have to dress up in all the old rags again for me to finish your picture."

"Yes," replied Double-Dutch, "it will be fun, won't it? And you'll play on the fiddle again, and we'll make believe it's all like it used to be; and, mother, there's one thing I want you to promise me, and that is, that you'll let me bring Johnnie Dicks back with me just for a day or two, to see all the beautiful things in the country, 'cause, you know, he's only a poor boy, and hasn't got any mother."

* * * * * *

One morning a thrill of excitement passed through the village. Old Reynolds, the postman, brought the news, and with great gusto delivered it at every house where he left a letter, that the burglars had been caught, and all the plate and valuables recovered. With as much self-importance as if he had taken a principal part in their capture, he told of the clever stratagem by which the detectives had seized the whole gang, but hinted that if it had not been for the artist gentleman the detectives would never have got on their track.

"It was a set o' gipsy fellows what did it," said he, "about as black a looking lot as you 'd ever wish to see; but they 've got 'em, every man-jack of 'em, and the women too; but the queerest bit was, they 'd buried all the silver and things in a hole in Farmer Freeman's corner field, where they'd had a fire, you see—beats me how those detectives found that out, though sure enough one of 'em's got a nose like a foxhound."

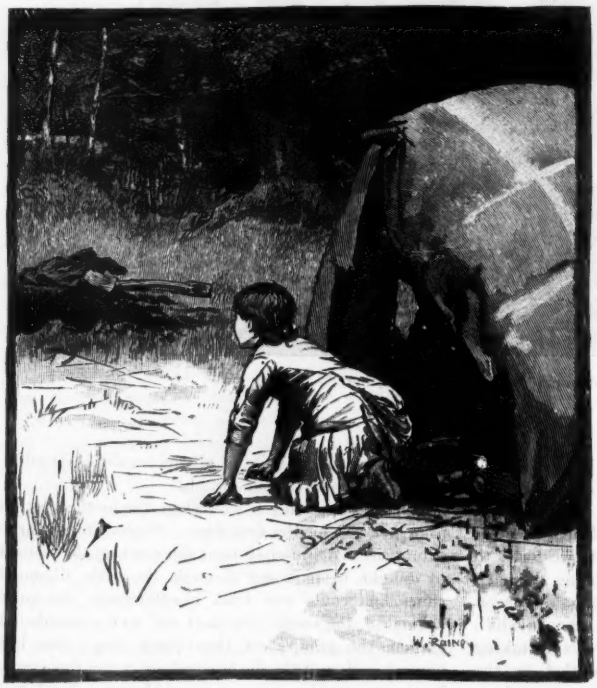
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And now the time had come when the artist must bid farewell to Kingsford, and return once more to his lonely life among the London crowds, once more to paint, for the dealers, subjects in which his heart was not.

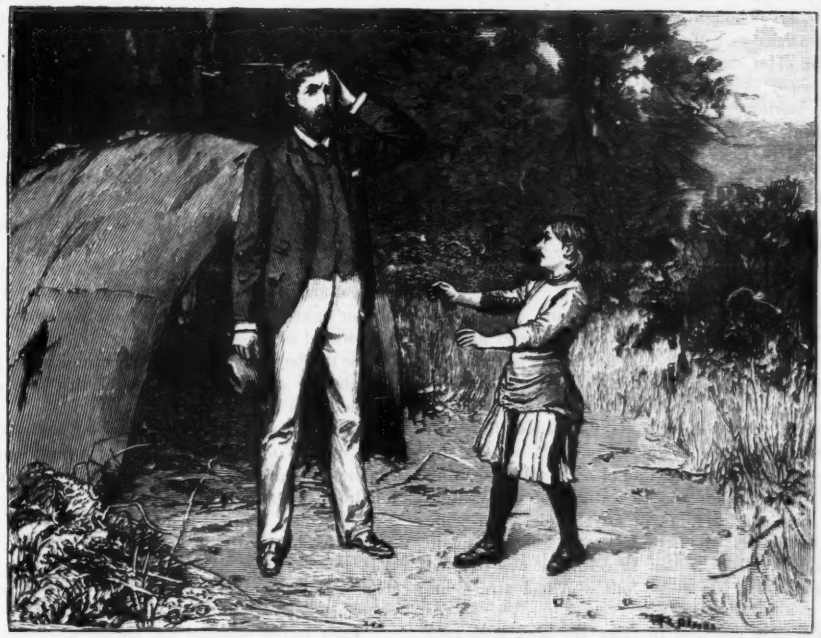
It was evening, and they walked down the village street in silence—Double-Dutch and the artist—across the bridge and past the village shop till they came to the little gate that led into the churchyard.

Here the artist paused, and looked around; in the yellow light all things looked so calmly joyous, that in spite of the array of monumental stones, sorrow and death seemed things incredible.

A red-tiled path ran through the churchyard, and out into the fields beyond; on each side was



"I crawled out on my hands and knees.'"—*p. 57.*



"He sprang to his feet, feeling quite dazed."—*p.* 55.

a row of dwarf yews, and by the gate some ancient walnut-trees, gaunt and fantastic, flung wide their branches. Near these the artist bade the little maiden stay, and taking a path that ran around the church, was hidden from sight by the old grey walls.

Double-Dutch stood a while, looking at the tombstones, trying to spell out the inscriptions on them; then wondered where the little graves might be of which her grandmother had spoken.

A bird upon a tree close by began to sing with boisterous joyfulness, and its song seemed to the little maiden but another verse of the hymn of praise her heart had been singing this many a day.

The church clock struck. An hour had well-nigh passed, and the artist had not returned.

At length she followed along the path by which she had seen him go. Presently she found herself among a number of tombs of more imposing appearance than the rest—tall monuments surmounted by urns, broken pillars, and other sculptured emblems; these were guarded by iron rails, as if the distinctions of wealth and position were to be jealously maintained even here in God's-acre—even in death. There was, however, one stone of modest appearance, that seemed somehow to have strayed in among this haughty group.

Before this, with clasped hands and bowed head, stood the artist. He came forward in silence, took the child's hand, and led her from the spot.

There were tears in his eyes, and little Double-Dutch saw that he could not trust himself to speak.

With instinctive sympathy she drew nearer to him, and stroked his hand.

They walked to a corner of the churchyard far removed from the public path, and there sat down.

The sun was now declining, and the giant walnut-trees threw long shadows across the grass. The crows were wheeling to their nests in the tops of the great elm-trees that stood in the Squire's park; and there, between the trees, could be seen the turrets and chimney-stacks of Kingsford Hall, the Squire's lordly residence.

As they sat in silence, the artist's eyes were dreamily fixed upon them.

Suddenly he turned to Double-Dutch and said—"You see that grand house between the trees? That is the Hall; it belongs to the Squire, you know. He is a very rich man indeed. The whole of this village belongs to him, and a great deal of the country round about.

"Now I will tell you a story, Double-Dutch.

"Once upon a time there lived in that house an old gentleman, a rather stern-looking, white-haired old gentleman. He was a man of severely upright character, perhaps rather feared than loved; but those few persons on whom he bestowed his friendship knew well that he was capable of the strongest attachment. Still, a reserved man, he hated all display of affection.

"With him, in the old house, lived two boys—his grandsons. Though cousins, they were very unlike in appearance and disposition.

"The elder one—Walter—was a strong built lad, with broad shoulders and sturdy limbs. He was active, daring, and generous—a boy that it did your heart good to look at, full of fun and bright spirits. His tricks and practical jokes kept the old family servants in a constant state of terror; nor were his sallies confined to the Hall, for the neighbouring farmers and the villagers suffered a good deal from his love of mischief. Still, he was a great favourite, and much beloved by the whole household.

"The younger one, as I have said, was a very different sort of boy, both in character and appearance; tall, slightly built, and not nearly so robust as his cousin. He was quiet and reserved to a fault, and was not such a general favourite. He joined his cousin readily in all his escapades, but still his great delight was in quieter pursuits—books and music—and above all was he pleased when covering paper with sketches and caricatures of the visitors at the Hall, the servants, or anyone else who came under his notice. His little bed-room was a complete picture gallery—from floor to ceiling it was covered with portraits of the queer folk who had struck his fancy.

"Though so different in taste, the boys were very fond of one another, and were scarcely ever apart. Together they went to a boarding-school some miles distant, and their holidays were always spent together at the Hall.

"In the long summer days they would make pilgrimages to some distant spot by the stream-side, Walter with his fishing-rod, and Ralph—the younger one—carrying his sketch-book; there they would stay the whole day long, and find all they wanted in one another's company. When they grew tired of their quiet employment, the river would afford them plenty of scope for their boyish love of adventure. They amused themselves by making a raft, and when it was completed, several voyages were made on the river; this was great excitement. Then they discovered what they were pleased to call a 'desert island.' There they built a rude sort of hut, and from time to time they would come to the spot, fancying themselves veritable Robinson Crusoes.

"But the boys were rapidly growing up, and all these things must be put away.

"One day their grandfather called them into his study, and told them he thought it was now nearly time they made a start in life. He had been thinking the matter over, and intended, after the next term at school, putting them into the mercantile firm of which he was a partner. They would be bound apprentice, he told them, for four years, and would have every opportunity of mastering the business in all its branches. After the four years had expired, they would then be of age. 'And,' said he, 'if you are industrious and throw all your energy into the business, there will be every probability of your rising to the position of partners.'

"Walter fell in readily enough with this plan, and began to look forward with eagerness to seeing something of the world; but to Ralph it was a great blow, for, although his bashfulness had hitherto prevented him saying anything on the subject to his grandfather, he had set his heart on becoming an artist.

"Now, in desperation, he told of his hopes, his ambition.

"The old gentleman, who had a secret distrust of art and artists, would hear nothing of it, treated the matter lightly, regarding it as merely a boyish whim that would soon pass away.

"So the boys went into the office, and as they were occupied in different departments, saw less of one another than they had done.

"Well, Double-Dutch, time passed, and the boys grew up into men. At the age of twenty-one they completed their apprenticeship, and each received five hundred pounds by the will of a distant relative.

"Of course, Walter, being the elder, finished his apprenticeship first, and received his money. From that day a change seemed to come over the young man. The sight of so much gold had turned the generous-spirited youth into a keen lover of money.

"Then Ralph received his legacy, and after some discussion with his grandfather, left the office and went to study art in Paris. Returning after an absence of three years, he found his cousin a cold, calculating man of the world: fast accumulating wealth, and fast becoming its slave. It was a great grief to the younger man to see how completely the love of money had eaten the heart out of him—of him whom he had looked up to as the soul of generosity.

"When he spoke to him it seemed as if a wall had grown up between them: the close friendship of boyhood was gone.

"For a few weeks Ralph remained in London, but although his grandfather appeared very glad to see him, he could not help feeling that the old gentleman had never quite forgiven him for refusing the opportunities he had placed in his way. The young artist, moreover, had not met with that success he had dreamed of; his pictures attracted no attention. So he returned to the Continent to resume his studies, finding he could live cheaper there.

"He wrote several times to his grandfather, and was much puzzled and grieved at receiving no answer; then to his cousin Walter, and the reply was a very cold one, with something shuffling in its tone.

"At last a telegram came to say that the old gentleman was dangerously ill, and, before the young man had time to pack his portmanteau and start for England, another to say that he was dead.

"When the will was read, to everybody's astonishment they found that the old gentleman had left all his property to his elder grandson, Walter Beale.

Not a penny did Ralph receive, nor was his name even mentioned in the document.

"This was a terrible blow to the young artist, and not for the money's sake either. In bitterness of spirit he once more took himself off to the Continent, to bury himself in his work, and forget his grief.

"So Walter became the owner of Kingsford Hall, and is to this moment."

"And is he the Squire?" said little Double-Dutch.

"Yes," the artist replied.

"Why," said the child, "it sounds something like the tale the man told us when we were sitting round the gipsies' fire."

"It does," said he; "in fact, it is a part of the same tale, Double-Dutch. The love of money had cankered the young man's heart, and he took advantage of the old man's declining days to embitter him against me. Walter! Walter! How could you do it?"

"But are you the other?" said Double-Dutch, looking up curiously into the artist's face. "How funny! and the Squire is dying, so they say. Oughtn't you to forgive him? I would, if I were you."

"Yes, Double-Dutch, you are right. At the grave of the dear old man whom he wronged so much, so very much more than he ever wronged me, I have forgiven him; and if God gives me the light of another day, I will go and tell him so."

CHAPTER X.

THE next day saw the artist walking up the avenue that led to Kingsford Hall.

Very little had it changed in twenty years. The great elms looked just the same, and the chain that ran from tree to tree, and had become embedded in their growing trunks, was just as he used to notice it when a boy. There, through the trees across the green lawn, flashed the water—the ornamental water where he had so often risked his life. The raised terrace, clipped shrubberies, and formal flower-beds, how familiar they were! The stone balustrades and sculptured urns just the same.

He rang the bell, and waited with curiously mingled feelings the opening of the door.

The servant, a stranger, who admitted him, in answer to his inquiry, said that Mr. Beale was no better, and was not in a condition to see visitors. The artist took a card from his pocket, and pencilling a few words upon it, begged him to deliver it; meanwhile he would wait.

The hall and staircase had not changed one atom; there hung the old weather-glass, and those dark, obscure pictures, the subjects of which he could never make out in his boyhood. He almost expected to see the grey head and bent form of his grandfather come forward to welcome him.

With noiseless step the servant returned, and requested him to follow. On the staircase he passed the doctor; they had met before, when he had been in attendance on Double-Dutch's mother.

He elevated his eyebrows on seeing the artist, but shook hands, and seemed very communicative.

In reply to Mr. Mason's inquiry, he said, slowly shaking his head, "Mr. Beale is very sadly indeed. I am afraid we can entertain very little hope for him. You see, it is not so much the nature of the injury he has received, though that is severe enough, but it is the distressing state of melancholy into which he has sunk; that, in my opinion, is the most alarming symptom. If he could only be roused out of it, and induced to take some little interest in anything whatsoever, there might be some prospect of his recovery."

The servant softly opened the door, and the artist entered the darkened room. A moment he paused, then approached the bed. The Squire lay turned from him, with his face hidden in his hands.

"Walter," whispered the artist. He did not move, but a shiver ran through his frame. "Walter, I have come to tell you that I know all, and that I forgive you from my heart."

A moment's silence, then the sick man spoke. "If you knew all, you would forgive me—you would pity me."

Then suddenly turning round, he raised himself on his elbow, and said hurriedly—

"Let me look at you, Ralph; turn to the light, and let me see your face. . . . You have altered, Ralph—you have altered; you look older, and your face looks worn, and your beard has grown. But then it's years ago," he added dreamily.

Then rousing himself, he exclaimed, shuddering, "Do you believe in hell, Ralph? I've been living in it, and finding my pleasure there, and glorying in it. Still, it was hell all the same.

"Yes, from the day I cashed that cheque, and held the cursed gold in my hand, I've been sinking into it, deeper and deeper.

"You don't know, Ralph. You can't understand it. My heart was all dried up within me.

"Sometimes I dreamed about the old life, Ralph, boy; but I thought it was too late, and then in another year or two I should be a millionaire—a millionaire, Ralph," he repeated, with a sickly smile.

"But God's curse is on it, Ralph—God's curse is on it; and He struck me down. Yes! I saw the man; I remembered him only too well. Haven't I dreamed of him often enough! But it was God that struck me down; and I'm afraid, Ralph, I'm afraid I shall get well again, and be like I used to be; and sometimes I try to pray that I may die.

"But you've come now, Ralph; take my hand; you've come now, Ralph; and you'll help me, won't you? You'll save me from it; won't you, Ralph? You shall have what belongs to you, Ralph. You shall have it all, Ralph, dear old Ralph! if you'll only stop with me.

"And we'll have the old pony," he murmured, dreamily; "and go a-fishing together again; and

the old punt, Ralph, and it will be all like it used to be.

* * * * * *

So the artist did not return to London, after all—at any rate, not to stay. He went for a few days to arrange his affairs, and transport his art treasures to Kingsford.

Then he took up his abode at the Hall, and for many months nursed the Squire with all the tenderness of a woman.

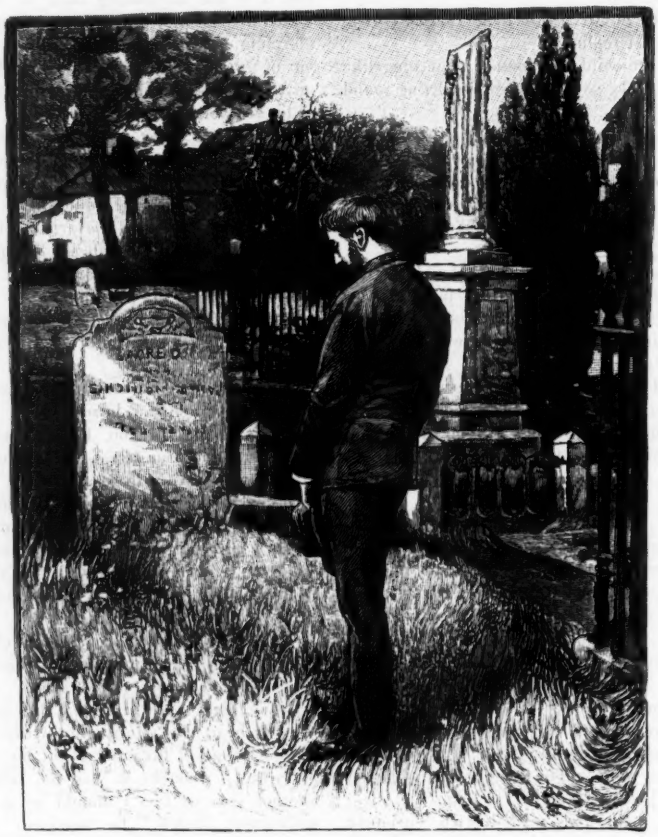
So the old days came again.

Though the Squire's heart ever bore the scars of the fire from which he escaped, still the old love came back, and the inseparable two were laughingly called throughout the county "the twin Squires of Kingsford."

* * * * * *

In one of the old panelled rooms at the Hall there hangs a picture—a portrait of a poor street child with tangled hair hanging about her face, and a sad, dreamy look in her eyes.

Many are moved by the deep pathos of the picture; there are but one or two that can read it aright.



"Before this stood the artist."—*p.* 61.

Beneath this picture stands a violin of delicate workmanship. Its music is often heard in the Hall, but few there are who know the part it played in making the rough things smooth, and the crooked straight.

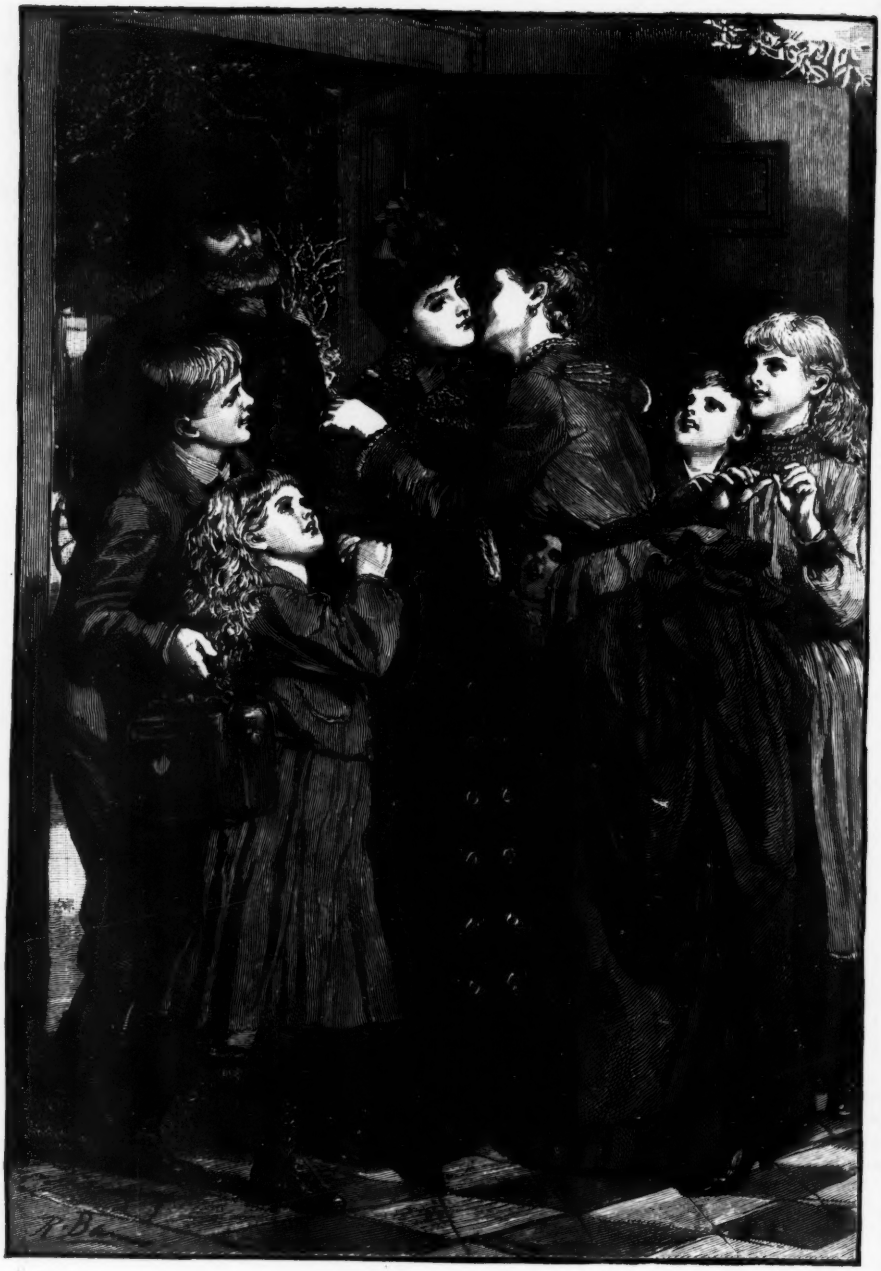
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As for Double-Dutch, she has grown in wisdom and stature, has passed the seventh standard, and is a sweet-faced, rosy girl of sixteen.

Nothing whatever of Drury Lane clings to her now but her name—for there are some to whom she will ever be "Little Double-Dutch."



UNIV. OF MICH.



HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.

See p. 70.



CONTENTS.

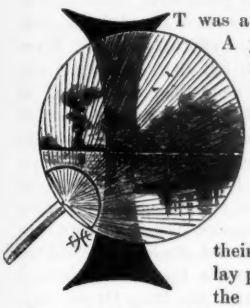
	PAGE
FRONTISPIECE—"HOME FOR CHRISTMAS"	2
BRIAN HARTLEY'S QUEST. By MARGARET LAW	3
"ON CHRISTMAS MORN, WHEN CHRIST WAS BORN." A CHRISTMAS CAROL. *Music by* A. C. MACKENZIE, MUS.D., *Principal of the Royal Academy of Music*	49
THE KEEPING OF CHRISTMAS. By the VERY REV. THE DEAN OF WELLS	50
THE CHOIR-BOY OF HARLESTONE MINSTER. By the REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.	53
"ALL FOR OTHERS." By S. A. ARNOLD	65
HOME FOR CHRISTMAS. By GEORGE WEATHERLY	70
A CHRISTMAS DREAM. By the Author of "Beauty and the Beast"	70

BRIAN HARTLEY'S QUEST.

BY MARGARET LAW, AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF AN OPAL RING," "A FAITHFUL HEART," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER I.

DAVID LEIGH'S WILL.



IT was a sultry afternoon in July. A yellowish haze over the sky obscured the brilliance of the sun, without moderating the heat of the atmosphere. Not a breath stirred; the trees stood like pictured trees against the brazen sky. The birds were silent in their leafy coverts; the sheep lay panting in the shadow of the elms, not caring to crop the scorched grass till the dews of evening brought relief. On one of the benches in Kensington Gardens a young man sat, with head bent forward, elbows on knees, balancing a stick in his ungloved and sunburnt though well-shaped hands. He was about eight-and-twenty years of age, apparently; not above the middle height, but broad-chested and well-knit in figure. He was somewhat carelessly dressed in a light tweed suit and soft grey felt hat, that as he bent forward allowed little to be discerned but the short brown beard that covered the lower part of his face. Careless as might be his attitude and attire, however, no one could glance at him and mistake him for anything but a gentleman.

Why he had wandered into Kensington Gardens that sultry afternoon he could perhaps scarcely have told. But being there, he sat on, lost in reverie. He took no notice of the groups that passed and repassed, nor did he appear conscious of the lapse of time. But before following him in his musings, it will be as well to explain who he was, and to give a glance at his antecedents. Though there was something about his appearance not altogether after the pattern of the conventional Briton, he was an

Englishman by birth, and an Englishman of a good old family too; but he had left his native country for Australia at sixteen years of age, and this was his first visit home. The estate to which he was born had been ruined by a long course of extravagance, pursued by several generations. It had been mortgaged up to its utmost value when his father succeeded, and at length the creditors foreclosed. His father and he would have been driven from the home that had been theirs only in name, had not death stepped in, as far the elder Mr. Hartley was concerned, and saved the necessity of removal beyond the short distance to the vault where his ancestors reposed.

Brian Hartley had received an excellent education, and if all had gone well would, in another year or two, have been entered at Oxford. College was now, however, closed to him, without any very great regret on his part; his tastes leading him to an active rather than a studious life. He had not been brought up with any view to a profession, so that when he was thrown on the world to fight his way alone and almost penniless, his outlook could not be said to be promising. He was a brave lad; he had no shrinking from hard work, but he hated the idea of being imprisoned—as he would have called it—in a London counting-house; and after consulting his father's solicitor, who was an old friend of the family, he determined to emigrate.

The little he possessed sufficed for his outfit and passage-money, with a few pounds over and above to keep him till he found work. He set sail with a stout heart, and a letter of introduction to a firm in Melbourne, but after landing in the new country difficulties beset his path upon which he had not calculated. He did not find it so easy as he had expected to obtain employment; he had nearly come to the end of his resources, and was well-nigh giving way to despair, when he heard of a hand wanted on a sheep-farm up the country. He applied for the post, obtained it, and at this farm, with the exception of a few holiday intervals, he had remained, up to six months previous to that afternoon when we find him seated in Kensington Gardens.

There was little in the active, though somewhat monotonous, life he had led for ten years, to dwell upon in recollection. When he first returned to England, his thoughts naturally flew back to his early days and his old home. But there was not much use in looking back, and his present reverie referred to the circumstances that had made him a rich man, and had sent him over to England on what might prove to be—he feared—a wild-goose chase.

The scene that at the moment presented itself before his mind's eye was a room on the first floor of a frame house. The room was spacious enough, though bare of furniture according to English ideas of comfort. On one side it opened upon a large central hall; on the other, upon the broad verandah that ran round the house. It was summer there, and the windows were open to the balmy air, the sun's too-powerful rays being warded off by green outside blinds. On the bed an old man lay dying, alone but for Brian. David Leigh had invested the money made by a lucky venture on the gold-fields in a sheep-run, and there he had lived ever since he had first erected his frame house upon his newly purchased land. He had lived frugally and worked hard, piling coin upon coin, always intending to revisit England, but always putting off the time, till, as wealth accumulated, years had accumulated also, and it became too late.

David Leigh left England with a companion, but that companion had died before any measure of success had crowned his endeavours. From that time he had been a solitary man, till, in want of someone with a better education than the rough hands employed on his farm, he had engaged Brian Hartley, and Brian became to him, from that time, as a son, both in duty and affection. Now, at seventy-four years of age, he lay dying. There was no sound in the room but the ticking of the clock and the old man's laboured breathing. Brian sat sorrowfully by the bedside, for David Leigh had been a kind friend to him, and he had none other.

The dying man had been lying quiet for some time, but at last, making an effort, he roused himself and spoke. Brian bent over him to catch his words, and understood that he wanted pen, ink, and paper; these were procured, and Brian then found that David Leigh desired to make his will. Propped up in bed, he managed to write, in a few barely legible lines, his bequests. They were short and simple. He directed that his lands and other possessions should be sold, and the proceeds, together with all other moneys belonging to him, divided into two equal shares. The one moiety he devised to his adopted son Brian Hartley, the other to his dearly loved sweetheart, Mary Henderson. He also desired that, as soon as the sale could be effected, Brian Hartley should proceed to England, and there seek out the said Mary Henderson, of Cowthorpe, Fellshire. This was all. Two of the men who happened to be about the place were summoned to witness the signature, and then David Leigh sank back, exhausted with his effort. At first Brian feared that all was over; but the end was not yet. David Leigh lingered for more than a week, and at times was able to talk, though in a rambling sort of way. His mind had gone back to his youthful days in Fellshire, and to "bonny Mary Henderson."

"You cannot mistake her when you see her," he said, with his eyes fixed eagerly on Brian's face. "She has soft brown eyes, and hair the colour of a ripe chestnut, all in waves and ripples. She had the whitest brow and the sweetest lips in the world; I have never seen a smile since like Mary Henderson's. Ay, and her cheeks were just the colour of the wild roses we used to gather in the lanes about Cowthorpe. Ah! there were never roses so sweet as those, and never a lass so bonny as my Mary!"

Thus the old man would ramble on, forgetful that Mary Henderson, if living, must be a grey-haired old woman. Brian listened attentively to every word, anxious to find what clue he might to guide him in his future search; and by dint of listening, and putting a question or two when Leigh was sufficiently clear in his mind to answer coherently, he made himself acquainted with the few facts that were all he would have to go upon.

"You did not find a fortune so easy to make, even here?" Brian suggested.

"No, that was the fact," returned David Leigh. "We tried one thing and another, and were driven from pillar to post, but we did not get on. Then poor Dick died. That was before the Ballarat days. I grew ashamed of my want of success—I, who had boasted of what I was going to achieve. Communication with England was not the easy thing it is



"The interruption was not altogether pleasant."—*p.* 6.

It seemed that Mary Henderson was the girl to whom he was engaged when he left England to seek his fortune.

"Mr. Henderson owned most of the land about Cowthorpe, and I was only the son of a country doctor. We were poor, and I was no match for Mary," he explained in one of his more lucid intervals. "I was brought up to my father's profession, but even if I had gone where practice might have been larger, it would have been years before I could have made an income to marry upon. Dick Henderson, Mary's cousin—a wild lad was Dick—had set his mind on going out to Australia, and persuaded me to go with him. We firmly believed we should both make our fortunes in two or three years, and then I was to come back and marry Mary."

The old man paused for a while, and seemed lost in some painful reminiscences, for he sighed heavily once or twice.

now, and often I had no means of sending or receiving letters, nor could I tell where I should be when the next mail came in."

"It is a long time, then, since you heard from any of your friends in England?" said Brian.

"A long time; ay, more than five-and-forty years—five-and-forty-years," Mr. Leigh repeated. "When I first built this house, I used to fancy what it would be to hear Mary's light step about the rooms, and have her smile to greet me when I came in; but it was only a dream. I intended to visit England, but the right time never seemed to come."

After this, David Leigh's mind wandered. He still dwelt upon old times, sometimes laughing faintly at some schoolboy escapade, sometimes deprecating his father's anger when he resolved to emigrate; but the chief figure that always appeared in the foreground was that of the fair girl with the soft brown eyes and wavy chestnut hair. As he

grew weaker he ceased to talk, but still seemed to take pleasure in hearing Brian repeat the simple hymns he had learnt in his boyhood, and that he had asked for in the earlier stage of his illness. The end came so peacefully at last that Brian was not aware when the last breath was drawn. It was but the going out of the lamp when the oil was done.

Brian mourned his kind old friend sincerely. He accepted the quest for Mary Henderson as a solemn trust; all the more because David Leigh had added a codicil to his will, bequeathing the whole of his property to Brian in case Mary Henderson should have died without heirs. This proved that Mr. Leigh's reason told him of the length of time that had elapsed, though his imagination still pictured to him his sweetheart as young and fair.

Brian did not underrate the difficulties that would lie in his way, unless, indeed, Mary Henderson was still single and living at Cowthorpe. But failure in anything he undertook was never anticipated by Brian Hartley. Strong in mind and body, and strong in will, whatever lay in man's power to do he made no doubt of doing.

As soon as he had seen the remains of his old friend laid in his lonely grave, he took measures to carry out the will. The land and stock sold well, and, together with the accumulations of upwards of thirty years, realised the sum of eighty thousand pounds. His next step was to secure his passage to England in one of the fast-sailing steamers.

The loss of his old friend, the sudden change in his circumstances, the excitement caused by the prospect of returning rich and prosperous to his native land, all tended to banish sleep from his eyes. For hours he paced the deck during the night watches, lost in dreams of the future, and always there arose before his mental vision the fair girl with the soft brown eyes and chestnut hair, who had been so frequently and so minutely described to him. She had become a sort of ideal, the embodiment of all that was sweet and good in womanhood. In vain he recalled to himself that the girl Mary Henderson no longer existed; that, if alive, she was now an old woman; the ideal still remained, and Brian was obliged to confess to himself that he was more than half in love with the coinage of his own brain. It will thus be seen that in spite of indomitable energy, and in spite of much practical good sense, this young man had a vein of romance running through the solid nature of his character.

It was of all these things he was thinking as he sat in Kensington Gardens that hot July afternoon, and above all was a feeling of impatience. He had not as yet succeeded in his quest, and he longed to see the affair terminated, and to have the responsibility taken off his hands. He wanted to feel free to follow out his own desires, one of which was the purchase of a home; but till he had executed David Leigh's trust he did not consider himself at liberty to attend to this, or any other business of his own.

He was suddenly roused from his meditations, and the interruption was not altogether pleasant, for it was caused by children's shrill voices. Now, children's voices are often very delightful, and children's laughter most especially so; but then the voices must not be shrill with peevishness and ill-nature, as were these that disturbed Brian Hartley.

He lifted his head, displaying to view a handsome, clear-cut face, and a pair of pleasant, honest grey eyes, and became aware that a young lady had sunk down in a weary attitude in the further corner of the bench on which he sat.

CHAPTER II.

BRIAN HARTLEY FINDS HIS IDEAL.



BRIAN HARTLEY started; he felt himself flush as the blood coursed rapidly through his veins. Was he the victim of some delusion? Had he allowed his imagination to lead him so far astray that he could not trust the evidence of his senses? For in that simply attired girl he beheld Mary Henderson, restored to youth as by some enchanter's wand.

There were the soft brown eyes, the wavy chestnut-coloured hair, that every here and there escaped from its bonds and wandered in little tendrils over the broad white brow. There were the delicate oval of face, and the sweet sensitive lips; only the cheeks had no wild-rose bloom, and dark lines under the eyes told of tiredness and want of sleep. Brian gazed till, conscious that he was staring rudely, he forced himself to turn away his eyes. But he might have stared on; the girl took no notice, and seemed utterly unconscious of his presence.

Three children were with her—two girls, about eight and six years old, probably; and a little boy of about four.

Plain, sallow, sharp-featured, ill-tempered-looking children, vulgarly over-dressed in the height of the fashion, with very short frocks displaying very long black legs, and very broad sashes; their sandy-coloured heads crowned with high hats, loaded with a profusion of ribbons and flowers.

The little boy began pulling at the young lady's skirts, leaving the marks of his hot hands on the brown *foulard*.

"Get up!" he cried; "I want to go and sail my ship." He had a toy boat under one arm.

"Presently, dear; won't you rest awhile after your walk?" the young lady replied, in the sweet voice that Brian felt assured must accompany those brown eyes.

"No, now; I want to go now," the boy persisted, with another tug at the dress.

"Mamma does not pay you money to sit down when we come out, instead of amusing us, Miss Grey," observed the elder of the two girls pertly. "We are not tired, and it is stupid here. Let Albert sail his ship another time; I want to go to the Row to see the company, and the carriages and horses."

Master Albert began to howl. He flew at his sister, and tried to kick her. "You 're a nasty thing!" he exclaimed in a passion, "and so is Miss Grey, because she won't go with me to sail my ship. I shall tell ma."

The young lady addressed as Miss Grey (Brian felt a pang of disappointment when he heard the name; did he expect it would be Henderson?) put out her hand and drew the fractious child towards her.

"Don't make that noise, dear," she said. "You shall go and sail your ship, only have a little patience. Juliana tore her frock so badly yesterday that it took me half the night to mend it. That is one reason why I am so tired to-day."

"If you don't get up and come away when we want to, I shall tear it worse next time—there! And I want to go to the Row as well as Laura," insisted the charming child who owned the name of Juliana.

"We will go to the wall of the gardens, next to the park; you can see the carriages and horses from there; you know your mamma has forbidden you to go to the Row," said Miss Grey, as she rose languidly and took the little boy by the hand, while he still hugged his boat under the other arm.

"Ma would never know if we went; she is not going to drive in the Row to-day—I heard her say so," pouted the elder girl in a sullen tone.

"Yes, she would," returned Juliana, jumping about with a malicious grin; "I would tell her; and then Miss Grey would catch it, and you too, and it would serve you right for blabbing about the preserved apricots yesterday."

"You may be sure I shall not permit you to go anywhere against your mother's wish," Miss Grey observed quietly, and she moved away in the direction of the round pond, leading the little boy by the hand.

By an irresistible impulse Brian rose from his seat and followed the group at some little distance. He could not bear the idea of losing sight of this girl, who had so suddenly and unexpectedly appeared before his eyes as the bodily presentment of his dream. That she was sad, and pale, and weary-looking, only rendered her the more attractive to one of those strong natures whose impulses go out towards the weak and unprotected.

It must be borne in mind that Brian Hartley, since his boyhood, had held little intercourse with the fairer half of creation. He had seen rough, slatternly women, loud of voice and intemperate of speech, the wives of the "hands" on the station; and had come into transient contact with those of a better class during his holiday visits to Melbourne. And since his accession to fortune, and while there arranging the sale of the property, he had been made much of, and might have had little difficulty in persuading one of the fair colonists to share his forty thousand pounds, had he felt so inclined. But, as we have seen, he had his ideal, and no one he had hitherto met had caused his pulses to quicken, or excited in him the wish to make her mistress of his future home.

And yet he had not intended to allow a vain imagination to lead him astray. He had never contemplated a solitary life. On the contrary, his longing had been great for some object on whom to expend the affections of his warm heart—only the right one had not appeared till now.

The group he kept in view, proceeding slowly towards the round pond — Albert, now he had gained his wish, hanging back and complaining of the heat. Laura and Juliana followed, quarrelling as they went. The pond proved a great centre of attraction that afternoon. Parties of children crowded the margin, laughing and shouting as their ships sailed well and came safely back to hand. The pond was dotted with a mimic fleet. Brian, under pretence of watching the eager children engaged in launching forth their tiny argosies, could draw near without attracting attention, and could follow Miss Grey with his eyes. There was an unaffected grace about her movements and manner that charmed him more and more. She was evidently gentle and sweet-tempered too, by the way she attempted to manage the troublesome, ill-bred children under her charge.

He stood looking on for some little time, when suddenly there burst forth a roar of distress from Master Albert. The string by which his boat was secured had slipped out of his hand, and the boat had drifted beyond his reach.

"See, Albert—the boat is making for the other side, with many, many other ships," said Miss Grey in reassuring tones. "Look at those boys running round to meet theirs. Let us go and catch it as it comes ashore."

But Albert refused to be comforted by any such assurance; he screamed and stamped, and would not be pacified; while Laura told him she was glad it was lost, and that now he would not be wanting to go to the pond while she wanted to see the company.

Brian Hartley stepped forward at this juncture. "Allow me," he said. "I think with my long arm and my hooked stick I may be able to reach your boat, my little man."

Stretching forward as far as he could without falling in, Brian dexterously caught the string with the crooked handle of the stick, and drew the truant boat to land. Albert snatched the boat, and held it close in his arms, wet as it was, to the detriment of his blue velveteen coat; but he made no acknowledgment to its rescuer.

"Thank you so much," said Miss Grey with a gracious smile that wonderfully lit up her pale face,

and reminded him still more of the description of Mary Henderson.—"Albert, why don't you thank the gentleman for what he has done for you?"

But Albert only hung back and scowled, hugging the wet boat still more closely, as if he feared the strange gentleman might be guilty of a design to rob him of his treasure.

and see, as long as you tell the truth," returned Miss Grey with quiet dignity.

They still lingered by the pond, where there was some amusement going on. Laura seemed to have forgotten the carriages and horses.

"Miss Jenkinson used to give Laura sugar-plums not to tell," pursued Juliana.



"They had been dispersed years ago, said mine host."—*p.* 9.

"Never mind; he will find his tongue some day, I daresay," remarked Brian good-naturedly. Then, raising his hat to Miss Grey, he stepped back; but not so far as to be out of sight and hearing.

"I shall tell ma that you speak to stranger gentlemen when we are in the gardens," declared Juliana with a grin.

"You may tell your mamma everything you hear

"Oh, you story! she didn't," exclaimed Laura.

"She did! You know she did!"

"She didn't!"

"Hush, children; it is very rude to contradict in that way," interposed Miss Grey. "I am afraid Miss Jenkinson did not teach you to be polite. You will get no sugar-plums from me, except for being good and obedient children," she assured them.

"Miss Jenkinson did not care whether we were good and obedient or not. She let us have our own way, and you don't. Miss Jenkinson was far nicer than you—she never bothered," Laura grumbled. "She always praised us to ma, and then we let her alone while she read novels. Don't you like reading novels, Miss Grey? I wish you did, and then you wouldn't tease us with those stupid lessons."

"And then I should not be doing my duty, and you would grow up ignorant girls, which would be very sad," Miss Gray answered; adding, "Come, children, we must not stay out longer—there is a storm coming up," drawing their attention to the south-west, where lurid clouds were piling themselves.

"A thunderstorm!" cried Juliana with a scared look. "Oh, come along, Laura—make haste!—I'm so frightened of thunder!"

"I'm not afraid—I'm not such a baby," replied Laura scornfully; "but I don't wish to be caught in the rain. We should spoil our hats and sashes, and ma would be cross."

Miss Grey, without further question, led the way towards the broad walk. Brian watched her till she disappeared from his sight amongst the trees; then he, too, left the gardens, and, hailing a hansom, had himself driven to the hotel in Jermyn Street where, for the present, he had taken up his quarters.

The afternoon's adventure had made an impression on his mind that was not to be effaced. That night he dreamt that a fair girl with a pale, pensive face and soft brown eyes came to him and stated that she was Mary Henderson, David Leigh's sweetheart. When he said that could not be, because Mary Henderson was now an old woman, she lifted her eyes to his with the smile he had seen once, and asked him if he did not know that love never grew old. Then she vanished, and Brian awoke, feeling for the first time how thoroughly he was alone in the world.

For the next week he haunted Kensington Gardens, and almost daily he had an opportunity of watching and making his comments on the same group. Each time he saw her, the sweet, gentle, overworn-looking girl made a deeper impression on his heart. He never attempted to attract her notice, never spoke to her. He had no excuse for addressing her, and he would do nothing to place either her or himself in a false position. Whatever steps he might determine upon taking in order to make her acquaintance, should be open and above-board. But what the steps were it behoved him to take he could not yet clearly see; only obtain an introduction he must and would.

At this time it seemed as if nothing further could be done in the matter of his quest. There was nothing for it but to wait, and see what information might be volunteered.

When Brian Hartley first arrived in England he at once sought the solicitor who had been his father's friend. He intended to lay the copy of David Leigh's will before him, and to act in accordance with his advice.

He found that the elder Mr. Sherwood was dead, but his son carried on the business in conjunction with a partner. Messrs. Sherwood and Lucas were the names he read upon the brass plate, as he entered the swing-door leading to the office he remembered so well in olden times. The present Mr. Sherwood received him cordially; he remembered the name if not the person of Brian Hartley. He undertook to assist him in his search to the best of his ability; recommended as a first step, what Brian had already decided upon—a visit to Cowthorpe; and asked him to dinner, an invitation Brian gladly accepted, feeling lonely as a stranger amongst the teeming population of London.

Brian lost no time in starting for Cowthorpe. He found a primitive village, that could have been but little altered since David Leigh's time. He began his inquiries at the rustic inn, where his arrival created a good deal of curiosity. There had been two families of Hendersons in the place, so he was informed, but they had been dispersed years ago—"before my time," said mine host of the "Roebuck." "If you want to know anything about the Hendersons, sir, there's old Miss Atkins, at Laurel Cottage," continued the host. "She has lived in Cowthorpe all her life, and will remember the Hendersons."

Brian thanked the landlord, and went to call on "old Miss Atkins." He found her a garrulous old lady, quite willing to talk of old times. She remembered Mary Henderson well, and David Leigh too. Mary and she had gone to school together. Mr. Henderson had speculated; he was always dabbling in some new invention. He had lost all his property, and went away from Cowthorpe to London, she believed, but she was not sure. Mary, of course, went with her parents, and she fancied she had heard some time after that she had married, but she could not tell for certain. She had never seen Mary again, nor heard of her in any direct way. The other Mr. Henderson, Mary's uncle, was dead, and his son Dick was dead also. He went to Australia with David Leigh and died there. She knew that David Leigh had been Mary Henderson's lover, but her friends were opposed to the match because David was poor. That was what drove him from England.

This was all the information that could be obtained from Miss Atkins, or from anyone in Cowthorpe. Where the Hendersons went to when they left the place, or what Mary's married name was, or whether she was still living, no one knew. A fresh generation had sprung up, and the former inhabitants were forgotten. The visit to Cowthorpe, therefore, was productive of little result; but Brian was glad to have seen the place for his old friend's sake. The wild roses were over, for it was the beginning of July; but the lanes were sweet with honeysuckle, and tall foxgloves, and ferns, and purple centaury, and golden St. John's wort, and a perfect tangle of traveller's joy, and the large white bindweed, made the hedges

gay beneath the sheltering elms. Brian could well understand how delightful must have been the summer-evening rambles of the lovers about these lanes; alas! that they should so soon have come to an end. He also saw Mary Henderson's old home—a gabled, grey stone house, much overgrown with ivy, and standing back in a garden. Children were playing there when Brian looked in through the half-open gate, playing with shout and laughter, where Mary had suffered the sad parting with her lover and the wreck of her worldly prosperity. "So runs the world away."

When Brian returned to London and recounted his want of success, Mr. Sherwood undertook to advertise. It was quite extraordinary what a common name Henderson proved to be—how many people were found to have mothers, or grandmothers, or aunts or cousins rejoicing in that appellation. Most of these would-be claimants were dismissed as unworthy of notice, but one or two of the applications seemed to have some foundation, and these claims Brian resolved to sift in person. His investigations only ended in fresh disappointment, however.

In the midst of all these troubles and perplexities he stole a day to revisit Wellwood, his old home. To save money enough to re-purchase Wellwood had always been his dream. Now he had the means; but here also a keen disappointment awaited him. The present proprietor was a self-made man, enormously rich, and not to be bought out by any means. He had a great respect for land as an investment, but none whatever for historic associations or sentimental considerations. He had altered the place beyond all knowledge, and had built a portico and two wings in the Grecian style on to the fine old Queen Anne mansion, and had cut down timber and straightened the avenue, so that no portion of these monstrosities should be concealed from public view. New stables were built where Mrs. Hartley's garden had been, and the pond where Brian had fished as a boy was filled up, and the ground converted into a tennis-court. Brian turned away sad at heart, feeling as if a desecrating hand had been passed over what was once so dear.

He did not relinquish the idea of purchasing a country house, though Wellwood had gone from him for ever; but he could now bide his time, and look about him until he found something that would suit both his taste and his means.

All this happened before the—to Brian Hartley—memorable day when he met his fate in Kensington Gardens. At the end of the week he had spent in haunting Miss Grey's footsteps, he received a note from Mr. Sherwood, requesting him to call. On arriving at the office, the lawyer met him with the information that a fresh applicant for David Leigh's legacy had appeared, and this time Mr. Sherwood thought that there was really a probability of the claimant proving the right person.

A young man had called at the office, from seeing the advertisement, to make inquiries. He stated himself to be a clerk in a Birmingham house. He had seen the advertisement some weeks ago, but had not thought it worth while to take any notice, as these things generally proved to be all smoke; but as the advertisement was repeated, and he was in town on business, he had called to inquire. He further stated that he was the heir of Mary Henderson, once of Cowthorpe, in Fellshire, being the only son of her only son. Mr. Sherwood said he seemed surprised, and a good deal agitated, when he heard of the importance of the affair. When told he would have to bring forward such and such certificates of marriages, births, and deaths, he said there would be no difficulty about that. He then went away abruptly, without leaving name or address. Mr. Sherwood, however, thought they would hear from him again, and if he proved the facts to be as he stated, there could be no question that he was Mary Henderson's legal heir, and the rightful claimant of the legacy.

Brian Hartley was conscious of an unreasonable feeling of disappointment. Somehow he had never thought of David Leigh's sweetheart as dead. He would like to have seen her, and have compared the soft brown eyes with those that had made such an impression on his heart. They would be dimmed with age, and the chestnut hair would be white, but still there must be some traces left of what she had been. So he had hoped; but now it seemed she was dead, and there was an end. This handing over the money to a clerk in a Birmingham house seemed such a very poor and commonplace ending to a romantic story. However, he would be thankful to bring the affair to a successful termination, and to be left free to follow out uninterruptedly his new and absorbing interest.

CHAPTER III.

BRIAN HARTLEY PURSUES HIS OBJECT.



BY this time Brian Hartley had thoroughly made up his mind. This pale, tired-looking girl, this poor governess, should be his wife if he could win her. It was very strange, very romantic and unlike a "man of the world"—as the phrase is understood.

Had he met Miss Grey in society, and been introduced to her in a regular and conventional manner, he would have been equally struck by her likeness to the visionary Mary Henderson, and would no doubt have fallen in love with her all the same, but it would not have been so sudden a fascination, she would not have appealed so directly to his tenderest feelings, as under present circumstances. This girl had crossed his path by the merest chance, so to speak; he had never spoken to her beyond the few words when he rescued Albert's boat; but he believed

he could read her sweet, pure soul, as in a book, through her soft eyes, in the music of her voice, in her rare smile; and by prudential considerations he was influenced not at all.

He was absolutely free. There was no one on earth to whom he was bound to give an account of his actions or intentions; he had no one even to consult. Whether he made or marred the happiness of his life was his own concern entirely; but he had no doubts, no hesitations.

The first step was to find out in what family Miss Grey was residing. This he could only ascertain by waiting till she left the gardens, and keeping her in sight till she reached home. It was now nearly a fortnight since he had first met her, and he had seen her almost each day. On entering the gardens he made at once for the round pond, knowing that this was the children's favourite place of resort. It was a beautiful day—fresh and breezy, with a bright sun. Thunder-showers had cleared the air of its oppressiveness. He found the party he looked for at the margin of the pond, watching the little ships as they bobbed up and down on the ripples caused by the light wind.

They remained here for some time, and then turned towards the broad walk. The children had hoops with them, but they did not trundle them very cleverly, and were soon tired. They then began chasing the sheep, till—with some difficulty—called to order by Miss Grey. She looked at her watch, and Brian supposed she announced the approach of tea-time, as they consented to proceed homewards without remonstrance. Leaving the gardens by the gate that gave egress from the broad walk northwards, they crossed the road to a street that continued in the same direction—Miss Grey leading the little boy by the hand, the two girls walking in front with some show of propriety now that they were in the streets, where they might be seen.

By-and-by they reached a square, into which they turned, stopping at a door about midway on the south side. Miss Grey rang the bell. The door was opened by a footman, and the children ran in, Miss Grey following.

This, then, was the house—this the casket containing the pearl he intended for such a rich setting. As soon as the door was closed, he walked past to ascertain the number; and now, to make himself acquainted with the name of the occupier of the house, he had only to step into a shop and ask to look at a directory. The first he came to that he thought would answer his purpose was a baker's and confectioner's. He went in, and, whilst purchasing some biscuits, asked the smart young person who served him if she knew who lived at the number in the square he indicated.

Certainly she did. Mr. Bloxam lived there; he was a customer of theirs. A very rich man—a something in the City, she believed.

Was there a Mrs. Bloxam living? Oh dear, yes, and quite a lady; always dressing in the best of everything, and spending her money freely.

Mr. Hartley thanked his informant, and left the shop, forgetting his biscuits, till he was called back and reminded of his purchase.

A Mr. Bloxam, a something in the City. He walked away—his head bent, his brows puckered. Could he possibly obtain an introduction to this Mr. Bloxam? Since his arrival in England many distant relations and old acquaintances, who had never thought of holding out a helping hand to the lad who was left alone and penniless, had lost no time in seeking out the lad grown to manhood when he returned rich and prosperous. Fathers held him up to their sons as an example to be followed; matrons smiled upon him, thinking what a good match he would be for dear Ethel or Maud. Brian did not churlishly reject the civilities showered upon him, but accepted them for what they were worth. It was by his own choice if he ever spent a solitary evening.

At last he was obliged to give up all hope of obtaining an introduction in a regular way; but the difficulties in his path had only strengthened his determination. He at last resolved to take a step that a man more accustomed to the conventionalities of society would, perhaps, scarcely have ventured upon—he made up his mind to call on Mrs. Bloxam and state his case. He argued with himself that, though the children were odious, it did not follow that the mother should be objectionable also. The young person in the confectioner's shop had spoken of her as quite a lady, and she would naturally take a maternal interest in the sweet girl to whom she had entrusted the education of her children.

He had no expectation of persuading Miss Grey to listen to him at once; but if Mrs. Bloxam would stand his friend, and authorise him to address her, he might have opportunities for pleading his cause. If he could only prove to her how sincere he was, how much in earnest, he would surely prevail at last. He would tell her of all his plans, and consult her taste. He felt sure that she, like himself, would prefer a country life; but perhaps she might have a liking for some particular place; and now Wellwood was lost to him, he would be willing to seek for such an estate as he desired to purchase, east, west, north, or south, wherever her wishes might point. He pictured her to himself in the life of ease and luxury to which he would be able to transport her, and his soul thrilled with the hope that she would one day lay her hand in his, and promise to share his happy fortunes.

Brian Hartley was not the man to let a resolve cool by waiting. Whatever he determined upon, he set himself to carry out at once. He therefore, having attired himself with all the care of a lover about to present himself before the eyes of his mistress, called boldly at the house containing the treasure he coveted, and asked to see Mrs. Bloxam.

Mrs. Bloxam was at home, he was informed; so

he sent up his card, with a request for an interview.

Mrs. Bloxam had just returned from her drive, and was still in her dressing-room when Mr. Hartley's card was handed to her. She did not know the name, but as the servant said it was a gentleman who wished to see her, she directed that he should be shown into the drawing-room, while she lingered to add a few finishing touches to her toilet.

Brian looked round with some dismay when, following the servant up-stairs, he was shown into a gorgeous drawing-room, where tasteless ostentation reigned paramount. Inharmonious colours, incongruous articles of furniture, ornaments selected without judgment, met his eyes. As he made these observations his spirits sank, and he realised, for the first time, what the mother of those odious children and the mistress of such a home was likely to be.

When the door opened, and the lady sailed into the room, he perceived at a glance that his forebodings were verified. He saw before him a stout, florid woman, with arrogance and vulgarity imprinted on every lineament. She was dressed in a showy silk, elaborately trimmed, and wore a profusion of jewellery. Heavy gold chains rested on her ample bosom, bracelets glittered on her fat wrists, and her broad, dumpy fingers were bedizened with rings. She bowed stiffly on entering, and motioning Mr. Hartley to a seat, she sank languidly into a capacious easy-chair, and began slowly fanning herself, looking to her visitor to explain his business.

She was puzzled; she saw before her an undeniably handsome, distinguished-looking man, faultlessly dressed. He was quite unlike the young men she was accustomed to meet in the society in which she moved, and still less did he look like anyone calling to solicit custom, or to beg for a subscription, or to entreat her influence with her husband as a means of getting employment. What, then, could be the object of this visit? She also noted the perfect self-possession of his bearing, and the keen glance of his grey eyes; and recognised that any display of



"Brian Hartley began his tale."

grandeur, or any of her affected airs and graces would be quite thrown away.

She had not time to inquire to what she owed the honour of this call, before, after a brief apology for his intrusion, Brian Hartley began his tale in his perfectly straightforward manner. He had no desire to conceal anything; he knew what he wanted, and he went direct to the point. He explained his position, mentioning his bankers and solicitors, to whom he could refer, related his accidental meeting with Miss Grey and the impression her beauty and evident sweetness of disposition had made upon him, and ended by begging for permission and opportunity to plead his cause, saying it was the dearest wish of his heart to make her his wife.

Mrs. Bloxam was so taken by surprise, so utterly astounded, that she could only gaze open-mouthed; and Brian had made his statement and awaited her reply before this wonderful story had time to reach her somewhat obtuse brain. When, however, she grasped his meaning, when she at last comprehended

his proposal in its full bearings, her wrath knew no bounds. She flushed the colour of a crimson peony; the tinsel ornaments on the bit of lace that did duty as a cap quivered, as if sharing the indignation of its owner.

There were three sins for which she had never been able to forgive Miss Grey—her beauty, grace, and refinement. She felt the soft speech, the quiet dignity of the governess's manner, as a perpetual reproach to herself. That this girl should so far have attracted the admiration of such a man as that he should wish to make her his wife, that she should be raised to such a position in society as she—Mrs. Bloxam—with all her wealth, could never hope to occupy, was not to be borne. It should never come to pass with her consent. Having no reasonable objection to adduce, she took refuge in invective.

"So, sir," she began, in a voice tremulous with passion, and closing her fan with a snap that threatened to break it, "you are the person who laid in wait to attempt to entice a young female away from her dooty to her employers! Oh! you needn't think I don't know about it; I hear everything from my precious Juliana. And you have the resurance to come here to me—to *me*, actually in my own house—with the barefaced request that I would assist you in your vile manifestations."

"Pardon me for interrupting you," said Mr. Hartley, "but I really cannot follow you. I have not the remotest idea to what you allude."

"It 's all very well for you to pretend ignorance," returned the lady with what she intended as withering sarcasm. "My darling Juliana informed me of your proceedings—how you made acquaintance with Miss Grey in Kensington Gardens under pretence of restoring his boat to my sweet boy; most scandalous and improper conduct, I must say; a pretty example to my angel children! When I reprimanded Miss Grey—as I had a right to do—and told her that, if such were her goings-on, I should not consider her a fit instructress and companion for my precious children, the minx answered me in a way most improper for a person in her situation. She had the effrontery to deny Juliana's statement. She actually gave me notice, too, and would have left the house at once, but I told her I could not possibly dispense with her services in that heartless and inconsiderate manner; so she relented to stay for a fortnight or three weeks, till I was suited. There will be no difficulty in finding one who will better depreciate the privilege of residing under this roof, having the companionship of those blessed angels, *I do* hope."

Here Mrs. Bloxam opened her fan again, and began fanning herself violently, as if to waft away the sense of her woes.

Brian listened, half aghast and half amused. The latter feeling would have predominated had he not been pained by the thought of that delicate, refined girl being subjected to the coarse, vulgar insults of this woman. Mrs. Bloxam's words had been poured out in such a volley that he could enter no protest until she paused to take breath.

"I do not wonder that Miss Grey should have been offended by such misrepresentation," he said. "When I had the good fortune to restore the boat to your little boy, Miss Grey thanked me—as any lady would have done—and desired the boy to thank me. This he declined to do, and I merely said, 'Never mind,' or something of the sort, and that was all that passed; nor have I spoken to Miss Grey since. Had I attempted to make her acquaintance in any surreptitious manner, I am certain I should not have succeeded. I have watched Miss Grey closely, it is true; but quite unknown to her. Your own good sense will tell you that had I perceived anything but the strictest propriety of demeanour, combined with sweetness and forbearance of manner—sometimes, I must say, most severely tried—I should never have come forward with such a request as I have had the honour of submitting to you. There is surely no impropriety in my wish to win Miss Grey's consent to be my wife? As I stated before, I am prepared to give references—I do not expect you to take the bare word of a stranger. I am ready to bring forward testimony both as to my character and position in life. Surely, after this explanation, you will see that Miss Grey has been in no way to blame."

"I see nothing of the sort, sir!" almost screamed Mrs. Bloxam, more angry than ever because she found herself put in the wrong. "I ain't accustomed to have my statements called in question. Do you wish to persuade me that my little Juliana—the most artless, amiable child in the world!—has told me an untruth? Do you suppose I don't believe her before a stranger? As for governesses, I can't think what those creatures are coming to," she continued, melting into a lachrymose mood, and sinking back amongst her cushions, as if crushed by the enormities of the offending class. "Their base ingratitude is unspeakable, I do assure you, sir. My former governess—Miss Jenkinson—suited me better than Miss Grey: she knew better how to value her privileges, and the society of my little angels. It is true they did not make much progress in their studies, but she explained that. They are such quick, clever children, it would be unsafe to overwork their brains too early. Miss Jenkinson, too, was devoted to me—quite devoted. Well—would you believe it?—this exemplary and indefatigable young woman decamped from this house, a little more than three months ago, leaving me without a word of warning; and I missed a diamond brooch; and I am sure the wretch took it—and after all her pretensions! But I shall take good care Miss Grey does not do the same, that I can tell you!"

Brian assured her that he did not believe there could be the slightest danger of Miss Grey either decamping or stealing a diamond brooch; and, finding the lady in rather a softer mood, he again urged his request to be presented to Miss Grey.

"Your proposal, sir, is quite—quite uncommon; I never heard of such a thing!" returned Mrs. Bloxam, a little mollified by Mr. Hartley's patient attention to her complaints. Besides, his handsome person and winning manner began to have their effect. "A young woman without a penny to bless herself with, and in a menial position, too! I should think you might do better, sir."

Mrs. Bloxam ended with a smirk, and smoothed down the folds of her rich silk.

"That is not the question, madam," replied Mr. Hartley; "and must I say that I altogether object to the word menial as applied to a lady who undertakes the instruction of the young?" There was a flash in the keen grey eyes as he spoke that rather cowed Miss Grey's employer.

She endeavoured to pass it off with a toss of the head. "I merely used the term as applied to one who works for wages," she said; "if Miss Grey can be said to earn her wages," she added spitefully. "I hope, sir, you're not one of those levellers who would make no distinction between classes. There must always be rich and poor, and the poor ought to be humble, and not stuck up."

Mr. Hartley assured her that he was no leveller, but added warmly that he considered respect was due to a lady, whether rich or poor.

Brian rose from his seat as he spoke; Mrs. Bloxam rose also. She remained silent, puzzled, not understanding the irony of his speech. But seeing by Mr. Hartley's indignant countenance that she had not produced the impression she desired, she again took refuge in offence.

"Sir, I ain't accustomed to be spoke to in that way in my own house," she said, again reddening with vexation.

"Probably not, madam," returned Brian coldly, as he stood with his hat in his hand. "Once more, will you allow me to see Miss Grey?"

"Certainly not, as long as she's in my employ," returned Mrs. Bloxam. "A pretty story, truly! Much good she would be to me with a young man coming dangling after her! I don't choose to have her head turned by any such folly. I always make a point of not allowing followers; I don't consider it respectable."

Brian Hartley was too much disgusted with this woman's exceptionally atrocious vulgarity to deign reply or further expostulation. "Will you, at any rate, oblige me by giving me the address where I may find Miss Grey after she leaves you?" he asked.

"That I cannot; I do not trouble my head as to what becomes of these young persons after they leave my service," returned Mrs. Bloxam stiffly. "I believe she has an elderly relative somewhere in London that she goes to see when she has permission to go out, but I know nothing more; it is nothing to me."

"And you will not even ask her for the address?" said Mr. Hartley.

"No, indeed; I am not going to trouble myself," replied the lady.

Brian could do no more. Angry, baffled, he moved towards the door; nothing could be gained by pressing the matter further in this quarter. He took leave of Mrs. Bloxam in the briefest and coldest manner, and she responded with her grandest air. He left the house, shaking the dust off his feet, so to say, his feelings in too much of a tumult to be at once sensible of the keenness of his disappointment. But as he walked rapidly away, the rebuff he had received began to tell upon him with all its consequences. But so far from the impediments he found in his way discouraging him or turning him in the slightest degree from his determination, they only served to fan his ardour.

The disgust and indignation with which that Jezebel he had just interviewed had inspired him—he would not vilify the name of woman by applying it to her—also increased a hundredfold the tenderness Miss Grey had called forth. The idea of that sweet, gentle girl being subjected to the tyranny and caprice of that mass of ignorance and selfishness was intolerable. But what to do next, how to proceed? These questions caused him a sleepless night, and morning's dawn found him no nearer the solution of his difficulties.

CHAPTER IV.

MIRIAM GREY.



GREATLY perplexed Brian Hartley remained all that day. Granted that he still had the option of meeting Miss Grey in Kensington Gardens, would any such meeting advance his object by a hair's breadth? Was it not as impossible as ever that he should address her there—he, a perfect stranger? Any such attempt would not only be repelled at the moment, but would prejudice her against him for the future. What could be gained by giving her a wrong estimate of his character? But if he was not to be allowed to see her in that house, where, to his imagination, she was imprisoned like some enchanted princess in an ogre's castle, where could he have a chance of making her acquaintance? How should he even discover her future place of abode when she left Mr. Bloxam's house? She might be living in quite another part of London, where he would not see

her in her daily walks; though even in this case he would not admit to himself the despairing thought that she might be lost to him beyond recall.

He had an engagement to an "at home" that evening. He went with no idea of enjoyment, but simply because he had nothing else to do, for one reason, and because, in his perturbed state of mind, he was glad to seek distraction in a crowd. The state of inactivity to which he was reduced was galling to him. It almost seemed as if a blank wall was built up before him. In the matter of David Leigh's trust there seemed nothing more to be done. Mr. Sherwood still expected they would hear again from this Birmingham clerk; but days had passed, and he made no further sign. So the settlement of that business might be as far off as ever.

Brian wandered through the well-lighted and well-filled rooms, listening to the music and the buzz of conversation, and addressing a few words now and then to some acquaintance, when a conversation between two ladies struck his ear. He had not been listening, so he did not hear the beginning, but as he stood behind them, wedged in for a moment by another group, one lady remarked to the other—

"It was quite an extraordinary and romantic affair, I assure you. It was a case of love at first sight on his part, before he went to India, and the courtship was carried on by letter."

"And she went out to him, you say?"

"Oh, yes; she went out to him, just because she was so charmed with his letters; and they are as happy as happy can be. I have it from the best authority," the first speaker replied.

There was a stir as a brilliant pianoforte performance came to an end, and Brian made his way across the room, down the staircase, and into the sweet summer night. It was now the end of the London season; another week and some of his friends would be off to the moors, others to the Continent for the long vacation, others to the seaside; and London would be left a social desert. Brian had several invitations to various country-houses later on, but he had, as yet, laid no plans for the autumn. How could he, with the business that had brought him to England still unsettled?

But it was neither of the moors nor of country visits he was thinking as he lifted his hat and bared his brow to the night breeze. The conversation he had overheard had given him an idea. It seemed strange to him that it had not occurred to him before. But having no correspondents, and never having had occasion to write anything beyond a few business notes, answers to invitations, and so on, this means of communication had not occurred to him till now. He would write to Miss Grey—why not? She could not be offended by the declaration of an honest man's love, and a letter would surely reach her. He did not suppose that the harridan in whose house she lived would go to the length of intercepting a letter.

He would much rather have told his story by word of mouth; he had never contemplated having to tell it so abruptly; but he could explain how he had been driven to this course. He was unpractised in literary composition; but he could, at any rate, say what he had to say in a plain unvarnished manner that would leave no doubt of his earnestness and sincerity. He took that night to think over the manner of his letter, and then he wrote.

* * * * * *

Miriam Grey sat in the schoolroom that afternoon: for a wonder, alone. Mrs. Bloxam had gone in her carriage to visit a cousin who lived at Blackheath. She had taken the "angel children" with her. It was a long drive, and she would have saved much time by taking the train; but her cousin had married a poor man, and Mrs. Bloxam delighted in displaying her carriage and livery servants, her dresses and jewels, before the eyes of "poor Kitty." She also caused the children to be decked in as much finery as could be disposed about their small persons, as a contrast to "poor Kitty's" children, who ran about in simple brown holland blouses. She seldom went, however, without taking some cast-off garments for the little Gibsons, for which act of generosity she considered that "poor Kitty" ought to be profoundly grateful.

It therefore happened that this afternoon Miriam Grey was left to the rare treat of solitude—to solitude, but not to idleness. A pile of garments in various stages of dilapidation lay on the table. Mrs. Bloxam could not be made to see the necessity of renewing such articles of clothing as did not meet the public view, and the governess was expected to patch and darn at all moments when no other demands were made upon her time. In two days Miriam would leave. Mrs. Bloxam was quite correct in supposing there would be no difficulty in finding a successor. Applications poured in after the first advertisement—applications from clergymen's daughters, officers' daughters, daughters of reduced gentlemen, of widows, of tradesmen. All these were not only willing but anxious to obtain the fifteen pounds a year for a life of incessant labour and constant mortification.

Miriam sat at the table, which she had drawn as close as possible to the open window, for the sake of the air, the scent of the mignonette, and the canary's song. She was now engaged in replacing sundry missing buttons; but every now and then, as she drew out her thread, she sighed wearily, casting a glance upwards to the blue sky seen over the roofs of the opposite houses. After a while she laid down her work, and with her elbows on the table gazed earnestly and fondly at a framed photograph propped up against her work-basket. No portrait of affianced lover was this, but of a sweet and placid-looking old lady. The fine hands quietly folded on the black dress emphasized the serene expression of the face. A mob-cap crowned the white hair, that showed traces of having once been wavy, like Miriam's. The face was that of one who had passed through troubled waters into a haven of rest; it was the

picture of a sweet, lovable old lady; no wonder that Miriam regarded it with tenderness.

"So your words have come true, grannie dear, and I have proved myself 'not strong enough,' in spite of my resolves. But it has been too hard, too dreadful!" Thus she apostrophised the photograph, while tears sprang to her eyes. "I am coming back to you, like a bad shilling, granny; only in your dear eyes I am never anything but the purest silver. It is very nice to have somebody who believes in one, especially when one is almost out of heart about one's self. There is no one else cares for me but perhaps Edward; but there, I don't like Edward—at least, not in the way he wishes, and I never shall. This world is full of contradictions and contrarieties, I think." So she continued her musings. "I know granny will point out to me afresh that it is folly to refuse a chance of settling comfortably in life, and that here is a good home waiting for my acceptance; and I am so tired—so tired that I almost think I should be tempted to accept it did the offer come from anyone but Edward, but from him—never! I wonder why I cannot see him with other people's eyes. He is exemplary as regards conduct, steady and intelligent in business, and likely to rise in the world, they say. He is not what would be called bad-looking, and yet I don't like him, and don't trust him, and I can't help it, and can't explain why. But I know you only wish for my happiness, granny dear. I wonder if it can be true that I am as like what you were when you were young, as you have sometimes told me; I am afraid you see me with partial eyes; I am sure I am not so bonny as you must have been.—Come in!"

This in answer to a knock at the schoolroom door.

"A letter for you, miss," announced the maid who entered, while she placed an envelope, directed in a bold, manly handwriting, before Miss Grey. She evidently regarded the missive with curiosity—letters of any kind seldom arrived addressed to the governess.

"A letter for me, Ann? Thank you," said Miriam, taking up the letter and regarding it with a degree of surprise that heightened Ann's curiosity—a curiosity that was not destined to be gratified, however, for Miriam laid it down again, unopened. Ann, having ascertained that Miss Grey would like her tea at six o'clock, had no choice but to leave the room.

Surely, Miriam thought, there must be some mistake; the letter must have been wrongly sent. But no; there was the direction plain enough—"Miss Grey, c/o — Bloxam, Esq." It must be for her, and yet how strange! As she glanced rapidly over the letter, she started with a thrill of the nerves. A wave of crimson colour flooded her pale face. The hand that held the letter shook, and she caught her breath. She placed her hand to her brow, for she had turned quite dizzy for the moment. When the mist cleared from before her eyes, she read the closely written pages over again, word by word, pondering each sentence as she read. When she had taken in their full meaning, she leaned back in her chair, the letter clasped in her hands. Her breath came thick and fast, her lips quivered, her cheeks flushed and paled.

"Oh, if I could! if I only could!" she murmured, while a wistful smile fluttered on her lips. Did she call him to mind? Yes, she remembered him perfectly. She closed her eyes, that the image might become the more distinct. She remembered she had been struck with his appearance that time when he brought Albert's boat to land, and she had speculated for the moment whether he was anyone distinguished whose name she would know; a great traveller, perhaps, like Stanley, or Captain Speke—whose monument she saw every day in her walks. She remembered the sound of his voice, too; and the few words he spoke had a ring of such genuine kindness, as well as manliness. Surely here was one any woman might trust with her life's happiness—one good and true. She had several times since that first day noticed him, and the wonder had passed through her mind that he should care to visit Kensington Gardens so often. And it was to see her he came! Why, it was like a fairy tale!

"I remember now how kindly he looked at me; it is not so often that sympathy with me shines out of anyone's eyes, that I should forget it," she said to herself. "But it is impossible! As a matter of course, it is quite impossible. What would he think of me if I could accept an offer made merely from compassion? And from what else could it be?"

And yet how hard she felt it to have to close this door, that seemed to show through it such a heaven of light! A something whispered to her heart that this was the man she might learn to revere and love. Then to be lifted above all worldly cares! to be secure and at peace for all her days! No more fears of being a burden upon her grandmother; no more dependence, no more hard work, no more humiliation! She read the letter over again. It was a terrible temptation; and Mr. Hartley did not ask her to decide at once: he only begged for an opportunity of pleading his cause. But—as she repeated to herself whilst sighing deeply over the renunciation—it was impossible. She must not allow herself to think of it.

As if afraid that if she dallied longer with the temptation her resolution might give way, she rose and brought her desk to the table where she had been sitting. Opening it, she took out a sheet of note-paper, and, laying it before her, she began to write quickly, as if determined not to allow herself time for thought or hesitation.

"Noble, generous man," she wrote, "how shall I thank you for your compassion, for your tender goodness towards one so poor and insignificant as I? For the future I shall think better of the whole human race because of your magnanimity. But do you not see that what you ask is impossible? We

are strangers; you do not know me. If you became acquainted with me, you might probably find me something quite different from what you had imagined. You might be disappointed, and then you would regret that you had allowed your divine pity to carry you so far; and I should read this in your eyes, your manner; and this I could not bear. Though I cannot be your wife, I shall always pray for you, and think of you with reverence and gratitude. Do not let your kind heart grieve for me: I am not so forlorn as you suppose. I have an aged and dear relative to whom I am going, and I think—indeed, I am sure—that I shall be able to meet the world with less fear of its neglect and coldness because of your letter, which I shall keep always.

"Adieu! Heaven bless you and make you happy! Such will always be the prayer of—Yours gratefully,

"Miriam Grey."

Miriam would not trust herself to read this letter over; she knew if she did she would find it so poor and feeble that she would not have courage to send it. She folded it with trembling fingers, and placing it in an envelope directed it according to the address given. Then replacing her desk on the side table, she ran up-stairs, put on her bonnet, and went out to post her letter. Not to other hands would she entrust it. There was a pillar-post close by the square, and into this she dropped it. As she heard the sound of it striking the bottom of the box, as she knew it was irrevocably gone out of her power to recall, a sort of heart-sickness came over her. She asked herself whether she had acted wisely, whether she might not have granted Mr. Hartley's request, and have given him a chance of becoming acquainted with her—whether she had not acted under the impulse of a sort of maidenly shyness, and thus cast aside what might have been a supreme happiness, such as would never again offer itself to her acceptance.

But no; she knew, if her decision had again to be made, it would be the same. Nevertheless, when she reached the house, she crept up-stairs to the little, bare, comfortless room she was allowed to call hers, and throwing herself on the bed burst into a flood of tears.

CHAPTER V.

THE CLAIMANT.

DID Brian Hartley feel disappointed when he received Miriam's letter? Scarcely. He had determined that, if possible, he would win this sweet and lovely girl to be his wife, the guiding star of his life, the fair spirit of his future home. But if she had at once accepted his proposals, if she had jumped at his offer with no further knowledge of him than could be gleaned from his letter, there is little doubt that such an immediate consent, savouring as it would have done of mercenary motives, would have cooled his ardour, and might even have caused him to repent of his hasty declaration. The only thing that really pained him in her letter was the evidence that she did not credit the love and admiration that had prompted him, but assumed that he had been actuated by compassion alone.

Brian was not quite so Quixotic as this. He would have exclaimed against so many tender and delicately nurtured women having to breathe the chilly air of poverty and loneliness; it would have moved him with pity to think of the numerous sisterhood doomed to a dull routine of labour without hope of respite, without ever being destined to hear the voice of hope and love. Had Miriam Grey, however, been plain and middle-aged, instead of being young and lovely, it is to be feared that his feelings would have exhaled themselves in vague compassion. Certain it is that he would never have come to the rescue in the way he proposed.

His heart was filled with joy as he held her letter in his hand. Her very handwriting, the paper she



"'Oh, if I could! if I only could!'"—*p.* 16

had touched, had a charm for him. The more he thought it over, the less did he feel discouraged. It was no curt refusal without plea. Had her heart been preoccupied, had she been already engaged, he felt sure she would have told him so. But her refusal was for his sake, not because any previously plighted troth forbade her to listen to him. He was not at all discouraged; he would win her yet, he said to himself—he would force her to believe in the sincerity of his love.

It was not till some little time after first reading the letter that it struck him that Miriam Grey had given no clue as to her future address. This did not give him much concern. He had no idea she was leaving Mrs. Bloxam's immediately; that lady had spoken of three weeks; besides, it did not occur to him as possible that, although Mrs. Bloxam had professed ignorance as to Miss Grey's connections, some of the household should not know where she was going. She had told him that she was returning to an aged relative; this relative, whoever he or she might be, would probably receive him in a very different spirit from what Mrs. Bloxam had done, and would surely grant him the opportunity he sought. In the meantime he would write again; he would disabuse her mind of the idea that had taken possession of it; he would convince her that it was love and not compassion that had dictated his proposals. He would entreat her also to let him have her address, and not to cast him off without a trial.

He wrote from the fulness of his heart, and eagerly awaited Miriam's answer. Two days, three days, elapsed, and no answer came; and now another matter of importance called for his attention. He received a request from Mr. Sherwood that he would call at the office as soon as convenient. On arriving there he found that the previous day's post had brought a communication from the Birmingham clerk. The letter was signed Edward Brodrick, and stated that the writer was now in possession of all the documents necessary to prove his claim to David Leigh's legacy, as Mary Henderson's grandson and sole heir.

Brian Hartley, anxious to get the affair settled, telegraphed to Mr. Brodrick to come up to London immediately, and appointed the following day at three o'clock to meet him at Messrs. Sherwood and Lucas's office, where his proofs would be at once examined. In talking over the business with Mr. Sherwood, Brian confessed to having had a feeling of disappointment that the legacy could not be paid into David Leigh's sweetheart's own hands; but that he now hoped sincerely that Mr. Brodrick might be able to substantiate his claim, and that the affair might be quickly settled, and the trust off his mind.

It was with considerable alacrity that he took his way to Lincoln's Inn at the appointed hour the next day. He was anxious to pay over the legacy should Mr. Brodrick's claim prove well founded, but determined at the same time not to do his old friend the injustice of disposing of his money until the most searching investigation had been made into the equity of the claim. On his arrival at the office he found Mr. Brodrick there, punctual to the minute. A formal salutation passed between the two young men on their introduction. It would almost have seemed as if there was some mutual repulsion, as if they had from the first moment taken an attitude of antagonism.

Brian Hartley, at any rate, felt a strong predisposition against Mary Henderson's heir, and this feeling probably gave a certain coldness and stiffness to his manner that the other resented. Unreasonable as they may be, people cannot always control these intuitive likes and dislikes, and yet what could Brian Hartley object to? It would have been difficult to point out anything in Edward Brodrick's appearance to which exception could be taken; on the contrary, he presented a perfect model of propriety and respectability. In person, he was an ordinary-looking individual—one who would be passed in a crowd without notice, or noticed as being rather good-looking than otherwise; somewhat below medium height, slight in build, with neat features, light hair accurately parted in the middle and carefully brushed on each side of a rather narrow forehead, light grey eyes, a clean-shaved face; there was nothing in all this to object to, surely. His complexion was pale, inclining to the sallow—the result of a too sedentary occupation, probably. His attire was immaculate, from the crown of his well-brushed hat to the tips of his polished boots. His hands, when his grey gloves were drawn off, were seen to be as white as a woman's. He would perhaps have looked better had his light summer overcoat and his trousers not been drab, so very much the same tint as his hair and complexion; but who ever heard of one man taking a dislike to another on account of the colour of his coat and trousers?

Be the cause what it might, Brian decided he did not like him. He noticed that when they were seated, Mr. Brodrick drew his chair a little further into the shadow, and there was a shifty uneasiness about his eyes when Mr. Sherwood addressed him. But this might be habit, or perhaps his eyes were weak. Then his voice was not agreeable; it was of the kind that may be called creaky. He pronounced his words, too, with an almost pedantic precision that made Brian feel impatient. But then suspense and anxiety had, at the moment, somewhat impaired Brian's fine temper, and this might account for much.

"You have brought the necessary documents with you, I presume, Mr. Brodrick?" said the lawyer.

"Certainly I have," the claimant replied. He drew a pocket-book from his breast-pocket, and selecting several papers laid them before Mr. Sherwood. "You will find there the certificate of Mary Henderson's marriage with my grandfather, James Brodrick; the register of the birth of their son James—my father; the certificate of his marriage

with Emma Marshall, my mother; and, lastly, the register of my birth. They are all certified copies. There are also two letters written by my grandmother to my father many years ago, and that I found in an old desk of my father's. I believe they sufficiently prove her identity with the Mary Henderson, originally of Cowthorpe, to whom the money is bequeathed. I have marked the passages where she refers to her past life," he concluded.

Brian Hartley watched Mr. Sherwood's countenance whilst that gentleman examined the documents laid before him. After his examination he placed the papers in order, and, lifting his head, addressed himself to Mr. Hartley.

"These documents, as far as they go, are perfectly satisfactory," he said. "There seems no doubt that the Mary Henderson who married this James Brodrick"—laying his hand upon the certificate—"is the person of whom we are in search. She, it appears, left one son, James, and he also left one son, Edward. It is perfectly regular and straightforward. Your grandmother resided in London after she left Cowthorpe, it appears; at any rate, she married there. Had you much difficulty in finding the certificate?" he asked, turning to Mr. Brodrick.

"No; I knew the parish where they lived. I did not think that either my grandfather or grandmother had moved about much. I went first to that parish church, and there I found the certificate," the young man replied.

"Did your grandmother—this Mrs. Brodrick—die in London?" Mr. Sherwood questioned.

"I—I don't exactly know," Mr. Brodrick stammered.

Mr. Sherwood glanced over the papers again, and made a note on a slip of paper. "Your father, I see, married and died in Birmingham, and you were born there. Was your father in business in Birmingham?" he inquired.

"He was in a situation there," Mr. Brodrick answered, this time without any hesitation. "My father was educated for the legal profession; but he threw it up, and went to Birmingham, where he married. I believe he had displeased or disappointed his parents in some way, for I do not think they had much intercourse afterwards."

"Your father died young, I see," remarked Mr. Sherwood. "Did you continue to reside in Birmingham after his death?"

"Yes; my father's death was caused by an accident. My mother returned to her father's house, taking me with her. I was educated at the grammar school, and when old enough was placed with the firm by whom I am now employed."

"You never saw much of your grandparents in London, I suppose?" said Mr. Sherwood.

"Scarcely at all. The fact is that my mother was not—not quite in the same rank of life," returned Mr. Brodrick, again hesitating. "I think, perhaps, my father's marriage was one cause of offence."

"You surely must have heard your grandparents alluded to, though you had no personal knowledge of them?" Mr. Sherwood suggested; "or did they both die while you were a child?"

"I suppose that was the case," Mr. Brodrick replied rather eagerly, as if catching at the idea; "you see, my mother was not likely to tell me much about them."

Mr. Sherwood again carefully went over the documents. "Well, sir, I will have all these certificates and registers duly examined and certified," he said at last. "If they prove what I believe them to be, I hope I shall be able to congratulate you on your accession to a very handsome fortune," he added, turning to the young man, who, with a deep sigh of relief, straightened himself in his chair.

Brian Hartley also felt a sense of relief, though conscious of a wish that somebody else had been Mary Henderson's heir.

"When, then, may I expect to hear from you?" the young man asked anxiously.

"You may depend upon it I shall lose no time, as my client is desirous of seeing the business completed," Mr. Sherwood answered; "but you must be aware that Mr. Hartley's trust is one of a very onerous nature. It is my duty to have every point of the claim duly attested, and I may have to take counsel's opinion. I have no doubt in my own mind that you are the legitimate grandson of the Mary Henderson of Cowthorpe to whom David Leigh left the half of his fortune; but then a matter of such importance must be placed beyond all question of a doubt."

"You will find there nothing but what is correct," Mr. Brodrick asserted.

"That is what I expect," returned Mr. Sherwood. "I observed before that these documents appear to be all right as far as they go; but there is one register wanting."

Edward Brodrick changed colour; he seemed to collapse as he sat. He did not look Mr. Sherwood in the face as he inquired, in an unsteady voice, what further evidence was wanting.

"I do not find amongst these papers the date of your grandmother's, Mrs. Brodrick's, death," Mr. Sherwood replied. "This date will have to be supplied."

"My—my grandmother's death?" Mr. Brodrick repeated in a hesitating manner, while he took out his handkerchief and wiped his face, as if to conceal the workings of his countenance for a moment.

"I think I understood you to say that you do not know whether she died in London?" said Mr. Sherwood.

"No; that is it," replied Mr. Brodrick. "I—I—the fact is, it was so long ago I do not know where she died. It may have been in London, or it may have been abroad; I seem to have some recollection of hearing that she had gone to the Continent. But, as I explained, I was a child, and after my father's

death there really was no intercourse. My grandmother was in London, and my mother and I in Birmingham."

This was plausible, but he did not appear at ease. Perhaps it was not conducive to self-possession to have Brian Hartley's keen eyes fixed upon his face as if looking him through.

Mr. Sherwood made an ejaculation, the meaning of which was dubious.

"You see, it will be absolutely necessary to prove the death of this Mary Henderson, to whom the money is bequeathed, before you can be said to be her heir," he said. "'Heir, or heirs,'" he continued, referring to a document that lay at his hand. "I presume you are an only child, Mr. Brodrick?"

"Certainly; I am an only child," Mr. Brodrick returned. But again there was a change of colour, and an embarrassment of manner not lost upon Brian Hartley. There was surely nothing to cause confusion in a simple question merely requiring a matter-of-fact reply.

Mr. Sherwood rose from his seat. Brian Hartley and Mr. Brodrick rose also.

"I am afraid we can proceed no further till we have the date of the death of Mrs. Brodrick—formerly Mary Henderson—certified," the former observed.

"Certainly not," Mr. Hartley agreed.

"Do you doubt my word, sir?" Mr. Brodrick inquired, flushing hotly, as he turned towards Brian.

"By no means, my dear sir," Mr. Sherwood interposed. "You must understand that I am Mr. Hartley's legal adviser in this very important trust. It is my duty to see that every point is established as clearly as if the legacy was certain to be contested in a court of law. I would advise you to institute inquiries as to the missing date at once. As soon as you can furnish us with that necessary document, and that and the others are certified, I can answer for my client's readiness to pay over to you the amount of the legacy."

"Quite right," Brian affirmed. "I am only anxious that this affair should be settled as soon as possible. Should you require funds to facilitate your inquiries, Mr. Brodrick——"

"No, no," the young man hastily interrupted, evidently shrinking from any offer of assistance. "All the same obliged to you, sir," he added. "It may take me some time; as I said before, I don't exactly know the when and where; but I have no doubt I shall manage it—it must be found."

While he spoke, he stood, his hat in his hand, his eyes bent upon the ground. Then straightening himself, as if with a sudden determination, he wished Mr. Sherwood and Mr. Hartley good-bye, and bowed himself out of the office.

When the door closed behind him, Brian and Mr. Sherwood looked at each other.

"It strikes me there's a screw loose somewhere," Brian remarked. "There's something about that young fellow that does not ring like true metal."

Mr. Sherwood shrugged his shoulders. "He will have to prove the old lady's death," he observed.

"Do you then think——?"

"My dear Hartley, I think nothing, except that we must be careful to whom you pay over the forty thousand pounds," returned Mr. Sherwood.

"I suppose the wish was father to the thought," said Brian. "All the way to England the idea of seeing David Leigh's sweetheart was in my mind, and somehow I cannot give it up; I can't persuade myself that she is really dead."

Mr. Sherwood smiled.

"A feeling of that kind does not approve itself to your legal mind, does it?" Brian added, with an answering smile.

"I am afraid it would scarcely be taken in evidence in a court of justice," replied Mr. Sherwood. "By the way, have you seen anything to suit you in the matter of a house yet?"

"I have not been looking about me lately," said Brian, checking a sigh.

"I think I heard you say you would like something such as Wellwood used to be. A client of mine wishes to dispose of his house; it has ample gardens, and a large paddock belonging to it, and stands well. It might be worth your while to see it," Mr. Sherwood suggested. "If you have no better engagement, come and dine with us at our little place at Twickenham on Saturday. Mrs. Sherwood will be very glad to see you, and we can talk it over."

Brian thanked his friend, and accepted the invitation. He then took leave, Mr. Sherwood promising to let him know should he receive any further communication from Mr. Brodrick during the week.

CHAPTER VI.

DISAPPEARED.



THIS was on a Tuesday; it was on the previous Friday he wrote his last letter to Miriam Grey. He was beginning to feel that he could bear the suspense no longer, when on the Wednesday morning he found on the breakfast-table amongst his other letters one with "On Her Majesty's Service" printed on the envelope. On opening it he found his own letter to Miss Grey, with "Gone away, address not known," written across it.

For the moment he felt as if he had been stunned by a heavy blow. "Gone away, address not known:"

was that to be the end? He soon rallied from the shock, however. He could not believe that he would find any real difficulty in tracing her. Though Mrs. Bloxam denied all knowledge of her home and connections, some of the servants would surely know where Miss Grey had gone; a liberal "tip" would no doubt have some influence in strengthening the memory. He forgot that, if they had known, his letter might have been re-directed.

He hastily swallowed his breakfast, and calling a hansom had himself driven to the square, but left the cab at the corner to avoid exciting attention. He found the footman who opened the door to him really ignorant of what he wanted to know; but that exalted functionary condescended to suggest that perhaps the schoolroom maid might be able to give some information. Ann was accordingly summoned from the upper regions, but the extent of her intelligence was small.

"Missus had been to Blackheath, and got into one of her tantrums because when she came home she found that Miss Grey had gone to her room to lie down, with a bad headache. Missus said she wouldn't put up with no such affectation, and sent me to desire Miss Grey to come down immediately and see after the children's tea. And when Miss Grey came down she flew out at her because she looked pale and heavy-eyed, poor dear, as if she had been crying; which I think she must have had some bad news in a letter I took her up. And Miss Grey, she wouldn't stand missus's abuse no longer, and left permiscuous-like, which she was quite right."

Thus spoke Ann, adding that in her opinion Miss Grey was a lady, if she was a governess, and that was more than could be said for everyone.

She further stated that Thomas had fetched the cab for Miss Grey. Mr. Hartley inquired if there was any likelihood that the driver would remember the address where he had driven Miss Grey, but Thomas declared that he did not fetch a cab, but hailed one that happened to be passing. He didn't suppose it belonged to the neighbouring stand.

Mr. Hartley inquired if he had heard the address given, but it seemed that Thomas had not thought it worth his while to cross the pavement to open the cab-door for the governess, so he had heard nothing.

Thinking it possible that the cab that conveyed Miriam Grey to her destination might have belonged to the stand, Brian told the driver of the hansom to wait for him where he was, and proceeded to the stand to make inquiries. Fruitlessly, however. None of the drivers had any recollection of taking up a fare from the square on the evening in question. He drove back to his hotel, intensely disappointed, disquieted, perplexed, but not yet dismayed. He did not all at once realise that Miriam Grey had disappeared as completely as if she had melted into thin air. It was the delay against which he chafed; a delay his impatience could ill brook.

Miriam had given no single hint in her letter as to where she was going, but Brian had only said to himself that the omission was a proof of her delicacy and refinement of mind. He admired her reticence, and the manner in which she had retreated from his pursuit. The omission had not occurred to him then as being so serious in its consequences; nor did he yet grasp to the full the probable result. What Ann had said about Miss Grey having gone to her room after the receipt of a letter—his letter, he made no doubt—and of the traces of tears, affected him deeply. Had she wept in sympathy with his disappointment? or had his pleadings touched her tender heart? Any way, this circumstance gave him additional hope of success in his suit when he found her.

Ay—when he found her! It was not till he began to try to form some plan of active search that he perceived how greatly he had been underrating his difficulties, and the perception came to him like a plunge into cold water. He now realised, for the first time, the enormous extent and overwhelming population of London. As he pondered, it was borne in upon his mind how a person might be completely lost in the throng, and never found again.

He comprehended, after even a few days' experience, how utterly futile such a search must prove without some well-considered plan. He made up his mind to take Mr. Sherwood into his confidence, and to throw himself upon the lawyer's greater acumen and experience of London. He was too thoroughly in earnest to heed the smile the confession of his romance might call forth; it would little matter to him, if only he could obtain help in his search for Miriam Grey.

He went to Twickenham on the Saturday, early in the afternoon, at Mr. Sherwood's request, and found that a project had been started to take him to see the house of which the lawyer had spoken in the beginning of the week. It was only twenty miles by rail; they could easily get there and back before dinner, and Mrs. Sherwood would accompany them to give her opinion. It was an old red-brick mansion, something resembling Wellwood, but more ancient and more picturesque, Mr. Sherwood said. If Brian liked it, he would advise him to close with it. The former owner was dead, and the place was to be disposed of at once; the heir, who was his client, not being inclined to live there, and requiring the money.

Brian could not refuse to accede to Mr. Sherwood's plan, though he took a heavy heart with him. He was charmed with the place, however, on their arrival, and could not but acknowledge that it was the very thing for which he had wished. It was a fine picturesque old mansion, standing on the slope of a gentle eminence, well sheltered by timber trees. At one side a wide terrace stretched from end to end, and a terraced garden followed the slope, till it reached a clear winding stream at the foot. From the entrance-gates a carriage-drive swept up to the front door, enclosing in its embrace a lawn soft as velvet. The gardens were extensive, and in excellent order; the stables and outhouses in good condition. The rooms were spacious, and furnished handsomely

and in good taste. The furniture might be taken at a valuation, Mr. Sherwood had ascertained.

Brian decided that it was what he wanted, that he could not do better, and empowered Mr. Sherwood to treat for it on his behalf. But he spoke so indifferently, and showed so little gladness in view of this beautiful place as his future home, that both Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood were struck by his manner. Whilst these two were discussing some part of the domestic arrangements with the housekeeper, who had remained in charge until the house was sold, Brian went on to the broad terrace, and leaning with his arms folded on the parapet, gave himself up to anxious thought.

It was a beautiful afternoon in August. The air was filled with the scent of roses and clematis. The stream glittered in the sunshine that fell in long rays athwart its surface. A flock of rooks flew cawing overhead as they sought their nests in the ancient elms. Brian had intended to consult Miriam in the choice of a home; but could she fail to be satisfied with a home like this, if he could only find her?—oh! if he could only find her! If she was lost to him, of what avail to him would be all this beauty? Would it not be better for him to return whence he came, and seek forgetfulness in his old laborious life?

The world seemed very blank to him just then.



"'Is there anything that John or I can do to help?'"—*p.* 23.

He sighed deeply, and tears forced their way to the eyes of this strong man. He felt a gentle touch on his arm, and a kind voice in his ear.

"I am afraid you are in distress," said Mrs. Sherwood. Her true womanly sympathy had divined that he had some sorrow at heart.

"Yes, I am in distress," Brian replied.

"Is there anything that John or I can do to help?" Mrs. Sherwood inquired. "You know you may command us if there is."

"I know you are all kindness," Brian answered; "and, in truth, I came here to-day with the intention of speaking to Mr. Sherwood about what is troubling me."

"I am glad of that," rejoined the lady; "you cannot do better than consult John," she added, with all a wife's confidence in her husband's ability to advise for the best.

Mr. Sherwood joined them, and they made their way back to Twickenham, the lawyer feeling satisfied that he had done a good stroke of business for both his clients.

After dinner, when Mrs. Sherwood was leaving the dining-room, she said, "John, Mr. Hartley has something to speak to you about; you will find coffee in the drawing-room when you have finished your conference."

With a smile and a nod to Brian, she left them; and Mr. Sherwood, who had, like his wife, been impressed by Brian's abstracted manner and depressed expression, looked at him inquiringly.

"It is quite true I have something to say, and something that I am afraid will give you rather a low estimate of my common sense," began Brian. He then went on to relate his meeting with Miss Grey, the extraordinary likeness to Mary Henderson that had at first attracted him, and caused him to follow her, and how, after repeatedly watching her, he had fallen in love with her, and come to the resolve to marry her if he could. He recounted his interview with Mrs. Bloxam, spoke of his letter and the answer received, of his writing again, and having the second letter returned to him through the Post Office; of Miriam's disappearance, and his unavailing search; and ended by entreating Mr. Sherwood to advise him as to what could be done.

Mr. Sherwood listened attentively. He had a warm regard for Brian Hartley, and had a tolerably clear insight into his character. He was not at all surprised to hear that his love-affair was of so uncommon and unconventional a nature. He did not smile or recommend him to give it up and think no more about it, as Brian partly expected, but after sitting silent a few minutes he said abruptly, "Let us go and talk it over with Lydia."

Brian had no objection. He liked Mrs. Sherwood, and she returned the liking. They had been excellent friends ever since his first visit to Twickenham. He therefore willingly followed Mr. Sherwood to the drawing-room, where, at that gentleman's request, he repeated his tale.

Mrs. Sherwood listened with all a woman's interest. "The likeness of this Miss Grey to Mary Henderson is very strange. Can it be a mere chance likeness?" she said.

"You must remember, my dear, that the likeness is only to the idea Mr. Hartley had formed of Mary Henderson," Mr. Sherwood corrected; "it may be very different from reality."

"I scarcely think so," Brian interposed; "my old friend described his sweetheart to me so frequently, and so much in detail, that I cannot think but that I have a tolerably accurate picture of her in my mind. You see, the poor fellow's mind failed to take in the lapse of time, and he thought by describing her as he did I should recognise her when I saw her."

"After upwards of fifty years, did you not tell me once? and he retained her image so vividly all that time! It is very touching!" Mrs. Sherwood exclaimed.

"It is the future, rather than the past, that Mr. Hartley is thinking of just now," said Mr. Sherwood. "How is this girl to be found? that is the question."

"I wonder whether this Birmingham clerk who has claimed the legacy knows anything of her?" Mrs. Sherwood suggested, musingly.

"My love! what could have put such an idea into your head?" cried her husband.

Mrs. Sherwood had heard all about Edward Brodrick's claim, and had formed her own conclusions.

"Well, John, you know that Mr. Hartley didn't quite believe in that young man, nor did you either," Mrs. Sherwood asserted.

"My dear, I never said so," said Mr. Sherwood quickly.

"I know you didn't," returned his wife; "but do you suppose I don't know what you are thinking of without your speaking?"

"I begin to think, Lydia, that you are a very dangerous person," rejoined Mr. Sherwood.

"But pray tell me what connection there was in your mind between Miriam Grey and Edward Brodrick," Brian entreated.

"I don't see that, though it may be proved that this Mr. Brodrick is Mary Henderson's grandson, it is quite proved that she has no other grandchildren," said Mrs. Sherwood. "There does not, at present, seem a certainty that she is dead. How do we know who this aged relative you say Miss Grey spoke of in her letter may be?"

Mr. Sherwood threw himself back in his chair and laughed. "Upon my word, Lydia, considering you have been the wife of a lawyer for ten years, you have the happiest knack of coming to a conclusion without a particle of evidence!" he exclaimed.

"Fiddle-de-dee!" returned the lady. "I am sure you lawyers go upon conjecture often enough before you collect evidence. You must have something to begin upon, like the foundation of this netting I am busy with."

"If I thought there was the slightest chance of that young Brodrick knowing, I would take the next

train to Birmingham and wring the truth out of him!" cried Brian hotly.

"Pardon me, you will do nothing of the kind," said Mr. Sherwood. "Remember, my dear fellow, you have not the slightest reason to suppose that Brodrick knows anything of Miss Grey. It is the wildest fancy. He would think you had taken leave of your senses. Neither have we any just reason to suppose that Mrs. Brodrick is still living. Certainly it rests with her grandson to prove her death, and this he will most probably be able to do. At any rate, we must wait. He either can prove it or he cannot. If the latter should be the case, we might consider the hypothesis founded on a likeness. Another thing you must not forget: if Mrs. Brodrick had been living, how is it she did not answer our advertisement?"

"Old ladies don't always read newspapers," muttered Mrs. Sherwood as she went on with her netting.

"And in the meantime?" sighed Brian.

"Have you thought of advertising in what is called the 'agony column'? 'M. G. is implored to send her address to B. H.,' or something of that kind," Mr. Sherwood suggested.

"Yes, it did pass through my mind, but only to be rejected," replied Brian. "I am convinced she would not answer it."

"No girl worth anything would answer such an advertisement," observed Mrs. Sherwood.

"Well, then, why not try a private inquiry office?" said Mr. Sherwood.

"I may be driven to that, but I hate the thought of it," Brian answered. "It seems monstrous to set a detective after an innocent, modest young girl, as if she were a criminal."

"And supposing this 'innocent, modest young girl' had a fortune left her?—suppose, for the sake of argument, that Lydia's conjecture had some foundation, and that this girl is another grandchild of Mary Henderson's—she would then have a right to half of David Leigh's legacy, twenty thousand pounds: would you deprive her of it for the sake of a punctilio, a sentiment, however chivalrous it may be?" questioned Mr. Sherwood.

"No, I suppose not," Brian replied after a moment's thought; "and, as I said, I may be driven to that: for I will never give her up whilst I have life."

"Quite right!—I like that," said Mrs. Sherwood approvingly. "It is so delightful in these days to find anyone in good earnest!"

CHAPTER VII.

MIRIAM AT HOME.

RUNNING parallel with one of the great thoroughfares leading westwards lies a small street that still bears its ancient designation of "road." Not many years ago the whole of this district was occupied by market-gardens and pasture fields, with here and there a good house enclosed within its own grounds, and here and there a few cottages. Now omnibuses ply where wains loaded with cabbages used to creak along to Covent Garden, and now showy shops display their enticing wares where the "milky mothers" grazed, and where children wandered in the spring-time to pick daisies and buttercups.

On one side of the road referred to stand a row of small detached two-storeyed houses. When built, these were considered as quite beyond the smoke and bustle of London, and were sought for their pleasant outlook across the fields. Now more pretentious dwellings have sprung up on the opposite side of the road, looking down upon their older neighbours from their superior altitude. The smaller houses are mostly occupied by clerks, single women, or others having limited means but some pretensions to gentility; while the more spacious tenements on the south side of the road are almost all lodging-houses.

One of these detached houses, retiring from the road behind green railings screened by evergreens, was conspicuous by its Dutch-like brightness and neatness. The exterior was white, with green lattice-work nailed against the walls, whereon jasmine and clematis climbed and struggled into flower during the summer and autumn months. The green-painted door, with its shining brass knocker, was in the centre, with a French window on each side. Above, were three windows and a sloping roof. Behind the house, a tiny garden had been saved from the encroachments of bricks and mortar.

Within, the rooms were simply but prettily furnished. The tasteful embroideries and knick-knacks, the books and pictures, the vase of chrysanthemums on the table, gave a refined as well as home-like effect to the small drawing-room, with which its present occupants harmonised well. One of these was a sweet, gentle-looking old lady, easily to be recognised as the original of the portrait Miriam Grey had apostrophised as she sat at work in Mrs. Bloxam's schoolroom. The other was Miriam herself. There was a third occupant also, of no mean importance in the household. This was a large tabby cat, purring with tucked-up paws and sleepy eyes on the white fluffy rug before the fire; for October had brought chilly weather, and a fire was acceptable in the evenings.

Tea had just been set on the table by the "neat-handed Phillis," the only servant belonging to the establishment. The old lady would not have the lamp lighted yet; the day had been fine, and the sky to the west still glowed with the after-glory of an October sunset. Miriam laid down her work, and stirred the fire into a brighter blaze. She then sat down to wait till the maid brought in the tea-kettle. Selina, the cat, took advantage of this unoccupied moment to jump on her knee and rub its cheek against her hand, receiving its expected caress in return.

"Don't forget that Edward is coming this evening,

Miriam. We must have something nice for his supper," said the old lady.

"I have not forgotten, granny," Miriam replied, as she stroked her favourite. "I wonder what brings Edward to London again."

"Cannot you guess?" the grandmother inquired. Then, after regarding Miriam silently awhile, she said, "Are you quite sure, dear, that you can never care for Edward?"

"Quite sure, granny dear," returned the girl, whilst a soft colour rose to her cheeks, that were still inclined to be too pale, and a half-suppressed sigh escaped her lips.

"I am sorry; he is a good man," was the reply.

"I suppose he is; I don't know," Miriam hazarded. "I have a fancy that it is a kind of surface-goodness; I wonder how it would stand trial."

"My dear!" in a tone of remonstrance.

"Perhaps I have no right to say that," Miriam allowed. "If I loved him I should have no doubts, I suppose. But then I don't love him, and I could not possibly learn to think of him as a husband. Besides——"

Miriam stopped short, while the colour deepened on her cheeks.

"Besides what, dear?"

"I shall never marry," Miriam declared, with a little tremulous smile. "You will have to keep me always with you, granny, as you will not let me look out for another situation."

As she spoke she gazed dreamily into the fire; but instead of the glowing coals she saw a manly figure, clear-cut features, and a pair of fine dark-grey eyes looking down kindly into hers. She had often said this to herself—"I can never marry now;" and again she repeated it. "I could never marry anyone but him," so her thoughts ran; "and yet I shall never see him again; it is beyond the bounds of probability. I wonder whether I might have told him where I was coming when I left Mrs. Bloxam's? But no; I could not have done that; it would have been like inviting him to follow me. Perhaps he has forgotten me by this time; men have so many things to think of. But I shall never forget him—never part with his letter! Never!"

Her reverie was interrupted by the entrance of Sarah with the tea-kettle. She put Selina gently down, and rising from her seat took up one of those old-fashioned, quaint, silver-clasped tea-caddies, with its niche inside for the delicate filigree tea-spoon, telling of our great-grandmothers' days, when tea was sixteen shillings a pound. From this she made the tea; then drawing forward a small "occasional" table, she placed it beside her grandmother's easy-chair.

The old lady had been watching her granddaughter's countenance as she sat musing over the fire. A suspicion had crossed her mind more than once that there had been some episode in Miriam's life of which she was ignorant. From the tender light in the girl's eyes, that were bright as with unshed tears, and the half-sad smile on her lips, she guessed that there had been some hope that never grew to certainty, some tender memory that would never be more than a memory. But Miriam had a right to her secret, and the grandmother would not intrude upon it; only there was one thing she wished to know.

"Tell me, Miriam," she said, as her granddaughter brought her tea-cup and set it down at her hand, "tell me, was it my urging you to think of Edward's proposals that made you persist in taking a situation?"

Miriam looked confused for a moment, as if she scarcely comprehended her grandmother's question, so far were her thoughts from Edward just then. But she immediately recalled her wandering fancies.

"No—oh no!" she replied. "But I perceived that you were anxious about my future, granny, and I wished to prove to you that there was no need—that I could earn my own living. You see, I failed," she added rather bitterly. "But, granny dear, you would not have me marry for the sake of a home?"

"For the sake of a home?—no; don't misunderstand me, dear," replied her grandmother. "Besides, there is no need; I have not much, but whatever I have will be yours, I have made sure of that. I have only you two, Edward and you. My little is not worth the dividing. Edward has a good post, and will probably be taken into partnership some day. He is steady and industrious, and does not require help from me; so it will all be yours, my best and dearest child."

Miriam knelt down at her grandmother's knee, took one of the white, delicate old hands in hers, and leaned her cheek upon it.

"No," the old lady continued; "the reason I would have wished you to marry is because I am afraid of a lonely, companionless life for you when I am gone. It is not good for man, or woman either, to be alone."

"Dear, dearest granny," murmured Miriam, "don't talk about leaving me; I cannot bear it. I have no one but you. I cannot remember either father or mother," she continued, tears springing to her eyes. "You have taken the place of both to me. As you wished it, I have promised to remain with you, to give up the idea of seeking to provide for myself. And indeed—indeed—all I ask of life is to be allowed to stay with you."

She rose from her knees, and throwing her arms round her grandmother's neck kissed her fondly.

"Nay, my child," said the old lady, after returning the caress, "I hope the right person may come some day, and wile my birdie away. I would not wish it otherwise." She put up her hand and stroked Miriam's rich brown hair. "But we will keep together, if God so wills, till that time comes. I will not urge Edward's suit upon you any more, trust me. Perhaps Edward is not the man to take a young

girl's fancy, and I must confess I do not think he has improved of late; yet—well, never mind. Go and get your tea like a rational being; and see, Selina is begging for her milk."

"You dear old pussy!" exclaimed Miriam, pouring some milk into a saucer, and setting it down for the household pet.

She sat down to the table and began her tea, but her thoughts were evidently still wandering.

At last she exclaimed, "Granny dear, what should you say if we were, some wonderful day, to go and live in a beautiful house in the country, where there would be lovely gardens and fresh flowers every day, and where there would be a pony-chaise for you to ride in, and all sorts of delightful things?"

Miriam leaned her chin in her hand, as she sat with her elbow on the table, and gazed dreamily before her.

Her grandmother laughed gently, as she shook her head at Miriam. "You mean a castle in Spain, my dear," she said, not knowing the undercurrent of thought that had given rise to the speech. "I am afraid I am too old now to care about making any change," she added, "even if your charming castle was built on solid English ground instead of in the air." She paused a moment; then went on: "Once upon a time it seemed probable that I might have had a very different life from that which eventually fell to my lot. Did I ever tell you of my girlish romance, Miriam?"

"A romance!" cried Miriam, casting a glance at a water-colour portrait of a stern-visaged gentleman that hung in one of the niches by the fireplace. "No, granny, I never heard of it; do tell me!" she entreated, with eager interest.



"'We will keep together, if God so wills,'"—*p.* 25.

The old lady again paused awhile, as if searching into the past. Then a slight colour, like the afterglow of the sunset, stole over the faded yet still sweet face, and she sighed.

"It was long, long ago—more than fifty years ago," she began, with a little tremulousness in her voice. "I was then just what you are now. My father had a considerable estate at Cowthorpe, in Fellshire; part of the land he farmed himself. Cowthorpe was quite a secluded little village amongst the fells, far away from the great world. We were the first people, not only in the village, but in the neighbourhood round about. I was an only child. The estate was not entailed; so whatever my father had would descend to me, and I was considered quite an heiress. In consequence, I did not want for suitors. But there was one, I knew, loved me for myself alone, without thought of land or money, and I loved him very dearly. He was a fine young fellow, was David Leigh—one who might have won any girl's heart. But he was poor. He was the son of a doctor who lived in the market town, and who attended at all the villages round about. David had been educated to his father's profession, and was intended to follow in his footsteps; but his tastes lay in another direction; he had no heart in the work, and he was in haste to be rich in order that we might marry. I would rather he had stuck to his profession, if he could only have liked it. He might have had to struggle on for a few years, but I should not have been afraid of any hardship by his side. However, it was not to be. My father would not hear of any engagement between us. It was not that he had any objection to David personally, but he would not give his consent to my marrying into poverty, as he said.

"A cousin of mine, Dick Henderson, the son of my father's younger brother, had made up his mind to seek his fortune in Australia, and he persuaded David to join him. David was out of heart because my father opposed our marriage, for he saw no hope, as things were going, of winning his consent. There was little known then about life in the colonies, compared with what there is now, and young men looked upon the new country as a place where fortunes could be easily made. He thought if after a few years he came back with plenty of money, my father would then be willing to receive him as a son-in-law; and I promised to wait for him, or to go out to him if he made a home in that distant land.

"Many and many a twilight hour, when we used to meet in the orchard or in the shady lanes about the village, we spent in building castles in the air and laying plans for what we would do when David came home a rich man. I need not say how sad was our parting. It was at the garden gate David bade me farewell, and I stood to see the last of him as he went down the road. We little thought that we were never to meet again!

"Well, Dick and he sailed together, and for two or three years I heard from him regularly. They neither of them were succeeding very well; this I could see plainly, though David endeavoured to make the best of it in his letters, and strove to write hopefully. They seemed to be just wandering about, picking up work here and there as they could. Then David's letters ceased. We heard in a round-about way that my cousin Dick was dead, but what became of David I have never known from that day to this; I never heard of him any more."

"Oh, granny, how you must have suffered!" cried Miriam, as her grandmother paused in her narrative.

"Yes, I suffered," said her grandmother. After a short interval of silence she resumed: "During this time things were going from bad to worse with us. My father was something of an inventor, and he was also fond of speculation. He always had some great scheme on hand; money was frittered away in trying experiments that never came to anything. Various portions of the estate were sold to meet these expenses: my father always used to say he would buy it all back when the scheme he had for the moment on foot brought him in the money he reckoned upon making. The last and most disastrous of all was an idea that he had found coal upon a piece of waste ground. I believe there was something that gave indications; machinery was put up and a shaft sunk, but no coal appeared, or, at any rate, nothing worth the working. My father was not to be turned away from it, however, and the end was that we lost everything—house and land and money.



"Setting it down before the household pet."—*p.* 26.

"David Leigh had been gone four years, and I was three-and-twenty years of age. I had never entirely given up hope till then; but when we had to leave Cowthorpe and come to London, I made up my mind that my love was lost to me, and that what I had to do was to bend all my thoughts and energies to help my father and mother to live. My father did not live long—he could not bear his fallen fortunes—and my mother and I were left to meet poverty face to face as well as we could."

"Oh, poor granny!" exclaimed Miriam, as she sat leaning her cheek on her clasped hands, all her soul in her eyes.

"Say, rather, 'poor Mary Henderson,'" replied her grandmother with a smile. "You young people cannot yet understand how much sorrow may be lived through, and lived down, with God's help. We were very poor; my mother was in ill-health. With what employment I could get, though I was skilful in fine embroidery, it was almost impossible for me to provide her with such comforts as she needed. What we should have done without James Brodrick's advice and assistance, I do not know. At last, one day, he asked me to marry him. I liked and respected him, but I had no love to give him, such as I had given to David Leigh. I told him all the truth, but he assured me he would be content with such measure of regard as I could give him. I hesitated for some time, but at last I consented to marry him, and I never repented. Your grandfather was a good man and a kind husband, and he made me very happy, and my poor mother too, as long as she lived."

"And did you never hear anything of David Leigh—never at all?" Miriam inquired.

"Never," replied Mrs. Brodrick. "I thought of him as dead, for I fancied if he had been living I should have heard of him in some way. At any rate, he was dead to me. But I never allowed myself to dwell upon the past; that was all over and done with. I had my two children to love, and their future to think of."

"Edward's father and my mother," said Miriam. "Whom does Edward take after? Surely neither his father nor his grandfather!"

"No, dear; he takes after his mother's family," Mrs. Brodrick returned. "We had some disappointment with our boy; he was not all his father could have wished. He married a tradesman's daughter in Birmingham; I have nothing to say against her, though she was not the wife we would have chosen for him. My poor James! I often think he might have been very different had he had life granted him to free himself from his youthful follies."

"And my father was a doctor, and both he and mother died young! How very sad!" sighed Miriam.

"Very sad," returned her grandmother, with an answering sigh. "Your dear father fell a martyr to his profession; he caught typhus fever, and your mother took it also in nursing him. You were a little tender thing of three years old when I brought you home."

"Oh! granny, what a burden I must have been to you in your great sorrow," Miriam exclaimed.

"You were never a burden to me, but always a blessing," replied Mrs. Brodrick fondly; "you were to me as a little angel, sent to comfort me in the days of my affliction, for I was then in the first year of my widowhood."

Mrs. Brodrick was silent for a while, lost in her remembrances. After a few minutes she resumed, "I have had great sorrows in my life, but also much happiness, and now God has granted me peace in my old age. It is strange how, as the time of departure draws near, our thoughts revert to the days of our youth," she added, after another pause. "When I lie awake at night, or sit musing when alone, I often think of David Leigh, and wish I could have known what became of him. I shall know some day, but not in this world."

Miriam's eyes were full of tears. Her grandmother's story had much affected her; life seemed to her, just then, a depressing, disappointing sort of affair. She brushed her tears hastily away at the sound of a double knock at the street door.

"That is Edward's knock," Miriam decided; "what brings him so early, I wonder? How I wish he hadn't come this evening! I'm sure we don't want him."

"You are not very complimentary to your cousin, my dear," remarked Mrs. Brodrick, smiling at the girl's petulance; "you had better have some fresh tea made, Miriam."

CHAPTER VIII.

EDWARD BRODRICK RENEWS HIS PROPOSALS.

EDWARD BRODRICK was as immaculate in appearance and attire this evening as when he presented himself at Messrs. Sherwood and Lucas's office earlier in the autumn. His hair was as accurately parted, his linen as smooth, and his boots as shiny as if he had been a waxen image just stepped out of a fashionable tailor's window, rather than an ordinary individual who had been exposed to the smoke and dust of a London day.

Mrs. Brodrick received her grandson kindly, if without any great exuberance of affection. It was not young Brodrick's fate to inspire any very keen affection anywhere. He was not popular amongst his fellow-clerks; and he could not be said to be a personal favourite with his employers, though his virtues were fully admitted. He had no extravagances, no small vices; he neither drank nor smoked, nor was he addicted to cards or billiards. He was quite a model young man in the office; and yet the senior partner, Mr. Roberts, had been heard to say that he should as soon think of taking a liking to one of his stamping machines as to young Brodrick.

Edward's manner this evening, contrary to what was usual with him, showed considerable embarrassment and restlessness. He appeared, from some reason or other, ill at ease—a fact that did not escape his grandmother's scrutiny, though she was far from guessing the cause. He would have saluted Miriam as he had his grandmother, on whose cheek

he had dropped a perfunctory kiss; but Miriam drew back with so evident a shrinking that he had to content himself with giving her a limp shake of the hand, while he bit his lips with vexation.

He was really fond of Miriam. As far as he had the power of loving, his love was given to her. He had always wished to marry her since his salary had been such as to enable him to keep a wife, and he had felt disappointed and mortified by her rejection of his suit. There were no other suitors in the way, however, to his knowledge, and he did not despair. Now circumstances had arisen that made their union in every way desirable, though these circumstances were only known to himself. If Miriam would only agree to marry him, it would make everything satisfactory.

For Edward Brodrick was suffering from what he had never before experienced—qualms of conscience. He had never intended to do wrong. He had been brought up to make respectability his idol, and he had always been eminently respectable. He told the truth when he said that when he first saw Mr. Sherwood's advertisement he had not considered it worth attention; and when, on seeing it repeated, he had called at the office, it was with the idea that he might be doing his grandmother a service. When he heard the amount of the "advantage" advertised, he was staggered, and he returned home to Birmingham without seeing his relatives.

He had always wished to be rich—riches were so exceedingly respectable!—but he did not all at once give way to temptation: far from it. Whilst Brian Hartley and Mr. Sherwood were wondering why he was so long in bringing forward his proofs, he was doing fierce battle with his better nature. The desire after wealth became conqueror in the end, as it has done over many a stronger man than Edward Brodrick. Sophistries were not wanting to palliate his crime, and at last he almost succeeded in persuading himself that he was quite justified in claiming David Leigh's legacy. Undoubtedly he was, or ought to be, his grandmother's heir. In the course of nature she was not likely to live many years, and what would she do with forty thousand pounds? She had already as much as she wanted to make her comfortable, and it would be positively injurious to her at her age to change her habits and mode of life; whereas to him it would be the foundation of a large fortune. There was no saying what he might not achieve with forty thousand pounds. With his business knowledge he might become a millionaire; why not? Many stranger things had happened. If his grandmother once had it in her possession, it might be years still before his share came to him—just so many years wasted!—and it was even possible that she might take it into her head to leave it all to Miriam. Surely it could not be wrong to prevent such a piece of injustice? It would be so much better if the money became his at once. He would be very generous to the old lady; she should have whatever she wished for; and if Miriam would only marry him, all that was his would be hers.

He had, as he thought, worked it all out mentally, and proved to himself that he was justified in the course he had taken. He had proved—as he made no question—to the lawyer's satisfaction that he was undoubtedly the grandson of Mary Henderson, formerly of Cowthorpe; and in this he had in no way deviated from the truth. Suppressing a fact, he told himself, was very different from stating anything that was not fact. But now this troublesome query as to his grandmother's death had been brought forward, and he did not yet see—though he had been racking his brains for weeks—how this obstacle could be got over. He had fancied, somehow, that his grandmother's death would have been taken for granted.

Edward Brodrick did not like telling a lie; he had no taste for the inventive in the way of facts; it was, on the contrary, exceedingly unpleasant to him. Moreover, a simple lie would not suffice; his statement would not be taken without the production of a register; and in order to produce this he would have to commit a forgery, and so make himself amenable to the laws of his country. A cold shiver passed through him as he contemplated this possibility; and yet, what to do? He could not expect his grandmother to die just to oblige him, and he had gone too far to recede. If he drew back now, he would be convicted of dishonesty just as much as if he went forward. No wonder that he quailed, no wonder that his inward perturbation betrayed itself in his constrained and embarrassed manner.

"Is anything the matter, Edward?" Mrs. Brodrick inquired anxiously, noticing her grandson's haggard looks.

"The matter?" he echoed, starting and colouring; "no, there is nothing the matter. What makes you think so?"

"I fancied you did not look well—as if something had disturbed you," returned his grandmother.

"I—I have rather a headache to-day, that is all," said Edward; adding, "I came early—I thought, perhaps, Miriam might like to go somewhere: the Popular Concerts, I thought of.—It would do you good, Miriam; it would, indeed. You sit too much at home; you look as if you wanted a change."

His eyes turned entreatingly towards Miriam. He wanted an opportunity of pleading his cause again. He must get her consent to marry him; it would make things so much easier for him. There was a text about robbing the widow and orphan, that wasn't pleasant to think of. Not that what he was doing could be called a robbery; it was only forestalling time by a few years; and if Miriam became his wife, what would have been hers would have been his in the natural course of things, so what difference could it make?

"Do come! Only say where you would like to go," he urged.



"'You don't know all, or you would have some pity for me.'"—*p.* 32.

"I don't think I care to go out this evening, thank you, Edward," Miriam replied, half guessing his motive for the invitation, and determining not to give him any opportunity of speaking to her alone if she could avoid it.

"Why not go, dear?" Mrs. Brodrick interposed; "it is a fine night, and I agree with Edward that you sit at home too much. A little amusement would do you good, and you are fond of music."

Mrs. Brodrick would keep to her promise, no longer to urge an unwelcome suit upon her granddaughter, but it was but fair to allow Edward a chance to persuade her to alter her mind. It is true that Mrs. Brodrick did not entertain any very warm affection for her grandson, but she respected him, and had a belief in his supposed sterling qualities. She knew he had none of those bad habits that often tend to make a woman uncomfortable in married life, and she really did not know enough of him to be aware how little charm of character he possessed. She herself had married without being in love, and yet had been happy. She did not approve of a single life for a woman; and she feared that in the secluded life Miriam led with her, there would be little likelihood of her being known and appreciated.

But Miriam persisted in her refusal. She owned that she liked music, but did not feel up to a concert that evening; she had a headache, she averred. Moreover, she reminded her grandmother that she had been quite a long distance that morning, nearly as far as the Marble Arch, and had come home tired.

Edward looked disappointed, or rather altogether put out. He fidgeted nervously, and his attempts at conversation were forced and spasmodic. Miriam regarded him with both surprise and disfavour. It struck her that she had never seen him appear to less advantage. Her repugnance became intensified each moment. Mrs. Brodrick judged him more leniently; she fancied she could guess what was on his mind, and felt compassion for his discomfort. Was it not enough to make a lover awkward and uneasy when the lady of his affections turned from

him with coldly averted looks, and scarcely spoke a civil word? She resolved that if Miriam would not give him an opportunity for another appeal, she would try to assist him.

"I wonder whether Sarah understands what to bring in for supper; I think I will go and see about it," she said, as conversation flagged more and more. She rose from her seat as she spoke.

"Let me go, granny," cried Miriam, for the first time since Edward's arrival showing some alacrity of manner.

"No, no, my dear; sit you still," replied her grandmother; "I am not going to be laid up in lavender yet."

The old lady was active in her habits. She liked to attend to the affairs of her household herself; it amused her, and gave her such occupation as she wanted, she declared.

When Mrs. Brodrick left the room, Miriam went to a side table for her work-basket, and bringing it forward she took out a slip of embroidery, and established herself at the opposite side of the table where Edward was seated.

He, however, left his seat, and, to her annoyance, took a chair by her side. She drew away a little, under pretence of being nearer the light. He did not speak immediately, but sat watching her nimble fingers as she drew her thread in and out. The feeling that his eyes were upon her made her uncomfortable. She tried to find topics of conversation, but her companion answered her only in monosyllables.

"Really, Edward, you are not very amusing this evening," she said impatiently.

She laid down her work, thinking that she would seek her grandmother and beg her to return to the room; but Edward made a movement to detain her.

"Don't go away," he entreated. "As for being amusing, if you knew all I have on my mind, you wouldn't wonder that I am not amusing. I want to speak to you, Miriam."

"If it is anything about yourself or your own concerns, I am willing to listen," Miriam replied, turning over the contents of her work-basket as if looking for something.

"But you are not listening; you don't care to attend to anything I say," Edward declared peevishly; "and what I want to talk about is of such great importance."

"Well, then, what is it?" said Miriam, pushing her work-basket away, and turning round towards him.

"It is that I want you to think again of what I said to you before you went to Mrs. Bloxam's. Miriam, you are the only girl I ever cared for, and I wish more than ever that you would be my wife."

"I am sorry you still wish that, because it can never be," Miriam replied, gently but firmly.

"But why can it never be? Do you, then, dislike me so much?" returned Edward, a tone of real pain in his voice.

"It does not follow that I should dislike you because I cannot think of you in the way you wish," said Miriam, sorry for his evident distress. "We are cousins; let us remain so."

"But, Miriam, you—you do not know—you have no idea how much better for you it would be—at least—that is—better for me," the poor young man stammered. Drops of perspiration started to his brow in his perplexity and trouble. "If you would only think better of it, if you could only make up your mind to marry me, it would make all square, you know—at least, you don't know," he added, correcting himself. "I—I really do wish you would say yes, Miriam—I do indeed."

He moved his chair a little nearer to hers, and attempted to take her hand, but she eluded his touch, and, rising, went towards the fire, where she stood, her face averted. Edward Brodrick had never appeared so little admirable in her eyes. He had chosen a bad time, too, to make his appeal, though unknowingly on his part. Miriam's mind was full of other matters; her grandmother's story had affected her much. She thought of the young lovers' parting; of David Leigh—a fine young fellow, her grandmother had said—and she wondered whether he could have been anything like Mr. Hartley. Miriam had been almost unconsciously allowing one image to take possession of her heart, and she could not help comparing Edward Brodrick with this ideal, greatly to the disadvantage of the former. She had once rather liked her cousin Edward. When he was just beginning to make himself independent, and she was a school-girl home for the holidays, he had frequently, when he came up to London, taken her to the Zoological Gardens and other like places of resort, and had made her little presents such as girls delight in; and she, in her turn, had pleased herself with netting purses or working slippers for her cousin. But now, since he had declared himself her lover, she looked upon him with different eyes; and to-night, more than ever, she thought him a poor creature. Whether or not it is safer, according to Mrs. Malaprop's opinion, to begin married life with "a little aversion," it is certain that contempt is fatal. It was not far from this that Miriam felt for the unfortunate young man to whom her answer was of such vital consequence, as she stood near the chimney-piece, her hands clasped before her.

"I do not in the least understand what you mean by 'making things square,'" she said coldly, wondering whether he referred to her grandmother's little property.

"No, no; of course you don't understand," returned Edward, wiping his face with his pocket-handkerchief, and looking more and more perplexed and agitated; "you ought to trust in me as the head of the family, you know. I—I can't quite explain, but I want to make it all right for you, and it would be all right if you'd only say the word. I don't see why you shouldn't, upon my

word I don't. I'm not a bad fellow—at least, I never intended to be—and I'm awfully fond of you, and I'm very well off—that is to say, I shall be. Do think of it, Miriam! Grandmother could come and live with us, you know, and then it would be all as it should be. Come, Miriam, think again, there's a dear girl!"

He had also risen and followed her, as she stood before the fire. His voice was tremulous in its eagerness; he looked into her face to try to find some sign of relenting, but there was none.

Miriam had never found this precise matter-of-fact cousin of hers any way confused or incoherent before. These repeated allusions, to which she could attach no meaning, together with his flushed face, trembling hand, and a certain huskiness in his voice, made her suspect that he had been taking more wine than was good for him. She knew his temperate habits (she did him that justice), and she thought a very little might have overcome him. She wished her grandmother would make haste; she felt the situation extremely uncomfortable.

"It is of no use, Edward," she replied to him, in as quiet a tone as she could command. "Pray, never mention the subject again; it is only painful to us both. It is impossible you can care for me much; we are not at all suited to each other. Do believe that I am grateful for your goodwill towards me, but I can never give any other answer than I have done."

To her surprise, Edward leaned his forehead against the chimney-piece with a sob. "You don't know all, or you would have some pity for me," he murmured half inarticulately; but he said no more, as just then, to Miriam's great relief, her grandmother came in and interrupted the uncomfortable *tête-à-tête*.

Miriam felt sorry for Edward, but she could not feel respect; she thought he was not taking his disappointment in a manly way. She could not get rid of the idea, too, that there was something behind—that love for her was only one part of his motive in pressing his suit; though what that further inducement might be, she could not guess. She put aside the idea of her grandmother's money; it was so little it could not be of importance to him; besides, whatever it was that actuated him, it was something new, something belonging to the present.

Mrs. Brodrick resumed her arm-chair by the fire, and took up her knitting; Edward roused himself, and turned towards the table; Miriam continued standing on the hearth-rug. Mrs. Brodrick looked from one to the other of the two young people; she quickly perceived that no understanding, such as Edward would have wished, had been arrived at. She was sorry for Edward, but her granddaughter's happiness was what she had at heart more than anything else in the world, and Miriam must judge for herself.

Edward made no pretence of talking to his grandmother. He was not able to sit still; he was more than disappointed, he was dismayed. He felt angry with Miriam, that she would not help to make things easier to him. If she would only marry him, it would make what he had done quite equitable; no one would suffer at all, while the benefit to himself would be immense. If only he could conclude the business without the direct lie, perhaps even the forgery that might be forced upon him! This terror—that, now he had become entangled in the meshes of deception, he might be driven into absolute crime—persisted in haunting and stinging him like Io's gadfly. Crime, in his eyes, was what would bring him within danger of the law. It was nothing but blind obstinacy on Miriam's part; it was not as if she could care for anyone else; and the sight of his grandmother sitting there so placidly knitting irritated him unreasonably. He could not expect that she would aid him in his plans by any pretence of non-existence. He could neither sit still nor go away. Perhaps Miriam might change her mind, after all. He wandered aimlessly about the room, looking at the pictures he had seen a hundred times before, and turning over the books lying on the tables.

At length he happened to take up a volume of Schiller's poems that Miriam had been reading, and turning to the title-page he saw a name written that took him by surprise.

"'Mary Brodrick!'" he read; then, turning to Mrs. Brodrick, he said, "I didn't know you were a German scholar, grandmother."

"Neither am I," Mrs. Brodrick replied. "That book and several others in the book-case belonged to your grandfather's sister Mary; she died many years ago, while you were a child."

Edward stood still with the book in his hand. He flushed crimson, and then turned deadly pale; he grasped the back of a chair near where he stood to steady himself; he felt suffocating, his heart beat so tumultuously. A light had seemed to break in upon his brain. Might not this, by a possibility, be a way out of his difficulties? But he must feel his way cautiously.

"You are ill, Edward!" exclaimed Mrs. Brodrick in alarm, noticing his action and change of colour.

"It is nothing; I felt a little dizzy, that is all. But if I am ill, I am sure it is no wonder," he added with a reproachful glance towards Miriam, who had now sat down, but had not taken up her work again.

"You must take care of yourself," pursued his grandmother; "I didn't think you looked well when you came in."

"Oh! I'm all right," replied Edward absently, his eyes fixed on the title-page of the book he still held in his hand. "I didn't know I ever had an aunt Mary Brodrick," he ventured.

"Did you not? Ah! perhaps not. She lived near us in London, and you were a little fellow in Birmingham. Poor Aunt Mary! She died before Miriam was born," Mrs. Brodrick explained. "She was threatened with consumption, and advised to try

a warmer climate. She went to Mentone, and during the winter it almost seemed as if she would have recovered, from the reports we received; but in the spring she caught a chill, and went off rapidly. The friend who was with her sent for your grandfather and me. We set off immediately, but we were too late to see her alive."

"How long was that ago?" Edward asked, striving to check the eagerness of his manner. He crossed the room, and placed himself on an ottoman that happened to be near his grandmother's chair.

"How long ago? twenty-three years," Mrs. Brodrick replied. "I remember the time well, for I was never out of England before, nor have I been since. Twenty-three years ago last April."

"Was she buried there at Mentone?" Edward asked, in as indifferent a tone as he could assume.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Brodrick, surprised that her grandson should take so much interest in this aunt, of whom he had confessedly never heard till this moment. "Yes, she was laid at rest in the cemetery in the upper part of the little town—a lovely spot. Your grandfather had a simple white marble cross placed over her grave, with just her name and age. She was much younger than your grandfather—just the same age as myself; we were born in the same year. Dear, dear, how time flies!" continued the old lady, thinking aloud, rather than addressing her grandson. "How many have passed away since then! Husband and children, and now only you two left!"

Mrs. Brodrick did not weep. Tears do not come readily to the aged, and her sorrows were of long-past date, hallowed by time. But she folded her hands before her and closed her eyes for a while, as if following in thought those who had gone before. Edward took the opportunity to make some entries in his pocket-book; Miriam regarded her grandmother with tender and sympathetic eyes.

After a few minutes Mrs. Brodrick looked up. Edward hastily closed his book. "I was only making a memorandum of something that occurred to me I wanted to do to-morrow," he said apologetically.

"I should not have suspected your memory of requiring to be prompted," Mrs. Brodrick remarked.

"Oh! as to that, I believe I have as good a memory as most; but it is always best not to trust to memory in matters of business," Edward returned sententiously.

Mrs. Brodrick asked Miriam to play or sing something. "We are getting rather dull, I think," she said.

Miriam willingly complied: then supper was brought in. Edward ate but little. He, however, uncorked a bottle of soda-water, and pouring it into a glass he drank it off feverishly. Soon after, he said he must be going. There was no possibility of speaking to Miriam again that evening; she scarcely either looked at or spoke to him.

"Whatever you hear, don't blame me," he said as he shook hands with her, after bidding his grandmother good-bye. "Remember, I gave you a chance."

Miriam's lips twitched; the idea struck her as comical. "Thank you," she returned, with something of her usual sprightliness. "In the days of my spinsterhood I will remember I once had a chance."

"Oh! I didn't mean that," he replied. But he did not explain what he meant, and hurried away abruptly.

"I begin to think you are right, Miriam," said Mrs. Brodrick, when the door had closed behind her grandson.

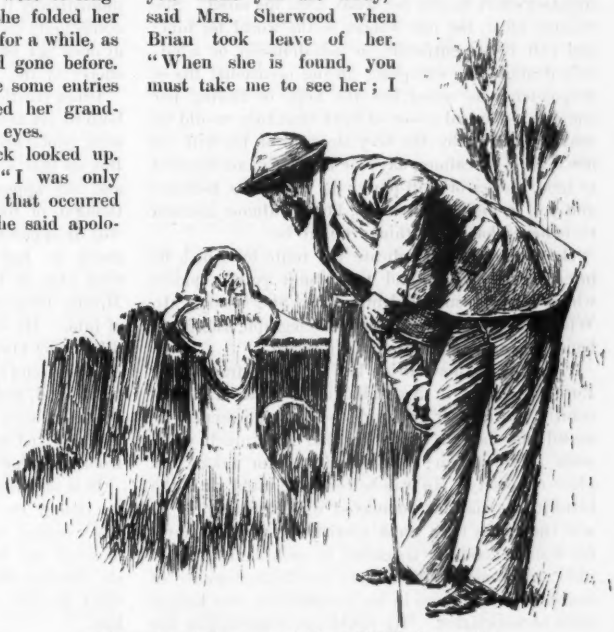
"I am glad of that, granny," Miriam replied. Adding, "Now, do not let us think or speak of it any more, but just be happy—you and I."

CHAPTER IX.

BRIAN HARTLEY FINDS MARY BRODRICK'S GRAVE.

IT was on a fine breezy October day that Brian Hartley crossed the Channel in search of the change that he so much needed. He had dined with the Sherwoods the evening before.

"We will do our utmost to find your Miriam for you while you are away," said Mrs. Sherwood when Brian took leave of her. "When she is found, you must take me to see her; I



"He made out the name of Mary Brodrick."—*p.* 35.

intend that we shall be very good friends," added the kind little woman.

"I could not wish a better friend for anyone dear to me," returned Brian warmly, with a pressure of the hand.

Brian's intention was to make southwards by gradual stages, visiting places of interest by the way, as his fancy directed. The route he had marked out for himself was to go, in the first instance, to the South of France; and then by the Riviera, the Corniche road, and the Maritime Alps to Genoa; and perhaps on to Florence, if time served. But he wished to be back in England again in December. Elm Grove would before that time have passed into his possession; furniture, plants in the conservatory, even the old house-dog—all but the horses; these he preferred to select for himself. The former housekeeper was glad to remain, and to her was entrusted the duty of forming the necessary establishment, so that by the second week in December he expected to enter upon the life he had looked forward to leading in his boyhood. Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood had promised to be his guests for the first week, that he might not enter his new home in solitary state.

But this was in the future; for the present his aim was to recover the health and spirits worn out by his vain search. He was not the man to give way to morbid feelings, or to contemplate for a moment leading a useless life given up to vain regrets, should the one desire of his life be denied him; nevertheless, he never for a moment made any endeavour to forget Miriam Grey, never made the slightest effort to put her away from his mind. She was his ideal, the one woman in the world for him; and call it presentiment, or self-delusion, or whatever it might be, excepting during occasional fits of despondency he never lost the hope of finding her one day. He had a sort of faith that they would be drawn together by the very strength of his will—of his love. In calmer days he had been accustomed to treat stories of will-power as mere idle fictions; and yet, in his present mood, he was almost inclined to believe that such things might be.

He did not fail to indicate the route by which he intended to travel, and to appoint certain places where letters would find him. Mr. Sherwood or Mr. Whistler could either write or telegraph, therefore, had they any information to forward.

From his boyhood Brian had longed to travel over Europe. While in Australia his thoughts had constantly flown over the wide sea to the scenes he hoped one day to visit. He had read much while with David Leigh; books had to him taken the place of society. He was better acquainted with the historic associations connected with the country he was traversing than most tourists. It had a charm for him beyond its treasures in architecture, or its hills and woods and valleys; for Brian, because of the strain of romance in his composition, was keenly alive to association. He could not contemplate the fortresses, and fine old town-halls and *châteaux*, as mere piles of stone, or specimens of this or that style of architecture; nor could he understand the flippant manner of many parties of tourists he encountered, who talked and laughed aloud while going through the solemn cathedrals.

Thus Brian travelled onwards, with many hours of vivid enjoyment, in spite of longings and regrets. He constantly told himself that the time would come when he would make a more extended tour, with the woman he loved by his side. Instead of taking the steamer direct from Lyons, he turned aside to visit Arles, Nismes, Orange, and other old towns, and then made his way to Toulon, Marseilles, and so on to Nice, one of the places he had mentioned where he hoped to receive letters. One awaited him from Mr. Sherwood, but none from Mr. Whistler, and no mention of Miriam Grey.

The letter from Mr. Sherwood that Brian found awaiting him at Nice was to the effect that a communication had been received from Mr. Edward Brodrick. This communication conveyed the intelligence that he had at last been able to discover the place and time of his grandmother's death. It seemed that she died at Mentone, twenty-three years previous to the present date. A white marble cross marked her grave in the cemetery in the upper part of the town; it could no doubt easily be found.

Mr. Sherwood suggested that as Brian was at no great distance from the spot, he should himself proceed to Mentone, seek out Mrs. Brodrick's grave, and verify her grandson's statement. Brian wrote back agreeing to the proposal, and promising to telegraph immediately if he found the statement correct. He accordingly cut short his intended stay at Nice, and at once set out for Mentone along the picturesque shores of the "bluest water in the world."

Brian Hartley was intensely alive to the beauties both of art and nature, though as far as the former were concerned he had to confess himself a learner. But on this occasion the loveliness of sea and shore and sky appealed to him almost in vain; he only thought of hurrying on to fulfil his mission. He was disappointed. He was not aware till then how much he had allowed Mrs. Sherwood's seemingly wild idea of there being some connection between Miriam Grey and Mrs. Brodrick to take possession of him. He was grieved, too, that his dream of one day seeing David Leigh's sweetheart, and of paying his old friend's legacy into her own hands, had come to an end, and that it was only her grave he was about to visit. He was disappointed, too, that he had received no news from Mr. Whistler; it seemed from this that no clue had as yet been found.

It is said that the sunshine of Mentone is its glory, its riches, its especial endowment. It was late in the evening when he arrived, but the following morning the brightness of the day was not without its cheering effect on Brian Hartley, notwithstanding what he felt to be the melancholy duty awaiting him.

After the light Continental breakfast of coffee and

rolls, he set forth to find his way to the cemetery, after having obtained a clear direction as to the road. He abhorred the whole race of guides and *commissionaires;* he had been victimised enough by those importunate pretenders already since he set his foot on foreign shore. He determined, therefore, to depend upon his knowledge of the direction, and the few words of the language he could speak, to find his way through the narrow, tortuous streets of the old town.

He passed a fountain where women were chattering with raised and shrill voices that might have led a stranger to suppose that they were quarrelling, and where there was a continual coming and going—classic-shaped pitchers brought empty, and carried away full of the cold, clear water by being skilfully poised on the abundant coils of blue-black hair.

His way led through streets so narrow that it was like being at the bottom of a shaft, a glimpse of blue sky only being obtainable in a strip between two high perpendicular walls. These streets were by no means sweet to the nostrils, nor did glimpses he caught here and there give him any idea that the inhabitants of the South had any pretensions to rival the Dutch in the matter of cleanliness.

Looking about him as he went along amongst little black-eyed, half-clothed children and old women sitting on their doorsteps plying the distaff, he could see into the gloomy ground-floor rooms. Here men were engaged in their various handicrafts, or women were busy over their household tasks; while high up above, on the upper storeys, were here and there bits of colour that would have delighted an artist—a pot of flowers on a window-sill catching a stray sunbeam; bright-coloured garments hung out from window to window; or perhaps a girl, with a gay handkerchief and a carnation stuck in her hair, taking a survey of the lower world. Now and then he met an itinerant vendor of fruit or fowls; and once a mule-train, coming down with its jingling bells, obliged him to flatten himself against the wall to avoid being trampled upon. He passed under mouldering arches, too, and always higher and higher, toiling up the steep, roughly paved streets.

He lost himself once or twice, brought up by a dead wall where he expected a thoroughfare, when he had to retrace his steps and to make an inquiry, the answer to which—volubly poured forth with many gesticulations—he mostly failed to understand. At last he was rewarded. After more devious turnings and staircase-like ascents, he reached the open air and sunshine, and a white wall, behind which appeared cypress-trees, and many white crosses and other memorials of the dead, gleaming against the bright blue sky.

He soon gained the entrance to this "God's-acre," lying on the hill, overlooking the blue sea; but then he stood bewildered. So numerous were the graves of the "resting dead" marked by white marble crosses, that how to find the one he sought baffled him. He told himself that he must begin by making inquiries; but here he was brought to a standstill. There was no register kept of the graves—nothing that could be referred to. The inhabitants knew well the graves where members of their family were laid, as they came every now and then to bring fresh flowers or immortelles. The Protestants were buried in a separate portion; that would facilitate the search; but other help there seemed none.

No one who had been connected with the place three-and-twenty years ago was now living, as far as Brian could make out—no one who had a chance of remembering the English lady who died so many years ago. Many another Englishwoman since her time had sought health at sunny Mentone, only to find a grave, and Mary Brodrick had probably made no particular impression; at any rate, no one could direct him to her tomb. His only course would be to examine the inscriptions one by one, taking a portion of the memorial stones that lined the walks or were studded amongst the cypresses each morning—a work that could not be accomplished under a week.

He did not confine himself to this examination of the graves, that threatened to become so tedious and wearisome; he made several excursions to Monaco, Ventimiglia, and other places of interest. When he spent his mornings in the cemetery, he generally indulged himself in the afternoon in sailing about the beautiful bay. This manner of passing the time he enjoyed the most, for it left his imagination free, and he could dream of happy days to come, when the present anxiety and suspense might be over and gone.

He had been more than a week at Mentone, and had attracted much attention by his indefatigable search amongst the graves, when his efforts were at last successful. He had been saddened to note the neglected aspect of the graves in this part of the cemetery; it told so plainly of the lonely burial-place, far away from friends and kindred; and so many buried there were young! On the sixth visit he paid to the cemetery in the prosecution of his object, his attention was caught by some carved lilies on one of the headstones; they were but roughly cut, but the design was pretty and simple. Stooping to read the inscription, now here and there half-obliterated, he made out the name of "Mary Brodrick."

So this was the end. This grave before which he stood was the last resting-place of David Leigh's sweetheart! The bonny Mary Henderson he so eagerly described had been dead many years when he bequeathed to her half his fortune! It was with a pang that Brian assured himself that there could be no mistake. Mary Henderson was indeed dead, and the edifice Brian's fancy had built up on Mrs. Sherwood's suggestion fell at once to the ground. He made a careful note of the situation of the grave, so that he would have no difficulty in finding it again; then slowly took his way back to the hotel, in order to telegraph to Mr. Sherwood.

It seemed a pity to him, now, that David Leigh's money should have been so left, as the one for whom it

was intended could reap no benefit from it. Not that he coveted it for himself; any such idea was far from his mind; but he did not like the heir, and could not help wishing that his old friend's wealth had been otherwise bestowed. A letter followed the telegram to Mr. Sherwood, giving details and stating that the information given by Mr. Brodrick was quite correct; that there was no doubt that Mrs. Brodrick had died at Mentone in the year mentioned. It did just pass through his mind that if she had been buried in England the inscription would have been to "Mary, wife of James Brodrick;" but he was ignorant of foreign customs, and this deviation from what was usual excited no suspicion in his mind. He did not like Edward Brodrick, and did not trust him; but in this instance, had the idea of deception been suggested, he would have scouted it as quite untenable.

In his letter to Mr. Sherwood he begged him to inform Mr. Brodrick that he was perfectly satisfied; and as from his—Mr. Sherwood's—letter, the certificates and registers had been examined and proved, nothing remained but to pay over the legacy. He requested Mr. Sherwood to have all necessary documents prepared, so that he could immediately on his return transfer the money to Mr. Brodrick's hands. He added that he intended shortly to follow his letter, having given up the idea of prolonging his journey. He was better, and preferred returning to England, leaving his projected visit to Italy for another opportunity.

CHAPTER X.

EDWARD AND MIRIAM.

AFTER sending in the date of Mary Brodrick's death, under pretence of its being that of his grandmother, Edward Brodrick passed a miserable time. Nature had not intended him for an impostor, nor had his education led him in that direction; only the good seed had fallen on such very stony ground. It could not be said that he repented; he was as eager as ever to possess the money, but he would so much rather it had come to him in a legitimate manner.

Argue with himself as he would, he could not get rid of the haunting sense of wrong-doing. He scarcely dared to meet the eyes of his fellow-clerks, lest he should read there that he was found out. He slept badly; and when he did sleep, terrible dreams made the night hideous. Sometimes he dreamt that Brian Hartley stood before him, and denounced him as a cheat and a liar; sometimes that when he went into the streets he was pointed at and hooted by the crowd; sometimes that he was pursued by horrible shadowy shapes, who drove him to plunge into a cold, dark river, where he sank lower and lower, till he awoke gasping and shivering. He became absent-minded and inattentive to his duties, and was more than once called to account by the manager.

When he received Mr. Sherwood's letter, telling him that Mr. Hartley had found Mrs. Brodrick's grave as he had described, that he was perfectly satisfied, and that the money would be paid over to him almost immediately, instead of being elated he was frightened—frightened at his own success. He wished he could have gone back to what he was—wished he had never seen that advertisement, never been led into temptation. But it was too late now to recede, so he told himself; such an act of reparation would be an open confession of fraud. Surely he could never be convicted of having obtained this money by false pretences; he might make himself quite comfortable. It was absurd to suppose that either Mr. Sherwood or Mr. Hartley would ever come in contact with his grandmother. She lived so secluded a life, her visitors were so few; why should he worry himself by imagining such an improbability? He said to himself that when he once had the money in his hands he would be at rest; and when he had doubled or trebled it, then perhaps, if his grandmother still lived, he might confess and make restitution. In the meantime he would make one more attempt to overcome Miriam's obstinacy, and persuade her to marry him. If she would only consent, he would feel quite at ease. If she still persisted in rejecting his offer, would not that be her own fault? Would he be to blame? Was he not willing to share everything with her?

The alteration in Mr. Brodrick's habits and manner of doing business had reached the ears of Mr. Roberts, the senior partner in the firm. The day after the receipt of Mr. Sherwood's letter, Edward Brodrick again made a grievous blunder while his mind was preoccupied. It was discovered, and Mr. Roberts sent for him and administered a sharp reprimand, with a threat of dismissal should he not be more careful for the future.

"You have served us well for many years, Mr. Brodrick," said the old gentleman irascibly. "I am as much surprised as annoyed at the change. Let me tell you that it is only from consideration of your former steadiness and punctuality that I do not dismiss you at once, as I should any other of my clerks who had made such gross mistakes."

"If you wish it, I am ready to leave at once," Edward replied. "I am aware that my private concerns have been absorbing my mind too much to allow me to do my duty properly in the office, so I think I had better go."

"As you please, sir," replied Mr. Roberts.

So master and clerk parted. Edward Brodrick put on his hat and walked out of the office with a sense of relief. He was free now to think his own thoughts and go his own way without let or hindrance. He had fully intended to give up his situation as soon as the money was paid over to him; it was only forestalling freedom from the daily drudgery that had become irksome to him by a few

days. He thought he would go up to London, and wait there till Mr. Hartley returned. He did not wish to meet with or speak to any of his acquaintances just then, and the change to London would enable him to bear the time of inaction better. He did not call it suspense; that was over. The business was settled and done, and the legacy was his as surely as if he had it in his hand. He would have occupation enough in considering how best to employ it, and he would see Miriam again, and try and convince her as to what she ought to do.

Miriam, in the meantime, was pursuing the even tenor of her way—helping in the household work, reading aloud to her grandmother, practising her music, making herself the sunshine of the house, and more necessary to her grandmother's happiness every day.

Mrs. Brodrick had very little society. Old friends had dropped off; and it is difficult for those whose means are too limited to entertain company, to form new acquaintances. People go where they can meet other people and be amused; it is too much to expect those who mix in the gay world to spare time to sit an hour, or spend an evening, with a quiet old woman, and Mrs. Brodrick did not expect it. For herself, she was satisfied with the few friends who were left to her, but she was anxious about Miriam. She did not feel it right that the girl's young days should be passed in such seclusion, and yet she did not see how it could be helped. Miriam always declared that she was perfectly happy, but the grandmother sometimes doubted. At any rate, she feared this content would not last. It was not natural for a bright-spirited young girl like Miriam never to have any longing for change, for something beyond their humdrum existence. But Mrs. Brodrick was accustomed to repose her cares and anxieties upon Providence, and she trusted that if it became necessary to alter their mode of life for Miriam's sake, a way would be opened for her.

She had quite given up the wish that Miriam should marry Edward Brodrick. Edward, to her surprise, had come up to London again, and this time to make some stay, so he said. He was very reticent about his concerns, and she did not care to press him with questions. She supposed he had a week or two of holiday time, and certainly it was not the season for a country excursion. November had come in with its usual accompaniment of gloomy skies and damp chilly atmosphere; and though London was at its dullest in this month, there was always something to be seen or heard that might make a week pass not unprofitably.

Edward had been several times to visit his grandmother, and the old lady was obliged to confess to herself that he was but a dull companion. She still adhered to her opinion that a single life was not the happiest for a woman, but it would be better to be alone than tied to a log. She still believed in her grandson's estimable qualities, but she no longer blamed Miriam for not sufficiently considering these. Certainly, Edward Brodrick did not improve upon acquaintance.

One day Edward had met Miriam in the neighbouring thoroughfare, and had walked home with her. When he was gone, Mrs. Brodrick drew from Miriam the fact that he had made another, and she hoped a last, appeal.

"Well, my dear, I begin to believe that you are right, and I was wrong," she said. "I thought too much of Edward's ability to get on in the world. He is very like his mother. I hope you may do better, my child."

"You dear, incorrigible old matchmaker!" exclaimed Miriam lovingly. "Don't I tell you I shall never do either well or ill in the way you mean? If I did—if it could ever be, it would be immeasurably better!"

A contrast presented itself before Miriam's mental vision as she spoke, and a flush rose to her cheeks. She began to feel dismayed, almost ashamed, to find how her rejection of Brian Hartley's proposals had left a lasting regret. She professed herself perfectly happy, and yet there was a void that nothing in this world sufficed to fill. It could not be said that she actually loved this man who had but just crossed her path to vanish again; it was only the idea of what might have been. She did not repent. She never allowed herself to think for a moment that her rejection was otherwise than unavoidable, that if they were in some wonderful manner to meet, and he once more made his offer, her answer must be the same. It could only be pity he had felt for her, not love; how could that be possible?

It was inconceivable to herself how an individual, of whom she knew next to nothing, of whose character she possessed no more knowledge than one brief interview and a few sheets of written paper might reveal, had made so indelible an impression. She would not have confessed it for the world. It was her secret, to be hidden close from every eye. But so it was. In vain she called herself idiotic, romantic, absurd; the feeling remained all the same, and refused to be driven away.

All this was merely an inward current, however; outwardly she was always serene, and often gay, with a bright smile and a merry jest to cheer her grandmother. If at any time she felt her spirits in danger of flagging, if she felt disheartened about herself, she went out for a long walk, coming home with a colour in her cheeks, a smile on her lips, and always something to recount for the old lady's amusement.

So the time had passed, and now winter was approaching; such a snug time, Miriam told her grandmother, when they would get a lot of work done, and have all sorts of nice books from the library, and there would be no one to interrupt them.

When Brian Hartley wrote to Mr. Sherwood from Mentone, saying that he had given up his purpose

of going on to Italy, and would shortly follow his letter to England, it was from a sudden impulse. He could not have accounted for it, but the desire to return seized him, and he yielded to it.

He once more visited the last resting-place of Mary Brodrick's mortal remains, and left a sum of money with the custodian of the cemetery in order to have the grave tended and planted with flowers. He then left for Marseilles, from which busy port he took the most direct route homewards. When he arrived in London his first visit was to Mr. Sherwood's office, where he urged that gentleman to use all despatch in whatever legal forms might be necessary, so that he might immediately pay over the money and get the affair off his mind. It had ended disappointingly, and he was sorry; but that could not be helped. Edward Brodrick was clearly Mary Henderson's legitimate heir, and to him the money must be paid.

His next visit was to Mr. Whistler, of the private inquiry office. Mr. Whistler was a rubicund little gentleman, with twinkling eyes and an easily smiling mouth. He expressed himself as delighted to see his client, but he owned he had not as yet much of a satisfactory nature to impart.

"We must be patient, my dear sir," he said, rubbing his hands; "with time much may be done—but we must have time. You see, we have so little to go upon beyond the description and name of the young lady. She is residing with an aged relative—well and good!—but we don't even know if that relative's name is Grey. We agreed that, as the young lady was a governess, the means of this relative were limited, and that therefore one of the suburbs would be a probable place of residence. But which? Would it be Dalston, or Wandsworth, or Hammersmith, or Kentish Town?—or where? We had no clue whatever. I set my agents to work; but these are all the reports I have at present."

Mr. Whistler drew out some papers from a pigeonhole in his desk.

"There is a Miss Grey living with an uncle at Dulwich," he resumed, referring to one of the papers. "She is about thirty years of age, rather short, and inclined to be stout; light eyes, and a good deal of colour——"

"Stop!" cried Brian, interrupting him. "That won't do at all."

"I thought not," Mr. Whistler replied composedly. "Now here is another. A Miss Grey lives in Camden Town with a widowed mother and two younger sisters. She goes out as a daily governess. Description: tall, slight, dark eyed. That is more like, isn't it?"

Brian hesitated; the description, though inadequate, was not contradictory; yet he was not hopeful. He did not feel as if this could be his Miriam; he did not think she would have spoken of a mother as "an aged relative;" he did not imagine her with young sisters; but still it might be. It was not at all improbable that, after leaving Mrs. Bloxam's, Miriam had taken a situation as morning governess. It was worth further inquiry. If he could see this Miss Grey, a distant glance would tell him at once if it was she he sought. He took down her address, and Mr. Whistler proceeded with his notes.

He had several other Miss Greys down in his memoranda living in different suburbs and occupying similar situations; but the descriptions of all these young ladies fell wide of the mark.

"You see, Grey is such a very common name," observed Mr. Whistler with a broad smile. "There are families of Greys innumerable in all ranks of life—from his lordship to the chandler round the corner. If we knew the name of the relative, that would help us, as I said before; but we don't; and she or he may be living in apartments—may not even be a householder. You see the difficulties, my dear sir; but we don't despair—not at all. Dear, dear, I could tell you of cases far more complicated than this where we succeeded at last. Time is the thing, sir; time and—ahem!"

Brian perfectly understood; he had not come without his cheque-book. He took leave of Mr. Whistler with no very hopeful feelings; but he determined to go to Camden Town in the morning, and watch till he caught sight of this slight, dark-eyed girl, though without the least expectation that in her he would find Miriam Grey.

CHAPTER XI.

BRIAN HARTLEY MAKES A DISCOVERY.



BRIAN HARTLEY arose, after a sleepless night, in a despondent mood. During his journey home he had buoyed himself up with the thought that each station passed brought him nearer to where Miriam must be. Now he was in London again, and seemed as far from her as ever. Mr. Whistler spoke of time; why, they might both be grey-haired before they met, at this rate! He intended to see this young lady at Camden Town; but he felt sure beforehand that she would prove to be someone quite different from Miriam.

It would be of no use to go to the address given before one o'clock. If this Miss Grey was a daily governess, she would not be returning from her duties before that hour, and he did not care to be on the watch longer than necessary. He thought he would call at Mr. Sherwood's office in Lincoln's Inn first, and see if the documents had been got ready for the

transfer of the forty thousand pounds. He was anxious now to be released from his trust as soon as possible. From Lincoln's Inn he would walk to Camden Town—though the day was not inviting, he concluded, as he glanced at the murky November sky.

He carried out his intention as far as his visit to the office was concerned—found that all would be ready for the transfer on the following day, wrote a note to Edward Brodrick to that effect, and then set out on his walk northwards. It had begun to drizzle by that time, but he would not call a cab—it would take him too early to his place of destination; and the omnibuses looked anything but inviting. He had no inclination to be squeezed in with a dozen other passengers, all in damp clothes and with dripping umbrellas; so he plodded on along Holborn to Tottenham Court Road, where he was brought to a standstill.

This busy thoroughfare happened to be unusually crowded with vehicles that dripping day, and just as Brian reached the corner there was a jam, a crash, a scream, and voices raised in loud objurgation. A cab had come to grief against a brewer's dray. A crowd immediately collected, as usual, and, as usual, no one offered help. A woman's pale face appeared at the window of the disabled cab. A hand was put out, vainly endeavouring to open the door, which had got jammed in the crush. The cabman was too deep in quarrel with the drayman to attend to his fare. Brian Hartley pushed his way through the throng, and, forcing open the cab door, offered his arm to assist the occupant to alight.

It proved to be an old lady, and she was alone. She must have been greatly alarmed, though she did not lose her presence of mind. Brian, however, noticed that the hand she laid on his arm trembled a little, and she looked very pale. She thanked him courteously for his assistance, as he made a way for her to the side pavement. As she raised her face to his while speaking to him, a strange thrill ran through his frame. Had he been asleep, like Rip Van Winkle, and wakened again to find Miriam Grey, but at seventy years of age instead of twenty? Or was he, as he had feared once before, the victim of delusion? The likeness to Miriam was startling, bewildering. There was the same delicate oval face, with the finely chiselled features, the same broad brow (only here were lines of care and sorrow that after-peace had not been able to efface), the same soft brown eyes (only the hair was snow-white instead of chestnut-brown). He must know her name; he would not lose sight of her till he had found out who she was. But how without impertinence? But Providence often favours us in an unlooked-for manner, and so it was with Brian Hartley.

The rain still came down with steady persistency; the pavement was crowded; the street muddy. The old lady looked disconsolately at the broken-down cab, and at the cabman, who was still engaged in a wordy war.

"If you will not mind standing a moment on the kerbstone, I will call another cab for you," said Brian in his pleasant voice, that at once inspired the old lady with confidence.

"Thank you so much; I am really ashamed you should have the trouble," she replied in a tone and with a smile that again sent the blood coursing through his veins. Could it be that he was on the brink of a discovery? Surely this wonderful likeness could not be deceiving him? and if not, what followed? It was the strong resemblance to the description of Mary Henderson that had first attracted him to Miriam Grey on that ever-memorable afternoon in Kensington Gardens; and if he had not stood by the grave in the cemetery at Mentone, he would have believed himself in the very presence of her he had so longed to see—David Leigh's sweetheart. But this was pure imagination, for Mrs. Brodrick was dead. But there might be a family connection to account for the likeness, and he determined by some means or other to find out.

These thoughts passed rapidly through his mind as he hastened for a cab. He placed the lady within, and asked her if he should tell the man where to drive. And then, observing that she still looked pale and upset, he begged to be allowed to see her safely home, saying that he would mount the box with the driver.

The lady gave her address, adding, "I am quite safe now, thank you. I was a little alarmed, I own but that is over. I am exceedingly obliged to you, but I could not think of taking you out of your way."

She spoke these words in a hesitating manner, and Brian thought she looked at him rather wistfully, as if, in spite of what she said, she would be glad of his protection. He assured her that it would not be taking him out of his way, which was the truth. The young lady at Camden Town was completely forgotten; all he thought of now was how to discover if this lady was in any way connected with Miriam Grey.

"I am sure you are not fit to ride alone after your fright; I could not be comfortable if I allowed you to do so," he said.

The old lady smiled at the earnestness of his manner, and there was something about Brian Hartley's face and voice that at once inspired trust.

"Well, if such is really the case, come with me," she replied; "but not outside with the driver this wet day."

She made way for him as she spoke, and, thus invited, Brian jumped in and took the seat by her side. As they rattled along the streets she began talking to him in a perfectly frank and easy manner, as if they had been old acquaintances. She told him she had been to the bank to receive a half-yearly dividend; that she was afraid of trusting herself in an omnibus on her way home because of the notices put up about pickpockets, so she always on these occasions took a cab, though she was not in the habit of indulging in such extravagance.

As she talked, and as he looked at her, the

conviction was more and more borne in upon Brian's mind that here could be no chance resemblance. His heart beat high with this belief. If it should prove not to be so, if it should be all a delusion, he scarcely knew how he should bear the disappointment To be cast back again upon the sea of uncertainty without compass or rudder, to be as far off as ever from his heart's desire, would be dreadful! But this surely could not be! The more his eyes rested on his companion's face—and he was aware they rested there more frequently and intently than politeness quite warranted—the more steadfast became his faith that he was on the way to find the woman he loved, and for whom he had so ardently sought.

More and more, too, the feeling increased that if he had not been so sure it was impossible, that if he had not seen the marble cross and read the inscription with his own eyes, he must have believed that it was Mary Henderson who was by his side. It showed how deceptive a description might be, he said to himself. He remembered telling Mrs. Sherwood that he did not think he could make a mistake in the likeness, and yet here was one who agreed with David Leigh's description in every point, and yet he knew that his old friend's sweetheart had been dead three-and-twenty years!

It was a long ride; there was plenty of time for Brian's musings and speculations. Plenty of time, too, for conversation. The old lady told him that she had a granddaughter living with her, and that she was afraid the child would be uneasy at her long absence.

"The dear girl scarcely lets me out of her sight; but I am obliged to assert my independence now and then," she said, with a little laugh.

Along the Euston Road, across the Edgware Road, past the Great Western Railway station—what a long way it seemed to Brian's impatience! The mention of the granddaughter had excited him still further. Should he see her? Perhaps she would be watching at the window. If not, could he make any excuse to enter the house?

At last the driver turned into a quiet little street, then again at a right angle, and, obeying the old lady's directions, he stopped at a white two-storeyed detached house standing behind railings screened by evergreens. Brian jumped out. There was no occasion to ring, for immediately the cab stopped the front door was flung open, and a slight girl, with wavy chestnut hair, came running to the gate.

Brian saw the door open, but he did not see who came out, for his back was turned as he assisted the old lady to alight.

"Oh! granny, how long you have been; I began to be quite anxious!" exclaimed a sweet young voice.

Brian started, turned suddenly, and two pairs of eyes met in mutual recognition. A deep blush spread over Miriam's cheeks and brow; she drew back a step; her eyes fell before Brian's. He was scarcely less agitated, though his feelings were all of joy. He sprang forward, and held out both his hands.

"Do you know me?" he exclaimed, a glad light in his eyes.

Miriam with an effort recovered her self-possession. She gently withdrew the hand he had clasped in both his, and turning to her grandmother, who had been looking from one to the other in surprise, said—

"This is Mr. Hartley, granny; a gentleman from Australia."

"From Australia?" Mrs. Brodrick exclaimed; "and you have met before? Miriam, child, you never told me that you knew anyone from Australia. —Pray step in," she continued, addressing Brian, who in the meantime had discharged the cab. He sent the driver away with a fare that caused that individual to leave his cab to its fate while he made a pause at the nearest public-house.

"How very odd that you two should be acquainted!" Mrs. Brodrick remarked, as they went up to the front door.

Mrs. Brodrick had keen sight, and in Brian Hartley's ardent looks and Miriam's blushing cheeks she thought she could read a riddle that had puzzled her, and that she could now account for her granddaughter's varying moods.

Brian Hartley did not recover himself immediately. This sudden joy, this fruition of all his hopes, had overpowered him for the moment. He felt dizzy, unable to speak, to explain anything, as he followed Mrs. Brodrick into the little drawing-room. Miriam's womanly instinct of reticence enabled her to conceal her agitation more successfully.

"How did you happen to meet?" she asked in a voice that she strove in vain to render steady and indifferent while she removed her grandmother's fur cloak.

"I will tell you," returned Mrs. Brodrick, drawing off her gloves and extending her hands to the glowing fire. Then she related, with many comments, the accident that had befallen the cab in which she was riding, dwelling much on Mr. Hartley's kind promptitude in coming to the rescue. "What I should have done without his assistance I don't know," she concluded.

"I am more rejoiced to have been on the spot than I can tell you, Mrs. Grey," Brian assured her.

He was grateful to her for having made her narrative so long, as it had given him time to recover self-possession. Perhaps Mrs. Brodrick had been somewhat prolix with a purpose.

"At the time you only thought of helping an old woman out of a difficulty," said Mrs. Brodrick, in answer to Mr. Hartley's assertion, smiling kindly on the young man from her chair by the fire. "I must correct you in one thing; my name is not Grey, but Brodrick. Miriam is my daughter's child; my daughter married a Dr. Grey."

"Brodrick!" exclaimed Brian with a start. Were the surprises of this day never to end? The idea that had flashed across his mind, but that had been put aside as untenable, and had afterwards been



"A dear sweet face
That each will miss on Christmas Day!"

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.—p. 70.



XUM

forgotten in the joy of finding Miriam, now returned in full force and took possession.

"You have heard the name? Perhaps you know someone of the name of Brodrick?—though it is not so very common," Mrs. Brodrick suggested, struck by the expression of Brian's countenance.

"Yes, I know someone of the name," Brian answered gravely. Then he added, "May I ask if you ever had any early friend settled in Australia?"

"Settled there I cannot say," returned Mrs. Brodrick. "I had an early friend who went out to Australia, but what became of him I do not know. It is many, many years since I heard of David Leigh."

She spoke musingly, more as if thinking aloud than answering her questioner.

Miriam had escaped from the room under pretence of carrying away her grandmother's wraps. She wanted to be a few minutes alone to compose herself: Mr. Hartley's sudden and unexpected appearance was so like something out of a fairy tale, she almost felt as if she must be dreaming. She wondered if he would disappear again, or whether he would follow up the acquaintance. If this was to be the case, she must guard herself well not to let him suppose that she expected him to repeat the offer contained in his letter. She buried her face in her hands, as if to conceal the hot colour that rose to her cheeks even from herself. Then she paced her room, striving to still the throbbing of her heart before going down again. She knew, if she did not go, she would be sent for to wish Mr. Hartley good-bye.

Mrs. Brodrick was much surprised when Brian Hartley started from his chair at the mention of David Leigh.

"I might have known it! I think I did know it, the moment I saw you!" he exclaimed as he stood before her. "You are Mary Henderson!" adding under his breath, "What a case of deception, and what a marvellous discovery, only just in time!"

Mrs. Brodrick did not catch these muttered words; she replied to his first exclamation. "You must have known David Leigh: Did he, then, remember me?" she inquired eagerly, her face all in a quiver at this mention of her old lover, from whom she had parted so many years ago.

"His last earthly thoughts were of you," Brian returned, also much moved by this strange meeting, this realisation of a hope he had considered buried in a grave at Mentone. He was shocked, too, by the revelation of a fraud that had so nearly succeeded in its aim, and that might have caused him to commit a terrible wrong.

"David Leigh was a second father to me," he resumed. "I went to him as a boy of sixteen, and remained with him till he died—not yet twelve months ago. He adopted me, and always treated me as a son."

Miriam stole into the room, and sat down near her grandmother, glad that the gloomy November day was already darkening towards afternoon, and that her face was in shadow.

"How wonderful it seems!" said Mrs. Brodrick, clasping her hands as they rested on her knee.—"Miriam, don't you remember, only a few days ago I said how much I should like to know what had become of David Leigh? He is dead, then. You were his adopted son? Did he leave no family of his own?"

"He never married," Mr. Hartley rejoined. "But I must ask you to let me give you all particulars another time. Do you admit anyone of an evening? May I call to-morrow evening?"

"Will you be so good? It would give me such great pleasure to hear all about my old friend; but pray sit down again. Are you in a hurry? Are we trespassing upon your time?" said Mrs. Brodrick.

Brian declined to sit down again. Great as was his delight in being in Miriam's presence, he had an onerous duty to perform that would not brook delay. He must see Mr. Sherwood at once, and make him acquainted with what had occurred. He did not wish to mention the legacy, or to enter into any explanation with Mrs. Brodrick, until he had consulted his adviser. That Edward Brodrick had attempted to get possession of David Leigh's legacy by false representations was clear. No doubt her grandson's dishonesty would be a grievous revelation to Mrs. Brodrick, and Brian felt as if he would rather not be the informant, if it could be avoided.

"Before I go, will you allow me to ask you just two questions?" he said; adding, "You will think them strange; but I must beg you to exonerate me from impertinence, and to trust that I have a motive, though I cannot at the moment explain."

"Certainly; I will answer any questions you like to put," Mrs. Brodrick replied in some surprise. "I cannot imagine that you will ask me anything I ought not to answer."

She thought of Miriam for a moment, and of the mystery there seemed to be between them. She made up her mind, however, that it could not be anything relating to Miriam of which he wanted to speak, especially in the girl's presence.

"First, have you a grandson of the name of Edward Brodrick?" Brian inquired, having obtained the old lady's permission.

"Yes," Mrs. Brodrick returned. "My family has not spread; I have just these two grandchildren: Edward, the son of my son James; and my daughter's daughter, Miriam."

"And your grandson, this Edward Brodrick, is in the employment of Messrs. Roberts and Smart, of Birmingham, I believe?" said Brian.

"Yes," Mrs. Brodrick answered; then, anxiously, "Have you anything to tell me about him?"

"Not just at present," said Brian, feeling grieved to think how this tender woman's feelings would be hurt by the revelation that must inevitably come. "My next question is, who is the Mary Brodrick who is buried at Mentone?"

"The Mary Brodrick who is buried at Mentone?" repeated Mrs. Brodrick in still increasing surprise. "Assuredly she was my husband's sister—my dear sister-in-law. She went to Mentone for her health, and died there, twenty-three years ago."

Brian again ejaculated, below his breath.

"You are very mysterious. Do you know, I begin to be rather afraid of you," Mrs. Brodrick remarked with a smile, though she changed colour. She could not make out the drift of these questions, nor could she imagine how this Mr. Hartley had gained the information his inquiries seemed to imply.

"You have no need to be afraid of me, I hope," Brian assured her. "At any rate, I am no dealer in the black art. Whatever knowledge I possess has been acquired by perfectly natural means, as you will understand by-and-by. But I must crave your patience; there is much to explain; much I wish to say in many ways. This meeting has been altogether providential, it seems to me, not only because it has saved me from committing a great injustice—— But there, I am talking in riddles again."

He pressed Mrs. Brodrick's hand with a look of reverential tenderness on his handsome face, and then he turned to Miriam, who had risen and was standing a little apart, an attentive and surprised listener to this colloquy with her grandmother.

He took her hand in his, saying in a low voice, as he bent over her, a world of love in his eyes, "You will not hide yourself from me again? Why were you so cruel as not to let me know where you were? Why would you not give me a chance?"

Miriam blushed rosy-red; her hand fluttered in his grasp. She shyly raised her eyes to his for an instant in mute appeal, and in that one glance, notwithstanding the resolutions Miriam had been forming in her own mind, he did not read total discouragement.

CHAPTER XII.

MRS. SHERWOOD COMES TO THE RESCUE.

BRIAN HARTLEY left Mrs. Brodrick's house feeling deeply, soberly happy and grateful. He saw the finger of Providence in all that had befallen him. He had, by what might seem to the worldly eye the merest chance, been saved from the misappropriation of his old friend's money, and at the same time had found her whom he had sought so long and fruitlessly.

Had he met Miriam Grey for the first time after his discovery of Mary Henderson and their close connection, much as he might have been in love with her, he would scarcely have known how to make advances that might so easily have been misunderstood. Now there could be no misunderstanding—no question that it was Miriam Grey herself he sought, not Miriam Grey her grandmother's heiress. He had proposed to her while she was poor and dependent, while he believed her to be poorer and more forlorn than proved to be really the case, so that he need have no scruple in renewing his suit now, however much her circumstances might have altered.

For Edward Brodrick he felt no pity; his pity was for those connected with the delinquent. At the nearest cab-stand he hailed a hansom, and had himself driven at once to Lincoln's Inn. Arrived at the office, he was told that Mr. Sherwood had left; he had gone home early. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to follow on to Twickenham.

Here he found that Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood were going out to a dinner-party, but they had half an hour to spare for him. Great was Mr. Sherwood's surprise and indignation when he heard the story.

"The rascal!" he exclaimed hotly; "there never was a clearer case of endeavouring to obtain money under false pretences."

Mrs. Sherwood was not in the room; she had not finished dressing. When she came in and heard what had happened, she clapped her hands in delight.

"There, John!" she cried, "will you laugh at my conclusions again? Only to think that I was right! I can't tell you how glad I am! Don't forget that you are to take me to call on your Miriam."

"Do you think there is any danger of my forgetting?" he rejoined. "But as for being mine," he added with a sigh, "that the future must tell."

Mrs. Sherwood nodded her head. "I don't think there is much fear," she asserted.

There was but little time; the Sherwoods had a long drive before them; but they insisted on Brian taking some refreshment. Indeed, he began to feel the need of it. This had been such an exciting day, he had never thought of anything so prosaic and matter-of-fact as luncheon.

He had still to write to Mr. Whistler to stop further proceedings on that gentleman's part, and then he could give himself up to happy day-dreams, wherein he walked through a cloudless future, with the woman he loved by his side.

After Brian Hartley had left, Miriam found herself compelled to explain to her grandmother the romantic circumstances of their previous meetings. She brought forth her precious letter, and kneeling by her grandmother's chair she leaned her cheek against her shoulder during its perusal. The letter, in its manly simplicity, impressed Mrs. Brodrick almost as favourably as it had impressed Miriam herself.

She laid down the letter, and, taking Miriam's blushing face between her hands, looked into her eyes.

A gentle sigh escaped her, for she thought she read there that the time would come before long when she would be called upon to give up her darling child. Not that this thought caused her sorrow; she had always wished that Miriam should marry, always wished to leave her with a good, kind protector when she should be laid at rest.

"I can see now why poor Edward had no chance," said Mrs. Brodrick, smiling. Then, as Miriam only hung her head and did not speak, she continued, "I quite appreciate your motive in hiding yourself away from Mr. Hartley, my dear; but was it altogether kind or wise? Remember, you ran the risk of making shipwreck of his happiness as well as your own. No man could give you a greater gift than he has done. He offers you his heart, his love, his whole future. Dear, we have only one life to lead; if Mr. Hartley has placed his in your hands, God forbid that you should hold it as a light matter."

"No—no—indeed, Granny," Miriam murmured in a broken voice, for she was weeping silently; "you must not think me cold-hearted, ungrateful. But don't you see he asked me to marry him because he pitied me? How is it possible he could have felt anything else for me than pity?"

"I don't see that at all; and listen to me," said Mrs. Brodrick, drawing the weeping girl towards her and kissing her fondly. "I have known instances where lives have been spoilt for just a foolish scruple. You must decide from the dictates of your own heart, Miriam. I only entreat you not to trifle with happiness; it too rarely visits mortals, not to be welcomed as an angel's visit. As for his love for you, in however sudden a manner it may have arisen, I don't think Mr. Hartley will leave you long in doubt about that!"

But Miriam shook her head, and would not be convinced. She repossessed herself of her letter, and carried it away to lock it up again amongst her few treasures. She kept repeating to herself, as if to imprint it upon her mind beyond danger of forgetting, that, however much her heart might go out towards Brian Hartley, she must never let him know that she loved him. Whatever her grandmother might say, she was quite sure it could only have been pity that induced him to make his offer. Now that they had met again, he would no doubt feel pledged in honour to renew his proposals. She must not allow him to sacrifice himself; she must be firm. She could never marry anyone else, but she was not afraid of a single life. Anything would be better than feeling that her husband had married her from compassion, or because he fancied himself bound to her in honour.

If amongst all the inventions of modern times there were only one that would enable us to read each other's hearts! Could Miriam have known what Brian Hartley was thinking and feeling at that moment, how much trouble she might have saved herself and him!

In the evening Edward Brodrick happened to call. He had been a frequent visitor lately. In spite of constant rebuffs, he could not altogether relinquish the idea that he might still persuade Miriam to marry him, and thus, to use his favourite expression, "make all square." He had just the day before received the notice from Mr. Sherwood's office that the money would be paid over to him on the following day.

Thus, then, he was about to reap the reward of his clever scheme, and he tried to drown remorse by imagining himself rolling in riches at no remote period, for money begets money. He was attired with his usual scrupulous neatness, but in face he looked ill and haggard, and there was a feverish excitement about his manner that did not escape his grandmother's observation.

"I am always glad to see you, Edward," she said kindly, "but I have been wondering lately how it is you have so much spare time. How can you manage to leave the office so often?"

"I am my own master now; I have left Roberts and Smart," Edward replied curtly, as he laid down his hat and stick.

"Left!" Mrs. Brodrick exclaimed in consternation; "how was that? I looked to see you a partner there one of these days."

"Not very likely; I hope to do better," Edward returned, taking a seat near the table where Miriam sat at work. "I—I—the fact is, I have some money coming to me, and I shall probably start in business on my own account."

Edward felt hot, and looked confused. It had not struck him before that he would have to make up some tale to account for the possession of so large a sum of money as forty thousand pounds, though certainly he had no need to mention the amount.

"Indeed! I am glad to hear it," said Mrs. Brodrick. "I did not know you were likely to come in for more money than the few hundreds you had after your grandfather Marshall's death."

"Well, I have," returned Edward irritably, drumming on the table with his fingers. "Not—not so very much, you know, but just something to help me on."

"I have no wish to pry into your affairs—don't think that," said his grandmother gently; "I am glad to hear of good-fortune having befallen you, that is all. And now I must tell you of a strange adventure that happened to me this morning."

Edward listened with scant attention while she told of the cab accident, but at the mention of Mr. Hartley's name, he sprang from his seat as if an arrow had pierced him. Every vestige of colour forsook his cheeks.

"Mr. Hartley!" he cried, in a voice shrill with terror; "what Mr. Hartley? Not Brian Hartley from Australia? Where did you say you met with him? Did you bring him here? Does he know who you are?"

Both Mrs. Brodrick and Miriam gazed at him in surprise.

"Yes, it is Mr. Brian Hartley from Australia of

whom I speak," said Mrs. Brodrick. "He brought me news of an old friend of mine, David Leigh. He asked if I had a grandson of your name. What do you know of him?"

"I—I know nothing to—to his credit," Edward stammered, sinking into his seat again. His grandmother evidently knew nothing about the legacy at present. "Mr. Hartley has no business here. You must not let him come again. You must not hold any communication with him, or let Miriam speak to him," he went on vehemently. "He is—is not a fit person for you to know."

Mrs. Brodrick looked astounded, as if she scarcely knew what to make of this outburst; but Miriam's cheeks flushed, her eyes flamed.

"For shame, Edward! You do not know what you are saying," she cried. "If you have anything to say against Mr. Hartley, meet him here to-morrow evening, and say it to his face. But you dare not; your countenance betrays you."

"I was speaking to grandmother. What is this Mr. Hartley to you?" Edward exclaimed, turning fiercely to Miriam. "Why should you take up the cudgels in his defence? Don't you think I know better than you what is fit and what isn't?"

Rage, jealousy, and alarm were all contending together in Edward Brodrick's breast. He was almost beside himself. He saw the cup he had raised to his lips dashed ruthlessly from his hand. And Miriam took Mr. Hartley's part; was it on account of this man that she had refused to listen to his pleading? But above all other sensations was dastardly craven fear. If he could only keep his grandmother and Mr. Hartley apart; if he could only insure the secret being kept! But then it all at once flashed upon him that it was already too late! His grandmother might not as yet have heard of the legacy, but Mr. Hartley already knew of her existence, and was therefore aware of the fraud that had been attempted. And if Mr. Hartley, then, as a matter of course, Mr. Sherwood.

Had he time to escape arrest for attempting to obtain money under fraudulent pretences? What he had done had never struck him in this light before. When he had first applied for the money, the concealment of his grandmother's existence had seemed so simple a thing; he had no idea of being driven to so much falsehood. Was Mr. Hartley a likely man to be lenient under such circumstances? At this thought every other feeling gave way to abject terror. He could have fallen at his grandmother's feet, have confessed all, and besought her to shield him, could that have availed, but it would avail nothing. He could not face the shame of discovery; he, who had always been a pattern of respectability, to be now the mark of public reprobation, to read condemnation and contempt in the eyes of his fellow-men—he could not bear it. He execrated the temptation that had come in his way, the glitter of the gold that had caused his undoing. Where could he go? where hide himself? These were the thoughts that rushed through his mind when his grandmother spoke.

"I think Miriam is right," she said. "We should condemn no one unheard, and without proof. You had better meet Mr. Hartley here to-morrow evening, and if he cannot clear himself from your imputations, if he is not the gentleman he seems to me to be, I promise you neither Miriam nor I will see him again."

But Edward did not listen, did not hear. His limbs trembled; he had turned deadly pale, with a cold, sickly pallor. He had no comprehension left but for one terrible absorbing thought. It was already several hours since Mr. Hartley had left the house—long enough to have communicated with Messrs. Sherwood and Lucas.

He started up, seized his hat, and with scarcely a good-bye rushed from the house. He hailed a cab, and had himself driven first to the lodging he had taken in London; then to Euston Square, where he took the night train to Birmingham. Arrived at home, he hastily packed his possessions, ran to the bank as soon as the doors opened in the morning, and drew out his money, started for Liverpool, took the first packet that sailed for America, and England saw him no more.

* * * * * *

Christmas was close at hand, with its rejoicing to some, its regrets to many. The New Year, too, was in sight, and Brian Hartley had taken possession of his beautiful home—Elm Grove. Preparations had been made for the reception of his friends, for not only were Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood coming, but also Mrs. Brodrick and Miriam.

Miriam Grey was not looking well. She had become thin, and paler than ever; her spirits were fitful; and she gave way to irritability occasionally, that was very unlike herself. The fact was, she had set herself a task altogether beyond her strength. She still held fast to her opinion that Brian Hartley had renewed his suit only from a point of honour, because he would not draw back from his former proposals. He had so much to give, and she so little! How could she believe that he loved her, when he must constantly be meeting beautiful and accomplished women so much more fitted to share his fortunes? So she strove to make it appear that she only wished for his friendship; but it was hard work—hard in his absence, harder still in his presence. And then she was unhappy because she saw that she vexed and annoyed her grandmother by holding aloof—her grandmother, who had suffered such sorrow from Edward's wrong-doing.

Miriam knew that her grandmother had come into some money through the bequest of her old lover, David Leigh; but she had no idea that it was so large a sum. Mrs. Brodrick had not told her the amount; she did not wish her to be biassed in her decision by any idea of giving to Brian Hartley what would have been his but for David Leigh's remembrance of his sweetheart. Neither had Mrs.

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Brodrick made any change in her mode of life. She was in no hurry, she said to herself.

Mrs. Sherwood had called, and had been delighted both with Mrs. Brodrick and Miriam, and before the second week in December they had met several times. Miriam was equally charmed with Mrs. Sherwood, and Brian was not a little glad to see the warm friendship springing up between the two.

When Brian first invited Mrs. Brodrick to be his guest at Elm Grove, she hesitated; she was afraid she was "too old to venture from home," she said. But Brian would not listen to this; he would come for her, he told her, and he would take care she should be in no danger, either from over-fatigue or exposure to the cold. It did not take very long to overcome her objections; she saw that Brian was bent upon this visit, and, moreover, she hoped that, with daily life under the same roof, Miriam might be no longer able to resist the happy lot offered to her acceptance. She could not understand Miriam's persistent coldness, for Miriam had concealed her real feelings from her grandmother as successfully as from Brian himself.

Miriam went to Elm Grove with great reluctance; but the visit was arranged, and she had no voice in the matter. She was glad Mrs. Sherwood was of the party; she kept to her as closely as possible, and avoided Brian as much as she could during the week. The beautiful house and gardens, the luxury by which she found herself surrounded, only intensified her belief in the necessity for self-sacrifice; but the strain was almost more than she could bear. And Brian, though he followed her with such assiduous attention that she could not fail to see that he intended to repeat his former proposals, had not yet, in so many words, asked her again to be his wife. She was not aware how often her coldness of manner had checked the words on his lips, and sent him away sad at heart. She sometimes told herself that she wished he would speak, and then she could tell him that he must not consider himself bound by his letter. She could tell him that he was free, that he must not for a moment imagine that honour compelled him to renew his offer. But she could not volunteer all this, she could not reject an offer before it was made. And all the time she was so miserable! longing for what could never be, and wondering how she would bear it when the time came, and, for his sake, she would have to send him from her, and to close the door upon her life's happiness for ever.

To the other guests the week passed pleasantly. The weather was frosty, but clear and sunshiny, and they had numerous drives about the country. Several gentlemen from the neighbourhood called on the new proprietor of Elm Grove, and when they found such a charming party of ladies there, sent their wives and daughters to call also. Then there was so much to examine in the house. Brian, having purchased it as it stood, did not himself know half its treasures. Mr. Sherwood spent his time between the library and the conservatory. Mrs. Sherwood looked over the china, in which she was as great a connoisseur as her husband was in plants. Mrs. Brodrick made herself happy by the fireside with her knitting.

Mrs. Sherwood had her suspicions before, and this week she watched Miriam narrowly. She one day put a suppositious case as of something she had read in a book, and blamed the heroine of her story severely for her absurd self-sacrifice. Miriam took the opposite view, and vehemently contended that the heroine was right—that she could not have done otherwise. This made Mrs. Sherwood quite satisfied that her conjecture was well founded. And now how to bring Miriam to her senses?

"Yes, yes; I see how it is," she said to herself, apostrophising Miriam in her own mind. "If Brian had been a poor man, you would have let him see that you loved him; but because he is rich and has a beautiful home to bring you to, you must needs make him unhappy by standing aloof; and you think you are acting very disinterestedly, very nobly, no doubt; but we must put an end to all that. I am not going to see two lives spoilt if I can help it."

She thought over what was best to be done, and then she took Mrs. Brodrick into her confidence. She told Miriam she wanted her to spend a few days at Twickenham instead of going direct home, and that her grandmother had consented to spare her. Miriam was nothing loth: the more she saw of Mrs. Sherwood, the more she became attached to her; besides, she almost dreaded returning to the quietude of home. The quiet that is pleasant with happy thoughts to dwell upon becomes almost unbearable when the heart is torn by vain longings and regrets. So, on the day that Brian Hartley took Mrs. Brodrick home, Miriam accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood to their Twickenham abode.

The fine weather of the previous week had given way to stormy winds and showers of drifting snow that made walking impossible. The ladies were obliged to content themselves with indoor amusements. At last, on Christmas Eve, a thaw came; the sun shone out again in fitful gleams. This was the last day of Miriam's visit. In the afternoon she would return home, in order to be with her grandmother on Christmas Day. Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood's presence was required at a large family gathering in London. Brian Hartley had confided to Mrs. Sherwood his intention of calling at Twickenham in order to escort Miriam home; but of this intention Miriam was in ignorance.

After luncheon Mrs. Sherwood placed a basket in Miriam's hands, and told her to go into the grounds and gather what she could to take home with her towards the decoration of Mrs. Brodrick's parlour. Miriam felt glad of the excuse to seek the fresh air, and to commune with her own thoughts awhile. She strove to shake off the depression that hung over her. She told herself that she was childish and unreasonable; that a while ago she would have honestly declared herself perfectly contented with

the prospect of spending her life with her grandmother, as long as that dear relative should be left to her, and that nothing was really altered since. But, in spite of this, the sprigs of holly and snowberry and laurestinus were wet with other drops than those from the dripping boughs.

Miriam had on her warm fur-trimmed jacket, and this she did not remove, as she intended to leave her kind friends so as to reach home before it was quite dark. She took off her hat, however, and laid it on the table beside her while she tied up her garden spoils.

"Here is a bright piece of holly and a bit of laurestinus; I shall wear them this evening. The holly will go beautifully with my dark-green gown."

Miriam spoke lightly; she hoped that Mrs. Sherwood would not perceive the traces of tears.

"Whom are you going to make yourself so smart for?" questioned the last-mentioned lady rather sharply. "Not for Mr. Hartley, I presume. I really begin to imagine, Miriam, you can have no heart at all. How you can be acquainted with all Brian Hartley's fine qualities — as you must be — and be conscious of his devotion to you, and not love him in return, is more than I can understand. Why, I believe I should be in love with him myself if it were not for John!"

"Not love him!" cried Miriam, dropping the sprays she held and clasping her hands, for once thrown off her guard. "Have you not guessed? Do you not know? I love him with my whole heart and soul! I love him so well that I hold his happiness dearer than my own! There is nothing in the whole world I care for in comparison with him!"

Mrs. Sherwood had been making signs to someone unseen by Miriam, who stood with her back to the door. As these last words were uttered in a voice choked by emotion, she slipped from the room; and at the same moment Miriam found herself drawn to a broad breast, and lips pressed to hers with the murmured words, "At last, my heart's treasure!"

That traitress, Mrs. Sherwood, had seen Brian enter, and had motioned him to keep back while she surprised Miriam into her confession. Resistance was of no further use; the words that had been overheard could not be recalled. And, oh! the joy of feeling herself conquered! The ineffable happiness of resting her head against her lover's breast; of listening to his expressions of endearment; of casting away all doubt; of knowing that he, whose image she had so fondly cherished, would be her beloved companion and stay through all the years to come!



"Resistance was of no further use."
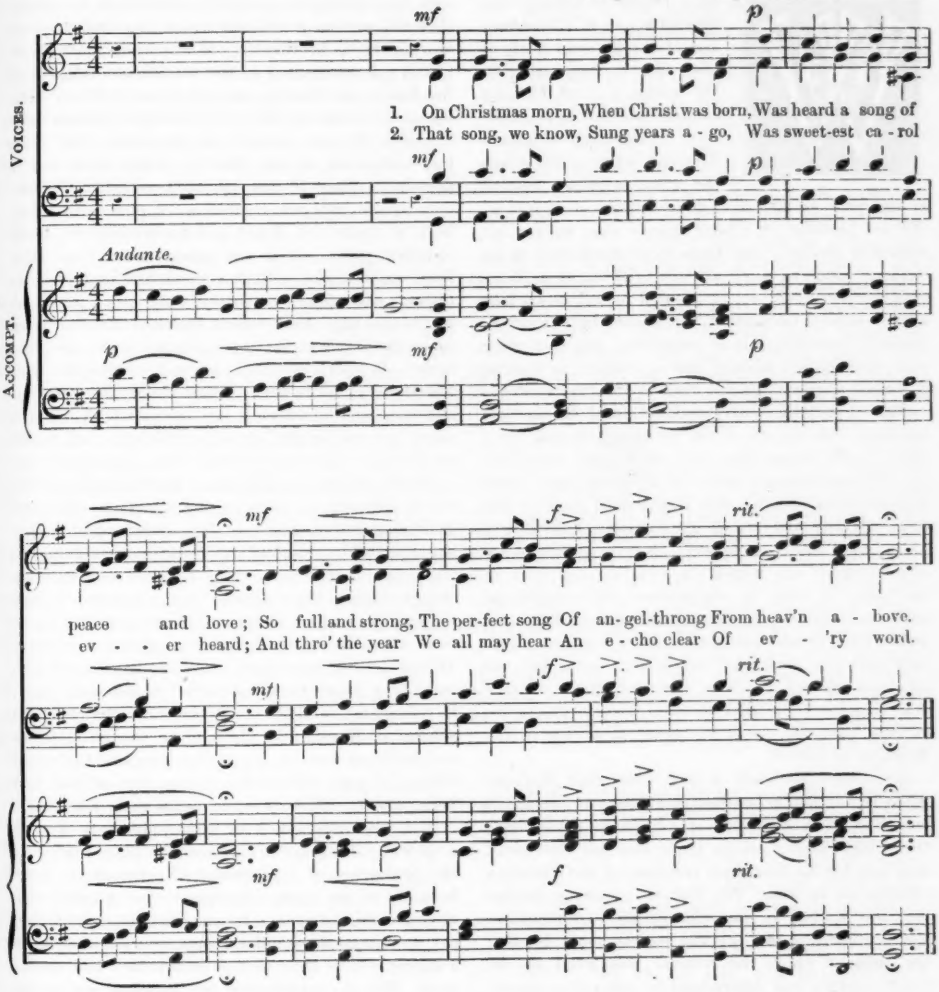
No need to dwell upon Mrs. Brodrick's gladness when Brian Hartley asked her consent to make Miriam his wife, nor to repeat her assurances that there was no one to whom she would with such confidence entrust the happiness of her beloved granddaughter. The remainder of Christmas Eve passed rapidly in the joyful discussion of plans and projects, in all which the dear grandmother, in spite of feeble protests easily overborne, was to have her share.

The hours flew by, when Miriam held up her finger. There were voices in the street. "God save you, merry gentlemen; let nothing you dismay," they sang. It was Christmas Day. Brian Hartley went to the door, and a shower of shillings and sixpences fell into the road; the carol-singers never before had such a reception. But out of their own hearts' content, Brian and Miriam would have wished to secure for all the world "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

"On Christmas Morn, when Christ was born."

Words by G. WEATHERLY.

Music by A. C. MACKENZIE, MUS. D.,
Principal of the Royal Academy of Music.



3.

And now to-day
It seems to say,
To each of us, "Let discord cease;
Put by your fears,
Your griefs and tears,
While in your ears
I tell of peace!"

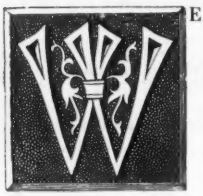
4.

And on this morn,
When Christ was born,
Let all to Him an offering make;
A victory won,
A good deed done,
Some work begun
For His dear sake.

THE KEEPING OF CHRISTMAS.

BY THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF WELLS.

"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."—St. John i. 9.



E have reason to believe that the influence of Christmas, and of our national mode of observing it, has been, on the whole, a great blessing to England and to Englishmen. Something is gained for men's better nature when the great religious festival of the year is also the great season of rejoicing. We are justified in giving thanks that we are not robbed of the joy; that there is so much even in its outward forms to teach all who will see it as it is, that the joy should not be allowed to sink down into a mere animal excitement, but should be supported, purified, ennobled. It is something, too, that each year, as it passes, should bear a practical as well as a formal witness that all men are indeed brothers—well that fathers and children, and sisters and brothers, and friends of old standing, should meet after a long separation, and with kind words of greeting and outward tokens of affection renew their remembrance of the bonds that united them in the days of old, and which it is God's will should unite them still. It is well, in spite of the many abuses which are mixed up with it, that once in the year, if only in compliance with traditional customs, men should open their hands widely and give of their abundance, and make a feast, to which they call not their rich neighbours only, but the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. Christmas, therefore, does bear effectual witness among *us*, at least, that the world has cause to rejoice in the Nativity of Christ.

It is hard to fancy a time since that Nativity when it was not commemorated; hard to picture to ourselves what a society of Christians could have been like among whom there was no Christmas. And yet, for the first three centuries of the Christian Church, so it was. We find on inquiring further into the matter, as one who wishes to understand the development of Christian society must do, that the time at which the festival was fixed in the fourth century was determined by other than purely historical considerations. It is obvious to anyone who reads the narratives of the Gospels that they contain no evidence as to the day of the Nativity—nothing to lead us to fix on the time of year at which we now celebrate its anniversary. The Christians of the first two centuries—the men who observed Easter so religiously and saw in every Sunday a commemoration of their Lord's resurrection—knew nothing of it. We can place no confidence in the dim, uncertain, conflicting traditions as to time and season which we meet during that period. It was when the faith of Christ was spreading rapidly through the empire, and men were feeling the want of new festivals to replace their old seasons of rejoicing which they had given up on renouncing heathenism; it was when the faith of Christ was recognised as the established religion of the State, and drawing the whole social life of men into itself; when all distinctively Pagan customs were repressed by the authority of emperors, that then the celebration of the Nativity began to occupy a prominent place in the Church's calendar. Then men spoke without hesitation of that which had been a matter of doubt and uncertainty for three hundred years. And the season which was thus fixed on coincided with that which had been for ages through the whole Roman world the great period of merry-making—that which loosened for its brief space the bonds of the oppressed, and made his yoke easier—in which men took farewell of the year that was drawing to its close, giving thanks for the corn and wine and oil which it had brought with it; still more, perhaps, for the blessings which they had found each man in his own home. The coincidence can hardly be deemed accidental. There would not be much difficulty in showing by a sufficiently large induction that it was part of a system deliberately acted on. The rulers of the Church sought to rescue the joys of men from the evil which had hitherto defiled them. They wished to take into the service of God that which in their judgment had hitherto been associated only with the worship of the demons. Wherever the missionary teachers of the Church went they were instructed to follow the same plan: to reform, not to destroy; to sanctify whatever was solemn or pleasant to think of in the recollections and habits of those to whom they preached their glad tidings of good things—not to blot out all that had been, and to call on men to begin their life afresh.

Men may differ much in their judgments of such a system. To some it may seem to have tended to the production of a paganised Christianity, to have been one of the many attempts to put a new patch upon an old garment. It was impossible, they may say, to change those old customs, and adapt them to a higher system than that in which they had originated. The joy which men felt in them was of the earth, earthy, in great measure sensual, never higher than social; how could they be woven into the order of a spiritual Kingdom, which was to lead men upwards from the earth, and, resting on spiritual relationships, lead to a spiritual joy? It was not enough to give a new name, though it was the holiest of all names, to that which had been so long associated with what was evil and debasing. The old leaven would be sure to show itself. Christmas was likely to reproduce the excesses of the old Saturnalia.

There is much in this line of reasoning which appears plausible. Once, at least, in the history of

our country, it has, we know, been acted on. Men have resolutely resolved to separate their religion from the joys which are common to the Christian and the heathen, to disconnect it from all social festivity. For a time this purpose was carried into all its consequences. Old habits gave way before the iron rule of an authority which condemned them. Men dared not rejoice as they used to do, or at their old seasons of rejoicing. It may not be fair to lay too much stress on the result of a single experiment; but those who know anything of the effects produced on the English character by the restraints which a rigid asceticism imposed on it—who take into account the terrible reaction which followed on that short period of coercion—may well be allowed to dread a repetition of the trial. When they compare the influence exercised by the Christian Church on the old and new populations of the Roman Empire, or on the Saxon settlers in our own country, they may, at least, be pardoned if they think the system on which the Church then acted the wiser and truer of the two—worthy, at all events, of something else than an unmixed condemnation. In spite of occasional excesses and mistakes, in spite of the many errors sure to occur when men imitated, in the policy of a worldly craft, that which greater and nobler minds began in the wisdom of love, they may recognise a higher than human guidance in that loving discipline—a witness borne with greater or less distinctness to truths of which men must be persuaded if their religion is to be any part of their life—if, in acknowledging themselves members of a spiritual Kingdom, they are not to forget the relationships which united them to their fellow-men as members of a family or a nation.

I believe, then, that one might go further than this, and say that the men who thus acted, men who were among the wisest rulers, and almost among the greatest teachers of the Church, felt that a necessity was laid upon them, compelling them thus to proclaim to mankind that, in passing from the old things to the new, in acknowledging God as their Father, and Christ as their Redeemer, they were not giving up one single element of any true abiding joy—that they were strengthening, not destroying, all ties which united them to their brethren. What they did was in effect to say to their converts and disciples, "You were right to rejoice in the abundance which the earth had yielded; right to make merry and be glad, to throw off the burden of the year's cares, and to think without repining of the year's sorrows. That feeling of bounding and exulting joy may have led you into wild excesses, into paroxysms of sensuality. It may have been accompanied by outbursts of the lowest part of your nature, of that which you have in common with the beasts. All this showed that there was an evil very near to you *then*, as at all times—that the Tempter of whom we tell you, and whose power you must have felt continually, would not let slip *that* occasion of bringing you more entirely into his own power, and making your bondage to him harder and more shameful. But the joy itself was not evil. Do not shake it off from you as you would a serpent that had stung you. That also was God's gift to you. The cheerful countenance and the gladdened heart testified of Him who is the Giver of all good things. In that harmony of the affections, that turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children, of the children to their fathers, you may recognise the work of His Spirit, of Whom every family in heaven and earth is named—in Whom every relation resting on the idea of fatherhood receives a new strength and holiness."

And in declaring this in their acts and words, they were not following devices of their own, or drawing fair but false pictures of heathen purity or happiness. Their *tendency* was to do just the opposite. Had they followed the bias of their own minds, they would have been tempted to say, "All such rejoicing is evil, and must be utterly abandoned. Renounce it as you renounce the other works of the devil. Have no fellowship with these unfruitful works of darkness. Do not be a partaker in the table or the cup of demons." But they had an example before them, and a truth to declare, which compelled them to do as they did, which in their judgment hardly left them a choice if they would prove themselves true shepherds of the fold of Christ—leading those who were entrusted to them to green pastures and still waters, rescuing them from the valley of the shadow of death, and the dry sands of abstract systems or of mere negations. St. Paul, also, had had to deal with a peasant population, and to persuade them to "turn from vanities and serve the living and true God." But as the very groundwork of all his pleading with them, he had declared this very truth. He had asserted that God had not left Himself without a witness among men. The whole order of the heavens and the earth—the rain from Heaven and the fruitful seasons—testified of Him. (Acts xiv. 15—17.)

But there was also an inward as well as an outward witness. Whatever those men of Lystra had known of joy and gladness—and they were likely, we may believe, to have known it chiefly in what philosophers would have despised as its lower and coarser forms—this they were to look on as God's gift, speaking to them of One in whom they lived and moved and had their being; Whom they were ignorantly worshipping, seeking after Him if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though in very deed He was not far from every one of them. (Acts xvii. 23—28.)

This was the example followed by the great teachers of whom I have spoken, and the truth which they had to declare was that the great chasm between God and man, which men had been trying to bridge over in a thousand unsuccessful ways, existed no longer; that God had been manifested to mankind; that the birth, life, and death and resurrection of a Man in all things like unto themselves had set forth the Being and Will of the Only God, Eternal, Invisible, as it had never been set forth before. Were they

wrong in counting this as the message of glad tidings which they were bound to deliver, in believing that all men had an equal interest in it? If this truth were to be commemorated at a special season, would it not be right to make that the gladdest, brightest, most joyous of all seasons of the year? And if they found that men had one period of the year more connected than others, by habits which they could not break, with their thoughts of fellowship and freedom and joy, were they not justified in seizing on that as the right season for testifying that the Giver of all joy had sent His Son to take their nature on Him, and to obtain for them an inheritance in His Kingdom? By so doing they taught men that the Revelation of God in Christ was indeed a taking away of the veil which had come between them and the Eternal Light. The Word that was in the beginning with God and was God, had been all along the life of men—the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. (St. John i. 1—9.) Now, when they were taught to believe that the true Light had appeared with the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, they were led to recognise the true source of the gleams of light in which they had rejoiced before. The darkness which had hindered them from comprehending it was dispelled. In the person of Christ they saw that image of God manifested in its brightness, of which they had found the traces, though sadly marred and obscured, in the depths of their own nature.

And in proportion as they received that truth, and came to the Light and believed on Him who was *the* Light, were they able to discern between good and evil, between light and darkness. The great blessing of that inward Light consisted in its giving them that power, in its enabling them to perceive the evil which lay so fearfully near to what was really and essentially good, and often appeared as its counterfeit—to recognise also the good which all their evil had not been able utterly to destroy. There had been a time when their joy and thankfulness had shown itself in a mirth which could not satisfy and in a sensuality which debased them; their very affections had been turned from their right objects, and worked evil rather than good. Their desire for sympathy in joy; their craving for fellowship in mirth; their sense that gladness was worth little unless they could share it with their kind, had led them to the wildest and most terrible excesses. When they had perceived all that was base and corrupting in this, they might be tempted to abandon it as altogether evil—part of the system of lies and vanities in which they had lived too long. It might have seemed natural to lead a sterner and more separate life; to show sympathy in the sorrow of others rather than in their gladness; to refuse any longer to be conformed to this world, as they had hitherto been conformed, in its vain joys and mirths. They were taught that the more they realised the fact of the Incarnation in its relation to all the joys and sufferings of humanity, the more that fact was presented to them as the coming not of a Judge, but of a Brother and Deliverer; as a message of glad tidings; of peace on earth and goodwill towards men; to see that, even before they knew it, He had been guiding and teaching them; putting good and kind thoughts into their hearts; teaching them to rejoice with them that do rejoice. They were taught to change their joy from that which had made it selfish and sensual. The desire that others should share in it, even in the material tokens and instruments of it, had been a righteous desire. That, therefore, was to be recognised and perpetuated. It was to find its true completion in the Church of Christ. Here there were to be music and joy and the sounds of mirth, no less than the wailings of the penitent and the dirge of the mourner. If Passion Week declared that the highest and divinest joy into which the spirit of man could enter was beyond an abyss of suffering and of death, Christmas was to bear its witness that there was a divine ground even for the common joys of life and the gladness of social intercourse. These were no longer unclean and defiling things; God had cleansed them. No man might dare to call them, or to make them, common or unclean. And so the message was delivered in this form, because it was one which brought it home to the hearts of men; and, speaking with equal clearness to the philosopher and the peasant—bringing the Truth, which had seemed to be in the heaven above or in the deep beneath, to the hearths and homes of men—it has perpetuated itself among us to this day. Thus to all men the Church has borne a witness not unlike in its meaning to that which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews bore to them. We might use his words as the fittest of all to declare that truth which was made manifest to the Gentile as well as to the Jews. "God, who in sundry times and divers manners spake in time past to our fathers"—in the beauty of the heavens and the brightness of the stars; in the fulness of harvests and the joy of the vintage; in the thoughts that carried them nearer to the Light; in the law written in their hearts; in their humanising affections; in the love of fathers and children, and husbands and wives, and brothers and sisters—even He "hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." (Heb. i. 1.) To that Son we must look if we desire to see the Light which has been in us, and which has been our life, for He is the brightness of His Father's glory. There we must look if the sufferings of our own lives, or the problems of the universe, fill us with dark thoughts and doubts that border on despair; there we must be content to find all that we can know of the Divine character and will, for He is "the express image of His person." (Heb. i. 3.)

It was, therefore, a great and good work, whoever first conceived it, thus to transform what had been a heathen to a Christian festival, to make that which had often ministered to evil remind men of their highest blessings. But if so, it must be, in the same measure, an evil and accursed work to reverse that

process, and to go back in our thoughts about it, or in our way of keeping it, to a practical heathenism. We can renew, and men do renew, the excesses of the Saturnalia in that which should be the purest and most blessed of all festivals. On the day which speaks of One who took our nature that He might redeem the body from its bondage to sin, we may give to the lusts of the flesh a larger measure of indulgence. It tells us of One who claimed fellowship with all men, and dwelt among the poor, and had not where to lay His head, and we may choose on that day to be proud and selfish in our joys, boasting of our wealth, feasting our rich neighbours, regardless of the poor. He came in the fulness of an Infinite compassion to reconcile us to His Father. In every word and act of His there was the Divine charity which seeketh not her own, and we, on this day, may be unreconciled to those whom we have wronged, and perpetuate old jealousies and heart-burnings, and be hard and unforgiving. He was the Prince of Peace, and we may meet Him on His own day with the sounds of war and the discord of our multiplied divisions.

Let us give thanks, if we dread these evils that He has taught us, that the Church teaches us how to rejoice in Him, what manner of feast should be inseparable from our rejoicing. We must gather round the Lord's Table, if we would learn the secret of true union—the ground of a true peace. There and then is the witness of a fellowship with which circumstances do not interfere, a communion in which high and low, rich and poor, are met together, because in it they have also a fellowship with the Lord who is the Maker of them all. There we have the pledge and earnest of the gift of an eternal life—a gift offered to us freely because it is offered to all men—one into which we enter in part now, into which that Feast of Love is meant to lead us, which will be ours in ever-increasing measure, in proportion as we attain that knowledge of God wherein is life everlasting. It is well to unite that holy feast with all our earthly rejoicings; well, when we draw near to it to think of old times, and friends who have gone before, and wrongs which we have long forgiven, and sins which we trust God has forgiven us—well, to renew there our purposes of better things; our resolves to be purer, holier, braver, manlier, more truthful than we have been—well, to think how all the blessings of our life come from Him who was born in our likeness that He might make us like unto Himself—sons of God and heirs of everlasting life.

THE CHOIR-BOY OF HARLESTONE MINSTER

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE OILED FEATHER," "THE MAN ON THE SLANT," ETC.



THE house of Doctor Gathorne Hautboy had been at one time the very home of song.

Gathorne Hautboy, Mus. Doc., was organist of Harlestone Minster, and was as well known all the country round as the great grey towers which loomed up heavily against the sky, as though they were some gigantic fortress wherein was kept watch and ward on God's behalf, and that of the souls of men, against the Prince of this world, who once, pointing out all human things, declared that they were his—and that to whom he willed, such things he gave.

To look at that mass of grey, and, in many parts, lichen-covered stone, to see its huge buttresses, one would have thought that whatever the Minster had to do with imagination, it had not anything much to do with emotion. But that would be to know only the Minster's outside; for the music of its bells floating out of those stone towers woke dreamy thoughts of unearthly lands in many a heart. Their sounds floated down the river; they wandered over the meadow; they tarried in the woods; they passed unchallenged through the strong oak branches; they dallied with the tender buttercups and daisies—and then died away, and went, whither none could tell.

Wonderful preachers were those old towers. In muffled peals they sang of human sadness, in bob-majors they rang out on wedding-morns the hopes of human gladness—and toll—toll—they preached in far-reaching vibrations, they sang in solemn monotone, the awfulness of the departure of a human soul.

And if the old Minster was vocal from the outside, it might be truly said to have been no less vocal within; for there, from roof to floor, creeping up pillar, and circling round architrave and arch and boss, and diffusing itself in the groined roof above, anthem and chorale, fugue and plain song, and psalm and hymn filled it now with holy sound—even as requiem and mass used to do in olden days. And Dr. Gathorne Hautboy might in one sense have been said to have been at the bottom of it all, for it was from his organ that there rolled out those bass thunders and those bright hallelujahs; and it was his choir that brought the tears into many eyes, and that smote with contrition many hearts; and that, in David's Psalms, woke up hateful memories of sin, and helped

men, David-like, to cast themselves for deliverance upon the tender mercies of their God. For Dr. Gathorne Hautboy's choir was the best in all the country round; and folk sometimes came a long way to hear him play, and to hear them sing.

At the time of which we write, the organist of Harlestone Minster was some sixty years of age, and Madeline his wife was some score of years younger. Time had been stern with the Doctor, tender with his wife. It had seamed the old man's face with furrows, but had contented itself with stroking with its white and bloodless hand her chestnut hair. It must needs touch her somewhere—it must needs do something as it was wont, but that "something" was its least. Time left Madeline her youth of face, but thus kept some sort of score as he flew by. Ah, yes! and a little more than the hair he meddled with; he passed that same hand over Madeline's brow, and though he left no wrinkle there, he left a shade—a shade of sadness. Time! had not he in his fulness brought her her little Gabriel, and had not he, in but little fulness, taken him away all too soon—and that, when he was destined by her husband to be the treble of trebles who had ever sung in the old Minster!

It was that little treble "that was to be" who with his tiny fingers had scored such deep furrows in the old Doctor's brow. For had not the Doctor expected great things of him, and had he not been sorely disappointed? Was not he to make the Minster still more famous than it then was, or ever had been, by his achievements in song? Was not he to be the one who was to make possible the performance of the Doctor's great anthem in A major, in which there were notes higher than any of his choir-boys could touch, and some almost lower than any cathedral's bass could reach?

Those low notes! Ah! he could manage them—he had written them down fearlessly in his score—Crawford Growles, the half-German, with his guttural throat, could go down to C below the bass stave. Yes! Crawford Growles was at present the glory of the Minster; people came sometimes from long distances to hear him. Down, down, down, like a bucket going down a well, would his voice descend. until it seemed to pass from his throat to his chest, and his chest to his boots, and his boots to the crypt above which he stood. It was awful to hear him when the anthem said anything about "the sea and the waves roaring, and men's hearts failing them for fear," or about "the voice of the thunder." You felt yourself vibrating in spite of yourself; and as Mrs. Scrubbers, the Minster laundress, said, "the horrors came all over you, and you became all goose-flesh inside." "I'm a'most afraid to wash his surplice," the good woman used to say; "I'm afraid to hear it groaning in the wash-tub; and some day I'm afraid the iron will drop out of my hand when I'm smoothing it. I don't believe he's easy in his mind; I don't believe any Christian could growl so deep as that, if he hadn't something on him. I believe he goes a deal deeper down than the crypt," said Mrs. Scrubbers, pointing mysteriously and significantly with her forefinger to some lower regions—"it may be to the middle of the world—it may be out at the other side. I heard one of the choir—Mr. Jenkins, the tenor—point to him and say, '*De profundis*.' I don't know what that means, but most likely 't is something very bad—worse than common folk had better know. 'T is Latin, I'm told; and I think plain folk who wish to walk straight, and do their duty in that state to which they were called, had better not have anything to do with that. We'll never get right at the Minster until we have some little lad who'll beat Mr. Crawford Growles, and sing as high as he sings low, and take the shine out of him—if he shines at all: I'd say 'the shadows'—and I tell you what, our washing will never be complete until we have that little lad's surplice—bless his little heart!"

"And it was to have been the Doctor's little boy," said Miss Jemima Peers, after she had, as in duty bound, seconded the anathemas of her principal on the wicked Bass. "The Doctor said he had the voice of a canary—and now he's agone—and Mr. Growles has it all to himself, as he's had all along—and unless we're sent an angel from heaven, or some little lad, nobody knows from where, Mr. Growles will have it to himself until the Minster falls—there's a bad crack, they say, in one of the towers, and the nose is off one of those images as spouts the rain-water from the roof—or until the end of the world. Look you, Mrs. Scrubbers, here's what I'd do, if they'd only be said by one who's only second in the laundry" (and Miss Jemima curtsied in the direction of Mrs. Scrubbers, for the needle of the compass by which Miss Jemima steered her course in life always pointed in that direction), "I know I says it as shouldn't before my betters; but if we could get a little lad as had come down somehow from a bird—a little 'un as was hatched irregular, with a blackbird for a father, and a thrush for a mother, so as to mix up the warbling and the whistling of the two—I think, now, that would put Mr. Growles somewhere amongst the wild beasts in the 'owlin' wilderness, and that would be a proper place for him, if only he knowed it. I've heer'd the sea-lions growls terrible; I'd make him one of them, and I'd send him about in a carawan, that I would; and I hope the dwarf would pinch him, and the giant punch his head, and the lady with pink eyes and piebald hair scratch his face, and the alligator bite him when he howled and growled and made believe that 't was the end of the world, or a bad thunderstorm comin' on. But, as I knows we can't do all this, which is as should be done, if it could, but it can't, then here's what I'd do!—I'd send to the Canaries straight for a boy—that's the name of the islands where the yellow birds come from. I'd say, 'Look out a boy as puts his head a one side, and looks as if he is thinking, and as lively as if he is hopping from perch to perch, and one as is fond of sugar and hempseed; and if you can get one as is fond of groundsel, I don't mind even if it's cooked—so much the better—that's the lad for us; the groundsel will settle the business, and where," said Miss Jemima Peers, looking at her principal, as though they had together fought a great battle which, through the alliance of Miss Jemima, and her help at a critical point, had been won, "where will Growles be then?"

There was no going farther than that question. It

meant the "unanswerable" and the "unknowable." In the matter of Growles it made agnostics of Mrs. Scrubbers and her sub. Growles was demolished, and they were happy.

It says a great deal for the vitality of the human race that, after having been trampled upon and, so to speak, been cut into small pieces, minced, peeled, shredded, pounded by their neighbours, and sometimes dearest friends, people survive it all; and the pieces come together again, as though nothing had happened; their own good opinion of themselves being quite sufficient for the restorative process, and for their after comfort. *In* this they live, before they are squashed; and *by* this they live, after they are squashed.

This good opinion of himself the Bass of Harlestone Minster certainly enjoyed. He knew that he could reach C below the bass stave, and nobody else could; he knew that he was the one unapproachable piece of talent in the choir. There were several tenors, several altos, an excellent set of trebles also, no doubt; but whilst no voice could ascend to the Minster's roof, his could, so to speak, walk about in the very crypt, and half-frighten people out of their wits, as he growled, and murmured, and muttered there. Such folk as were not scientific, and expected to see the lightning *after* they heard the thunder, might have been excused in that they expected a flash and a start, when Growles with his voice, and Dr. Hautboy on his organ, seemed to be trying which could go the lowest.

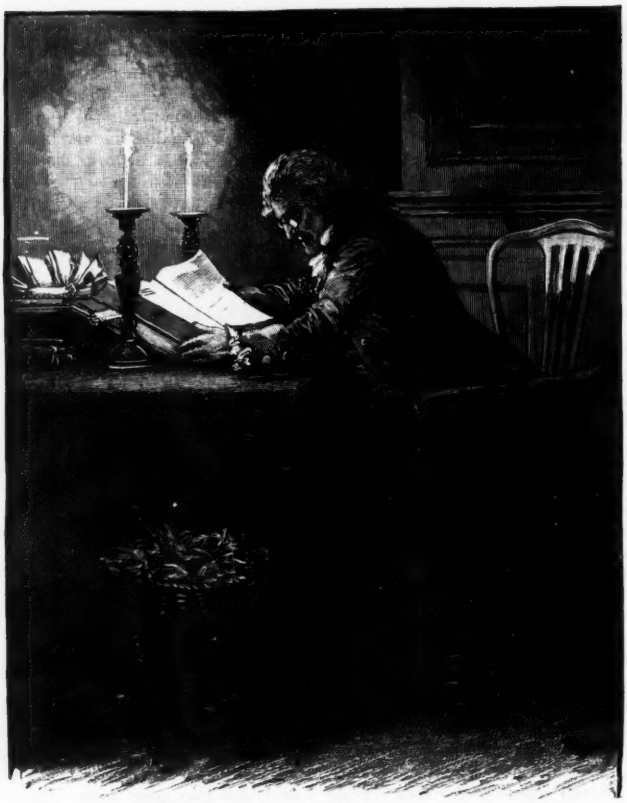
I have said that Crawford Growles, the Bass of Harlestone Minster (the wicked Bass of Mrs. Scrubbers and Miss Jemima Peers), had a good opinion of himself. He lived in the calm contemplation of being unique, of being in the capacity of "Bass" unapproachable. Others might trill as they pleased; he had to give but one thunder-roll, and they were nowhere. As to the altos, every one of them would crack, and goodness knows what they would come to; perhaps to penny whistles, or it may be to nothing at all; and as to the tenors, and so forth, well! it was known what they had come to, and, compared to him, it was nothing much. Moreover, was not the Bass in the organist's confidence? Did he not know of that anthem which could not be performed for want of the treble, unfound as yet? Was not he equal to the bass which was also indispensable for its performance? All these were elements of satisfaction, which were not lightly to be thrown aside. But if ever any lurking idea of his own unapproachableness came over him, which he could not at once dispel with a specimen growl, which said, "Match me that if you can," the great Bass reassured himself by passing his hand over his ample breast—there was a wind-chest indeed!—or by stroking his throat, tarrying meditatively for a few moments on the larynx, for was there not something to be said about that? Had not Dr. Greaves expressed his wish to have that larynx? and had not the great Bass actually left it in his will to the Doctor if he should be the survivor; and if not, then to the College of Surgeons, who were to write a report on it, illustrated by coloured engravings, and so hand down the great Bass to posterity? Dr. Greaves never saw that throat, but that he longed to have his scalpel into it; and the Bass never saw Dr. Greaves but that he hoped he might never have the chance. As to the College of Surgeons, he could not help himself as regards them; they couldn't die first, from the simple fact that they could not die at all, otherwise the Bass would have liked to back the larynx against them all. The history of that curious little box and its chords—well, he hoped they 'd all have to wait a while before they found it out; and while they were at it, wouldn't the wicked Bass be glad if he could give one of his deepest growls, and scatter the whole College, scalpels, and spectacles, and all their etceteras, to the four winds of heaven.

This was the state of things at Harlestone Minster at the time of which I write. Dr. Gathorne Hautboy was growing old, and his anthem was never likely to be performed. Madeline, his wife, had no other little boy to replace the one that was gone. The Doctor chafed under his disappointment, but Madeline was at peace. She could hear the little one singing in some far-off place—or she thought she could—which was the same to her; and never did she bow her head in meek submission but that she thought she heard a note—a high, high note—the very note her husband wanted for the anthem; so that she believed the note existed, only it belonged to the heavenlies, and how could it be embodied on earth? Madeline often wondered whether one of the reasons why such as that little lad were taken was, because they had music in heaven after the manner of the earth; and whether the high, high trebles were not supplied by them: she was very fond of that verse, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou perfected praise."

Who can tell why mothers mourn when their babies are gone? All time seems dead against them—it all says that they must weep. The past—a baby's little past! how short in itself—how long, spaced out by the measurings of a mother's heart. The ambitions of life so natural to a mother's heart—the sitting at the right hand and the left of all honour—the triumphs to be won—the reflected lights upon herself—these hopes all crushed; and even if they had never been, the simple emptiness—nay, call it not simple emptiness—the great chasm in the heart. Who can be rent and torn, and yet be as though they were whole? Babies fill but little spaces in outer life; the mother's fold of an arm is enough to encompass them; the little cot is enough to house them; but in inner life, in the inner life of a mother's heart, they fill, save as all first belongs to Christ, all space. When a babe has gone, who can tell the chasm that it leaves?

And Madeline Hautboy's babe had gone, and Dr. Gathorne's babe had gone—the one and the selfsame babe. The gentle Madeline bowed her head, and was strong—the strong Doctor bowed not, and was weak.

Well! time had passed since the Doctor's and Madeline's little Gabriel had gone, and things had settled down in the organist's house in the corner of the Close. The Doctor, who had looked forward to his little Gabriel's singing the anthem's highest note, had ceased to expect that it would ever be sung; but Madeline, his wife, full of hope and faith, believed that in some way or other it would yet be heard.



"The Doctor read with all his eyes."—*p.* 57.

Her husband's conception of this anthem would not be for ever a mere thought; embodied in sound it yet must surely be. She would wait. The patient waitings of women are wonderful. They have won great victories. She could wait. Their faith is great. She could believe. How the thing was to be was naught to her. That it was to be, was all with which she had to do.

Thus things were with Dr. Gathorne Hautboy and his wife, when one day the organist came home from the Minster library with a strange-looking book. It was bound in vellum, and was fastened together with two large clasps. It was written in black-letter on parchment, and in Latin; and from his manner the organist's wife could see that he had something with him on which he set great store.

"Madeline," said the Doctor, "I found in the Minster library a book of great price. The librarian has let me have it to read at home. It has in it many things about music. It has in it even some new anthems and chants, and some theories which appear to me to be speculative, but they may have in them much of truth. Moreover, the book contains a life, or part life, of the author, and I must give myself up to the study of it (and, if need be, to the copying of it), until I have made myself master of it. The book was on a high shelf which no one, to judge by the dust on it, ever goes near; and, as to the librarian, he knew nothing about it, except that it was in the catalogue. Indeed, for the matter of that, I don't think he knows, or cares, much about any of the books, except that their names are in the catalogues, and they themselves on the shelves. He thinks that is all he has to do with them. He says no one comes near the place but myself, except it be an old prebendary from the country, who is writing a history of the world from its creation, with its probable career to its end; and who comes to see if there is anything that lies in his way. He hasn't come, I suppose, as yet, to Jubal, the father of all such as handle the organ, or this book, supposing he could have guessed at its contents, might have been of some use to him. I am given a month by the librarian; and now, good wife, you will let me shut myself up every night after supper, when all is quiet; and let me read as far into the night as I like, until I make myself master of this book so far as I can. What a blessing, Madeline, that I know Latin as well as I do. If there is anything worth having in the book, I'll get it."

And so the Doctor of Music shut himself up in his study—the place where he used to shut himself up to grieve for his little lad—and for a whole month he was to sit up all night if he liked. And should the natural man fail, coming on the small hours of the morning, a tray was placed by loving hands in a corner of the room, with something on it, that that natural man might be strengthened, and be able to pursue the needful studies in peace.

There was a mixture of curiosity, eagerness, and awe in the organist of Harlestone Minster, as, his door shut and locked, he sat down in front of a pair of candles, to study the parchment-covered book. It was a folio—written in black letters, with great care, the first part containing matters connected with the author himself; the second some theories of music, and dissertations thereon; the third a collection of anthems and chants, and scraps, and services of church music, of various kinds.

These latter would have chiefly occupied the organist's attention, but that he felt compelled by some inward feeling to begin at the beginning, and learn something of the man whose music he was about to study—and, it may be, learn from, and enjoy. And Dr. Gathorne was not sorry that he began at page No. 1.

My readers will excuse my giving only a free translation of such parts of the book as it is necessary they should be made acquainted with, which manifestly must be a very small portion, owing to the limited space at my command:—

"This book is written by me, Fra Bonavia, of Mantua, in Italy, a brother of the Order of St. Augustine, in the Monastery of Harlestone, in the kingdom of England. In it is contained the anthems and all holy song which have come to me in the night watches: in it, mine own thoughts on the divine art of music, how I have fallen by song, and how by song have I been restored. Here are my confessions, which, like holy St. Austin, I freely make; and at the end of this book will be found my departure hence, which Brother Clement hath promised that he will write, so that there may be nothing wanting in the history of my life."

The Doctor began to be riveted on the page which he was somewhat slowly and laboriously translating, partly because of the black-letter writing, and partly because his Latin was not quite so fresh as he thought.

The Doctor had studied the science of music; Boëthius's voluminous Latin treatise he might be said to have at his fingers' ends; he knew the ancient dissertations of Pythagoras and Aristoxenus and Ptolemy; he could tell all about the mathematical ratios of intervals, and the old Greek scales, and no one knows what besides. All that Zarlino, and Fux, and Padre Martini had to say on counterpoint and fugue, that did the Doctor know; but here was something touching the inner life of one who, at a glance at his music, he could see was a master of song; and so the Doctor read with all his eyes:—

"I, Fra Bonavia, am of princely family, though with earthly position I have nothing now to do. I am the son—the younger—of a ducal house. My mother vowed me young to the service of Holy Church; and my father having squandered at gaming and in show much of the property belonging to our family, was willing that I should be provided for by becoming a priest. I was not averse to the thought as I grew up, for I was of a mild and gentle disposition; and, above all things, given to the music of the Church. The world seemed to me, even when young, little to be desired; and I looked forward with eagerness to the day when I should leave it altogether.

"Thus I grew up until I was twenty-one years of age, when, in a manner wholly unexpected, my life became changed.

"My mother was on her dying bed; and she sent for me to be with her at the last. I sat with her by day and night, only leaving her for necessary rest and air. Shall I say, 'Would that I could have done without the air?' for through the need of that air was broken the rest and quiet of my life.

"Oh, sweet disturber, oh, sad disturbance, what shall I say? Shall I speak as a monk, or as a man? I leave it undecided; it is too deep for me to settle. Let me chronicle what was—shall I say what was not? —alas! am I not torn at the thought? Why should I 'utter my dark sayings upon the harp?' Why should my words be like the voice of winds, and chime of waves, and the song of birds, all of which are in the minor key? Shall I give vent to my feelings, as well as maintain my reserve, by means of music, putting the story of my life's sorrow into notes instead of words? Nay, I must write, that I may feel that someone hereafter may be a sympathiser in my woe. Sympathy even down along the ages is sweet. I will seek its solace with my pen.

"Hard by the palace where my mother lay dying was another one stricken unto death. She belonged to England—this country in which now I live—which for her sake I have made my home—for her sake, let me say, for hers; and yet mother and daughter were so bound together that they might have been said to have been one. The fair girl, who lived for her mother, had to walk abroad and take the air, even as I had. She was worn with watching her mother, even as I was with watching mine. She never went farther than up and down in front of where they lodged; and there I saw her day by day. Ah! why did those eyes, and that long fair hair, and that soft voice and slender form ever cross my path—the path of one destined for another kind of life than that which had made her mistress of my home as of my heart? But it was my fate. The mother died, and my mother died almost at the selfsame time; and now she was desolate and unprotected, and I was desolate too. She was weak and far away from all who could help her; I was strong, and among my own people. I became her friend. My old nurse took her under her own roof, but she did not need that shelter long. We were kindred spirits; we solaced our sorrows with music and each other; we mingled our voices and our tears. Music is a great teacher, and a great binder, a binder of wounds and a binder of hearts. Helios was the same as Phœbus Apollo, the god of day and light, and the father of Æsculapius, the god of medicine, if not the god of medicine and healing in his own person. The old idea was the

sun, the fountain of light; hence flowed light and health, and that same deity provided our music, one of the soul's chief comforters and healers, whence from time immemorial its medicinal fame.* Cecilia was the English girl's name that was dowered with the saint's music, as with her name. My little estate, far away amid the mountains, was enough for us; and for her I abandoned that calling which forbade me to have a wife. There we lived, and there our little Cecilia was born, and there the mother died.

"And I, how could I bring up her little child? Ah! woe is me now. I see, when it is too late, that I should have devoted myself to watching and training her up, if by any means the world might have been blessed by having one like her who had departed. I left her with our old nurse, and all the property, and fled from the world, fled to the country where my wife Cecilia was born—to die, breathing the air that she had breathed. Woe is me! I never heard of the child again. When my country's troubles came, nurse and child had to flee, and whither they wandered, or if they lived, who can tell? But I feel that my little Cicely was not slain. Once let that voice be heard, and for that she would be spared, for during the four years of her life with her mother she caught those tones. True, there was a monster who had a dish of nightingales' tongues, but he was alone. Did not the enemy spare those who could repeat even but a few of Homer's lines—music in them all? Did not Amurath, Sultan of Turkey, spare the 30,000 captive Persians when one of them played to him upon the lute? My Cicely lives, lives for her voice's sake, but never shall I see her again. But she carries her talisman with her—her dower—unscathed. Will she pass with it through earth, and with it, for celestial use, enter into heaven?"

* * * * * *

"Doth the spirit of prophecy now move the spirits of mortal men? Comes it in visions of the night as it came of old? If it cometh, then hath it come to me. Lo! my Cicely, grown to woman's estate, and by her side a fair young child. Ah! in him my own Cecilia again; and down through generations ever the same face, and hair, and voice. Cecilias the mothers of Gabriels, and Gabriels the fathers of Cecilias, until I see the image of my loved one at this monastery's door. It is not she, but it is her flesh and blood, and like her. I hear her speak—'Go, little Gabriel, go to the Minster that hath sheltered thy forefather in his sorrow, and pay them back their charity with the dower of thy race—the voice which belongs to the Bonavias alone. Go, my far-off child, and sing the note which none but thy people can touch—which thy forefather hath written, but which none have sung, for it hath been kept for thee.'

"So be it, say I, Fra Bonavia. May one of my Cecilia's blood sing in this Minster the note of notes, and repay the English the hospitality they have shown to a stranger, their respect for the silence of his grief."

* * * * * *

At the end of the book was some writing in another hand. We need give but as much as is needed to tell us of Fra Bonavia's end:—

"Hereby do I, Brother Clement, of this Harlestone Minster, fulfil the last wish of my beloved Fra Bonavia, who has passed at last beyond his earthly woes. He departed hence on St. Cecilia's Day. He had many visions on his dying bed, saying that he heard harpers harping with their harps, and that he saw saints clothed in white raiment. It being the dullest time in the year, when song-birds are silent and sad (November 22nd), lo! a bird with plumage unlike any in our groves, escaped, it may be, from some lady's cage, but surely from some foreign clime, came upon the window-ledge of Fra Bonavia's cell, and struck three times with its beak against the glass. I opened the window, and it flew in, and perched upon the head of Fra Bonavia's pallet; and there it sang—sang thrice—and each time was its song unlike our birds' notes. Fra Bonavia smiled, but opened not his eyes when he heard the first notes; and when he heard the next, he opened his eyes; and when he heard the last, he stretched out his hand, as it were, to be led away; and it dropped, and his eyes closed, and he was dead; and the bird which sang high—high up above the notes of all our birds—was gone. While that long high note was swelling, it passed through the window again; it seemed as if Fra Bonavia's spirit floated away on the bosom of that song.

"So died Fra Bonavia, whose meditations and confessions, whose sorrows and whose aspirations, are recorded with his own hands in this book, in which also will be found his theories of music and science, which I do not comprehend, but which he says will hereafter be found true. Here, too, are his anthems and pieces of holy song; some beyond all mortal rendering, but, as he saith, 'possible for the angelic choirs.' If any of the music of the heavenly choirs hath been revealed to him, who am I that I should say that it should not be written here? May the child of whom he spake come at some time to the Minster of Harlestone, and keep up its ancient fame and glory, or restore it if it be lost; so that its name may remain for ever as the earthly home of heavenly music, and that of all Minsters it may be the crown and glory and the head. Amen."

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I have already advertised you, good reader, that I cannot pretend to tell you all, or any considerable part, or, indeed, I might almost say, anything at all of the ancient brass-bound book, written by Fra Bonavia, of Harlestone Minster, and containing the postscript of Brother Clement. But though I cannot tell you all that Fra Bonavia wrote, I know that Gathorne Hautboy came forth from his study in the small hours of the morning, each morning for many days, almost like a man who was sleeping and was walking in his sleep. The life of Fra Bonavia was dreamland to him, and still more so were the wonderful compositions, long and short, which he found scattered through the book. "They called Guido of Arezzo 'Inventor Musicæ,'" said the Doctor, as he closed the book for the last time, "because he added two more lines to the stave; but what should this man be called who opens out the very correspondences of Nature, so

* "The poets," says Bacon, "did well to conjoin music and medicine in Apollo, since the office of medicine is but to tune that curious harp of man's body and to reduce it to harmony."

that we see the brotherhood of Light and Music? Fra Bonavia has henceforth made every sunbeam to be a song, for he has shown me how the fundamental notes of the musical scale correspond with the prismatic colours which make a sunbeam. In the colours thrown by the prism upon the wall I hear, as Fra Bonavia has told me, the sounds of music in a different sphere, so that whatever is representatively expressed in light is representatively expressed also in the harmonies which please the ear; the difference lies only in the method. Fra Bonavia, all your sorrows ended, may I meet you in the land of all true song; and, meanwhile, may it be in my day that your hope for Harlestone Minster may be fulfilled; to us may there come the note peculiar to your race."

Cathedral towns are proverbially dull, therefore anything that makes a stir, even though it be something small, is very welcome. It is a great relief, when one has worn out Mrs. Canon's bonnet, and Mrs. Precentor's gown, and Mrs. Succentor's gloves, to say nothing of Mrs. Dean's sealskin and the bishop's wife down to her boots, to have a little something on the *tapis* which will afford reasonable ground for that small talk which to some people is as life.

Hence the announcement that Dr. Gathorne Hautboy, assisted by the Cathedral choir and foreign talent, would, on a certain day, give a grand concert, stirred the soul of Harlestone down to Mrs. Scrubbers and her sub.

To Mrs. Scrubbers it was, on reflection, an excellent thing that this concert should be given, for it was to be in the Town Hall, and the nefarious Growles would be done for, seeing there was no crypt there; and that, unless he intended to go, without making any bones about it, into the very bowels of the earth, without passing through any immediate stage, he must sing up a bit, where people whose nerves were not strong could follow him, or, at any rate, not have to shake so much inside as when he sang in the Minster. To this Mrs. Scrubbers' sub said "Amen."

But the minds of the public were exercised upon the foreign talent; for Growles, though a terrible phenomenon, was after all a thing of daily life.

Growles, on the other hand, concentrated his attention and hopes on himself, only wishing, as regards the foreign talent, that they would "come on," and "try it on;" *he* would show them a thing or two before they left. As to that falsetto, who sang somewhere in the back of his neck, or up amongst the roots of his hair, or somewhere, no one knew where, and those twopenny-halfpenny choir-boys, whose larynxes were not worth twopence a dozen even to the College of Surgeons, he took no note of them—they were not worth a thought; but he should like to try a throw with the foreign talent all round. If it were not for its pedals, and heel-and-toe work (which was not fair), Growles would have liked to have a throw with the Minster organ itself; but now it was a question of foreign talent. "Let them come on," that was all!

And in due time they did come on. They had practised their parts in London, and required merely three or four rehearsals at Harlestone to be equal to their work. And all Harlestone was in a ferment. For those were not railroad days, when concert-folk were common; and, above all, Italians, except in London, were scarce.

The foreign element in Dr. Hautboy's concert consisted chiefly of Signor Petrucci, tenor, who dated his ancestry from the inventor of musical types of that name, A.D. 1502, and of Signora Vitelli, soprano, and Fräulein Meyer, contralto; and they were all lodged at the Mitre Hotel, with the exception of the Italian lady, Signora Vitelli. She and her little boy became the guests of Dr. Gathorne Hautboy himself, for she was in very delicate health, and never, since her coming to England, having been out of London, feared a country inn, even though Signor Petrucci impressed upon her that it was the "Mitre," which freely rendered meant the "Bishop," and therefore must be warm, and snug, and good.

It was well for the success of Dr. Hautboy's concert that he had a hospitable heart, for, without that, Signora Vitelli would never have come to Harlestone. The soprano was, in, fact, ill—very ill; and it gave her as much as she could do to get through her part. But what she did, she did well. It was the last music of the dying swan.

Signora Vitelli sang her last song on earth at Harlestone, and her last breath she drew within the precincts of Harlestone Minster and in the house of Dr. Gathorne Hautboy, the organist—her host.

The concert had been a great success. Signora Vitelli had soared away to heights unknown hitherto to the Harlestone community. Even the bishop and the dean were seen amongst those who clapped their hands; and Mrs. Scrubbers went home rejoicing that Crawford Growles—that wicked old Bass!—had been beaten up high, for the strange lady went further at one end of the scale than he had gone at the other; and it would have given in all probability enough to Harlestone to talk about for many a long day had not a sad matter happened to divert their attention. The soprano lay for a few days sick unto death at the organist's, and then the foreign lady died. She died in gentle Mrs. Hautboy's arms, and departed in peace, leaving to the Doctor and his wife the little boy whom she had brought under their roof.

The mother-heart of Mrs. Hautboy made her long to adopt the fatherless, and soon to be motherless, child; but the good woman feared to propose it to her husband. She had no need, however, for so doing, for on the last day of the Signora's illness, when it was plain she would not last longer than the evening, the Doctor laid his hand on his wife's shoulder and said, "Madeline, no longer shall we be childless; that little one shall be ours. Mark you what his name is—Gabriel. Let us count him ours, come back after many years." For the Doctor, who had kept deep locked within his own heart up to the present the contents of Fra Bonavia's book, believed that this might be the fulfilment of the Fra's prophecy, or wish, whichever you may be pleased to call it. Time would tell; the little one was now only five. Mrs. Hautboy wondered, but thankfully prepared to take the child.

The last day of Signora Vitelli's life was partly spent in telling her history to her hostess and her nurse.

"It is well that you should know it," said she, "as you are to be my child's mother upon earth. You see his long golden hair, while mine is black, after the characteristic of my country. In our family there have appeared from time to time children with blue eyes and golden hair. They come from Saxon blood in a far-off ancestor. From her, I am called Cecilia. The name has ever been kept up in our family; and from a dead child, long ago dead in far-off times, he is called Gabriel. That name has ever been kept up amongst us too. Mark well his voice. He will sing, sing higher than I can sing—away, away up in the skies, above the larks, above the clouds. The golden-haired children in our family have always sung; and every one has had a note higher than the others. We have a tradition that it came down from far-off times, from a dead Cecilia, one of your countrywomen, who became mingled with us and ours. I have breathed upon my boy as he lay by my side, to dower him, if so I may, with all I have—breathed into his parted lips as he slept. I have sung softly in his ears as he lay by my side, until he smiled in his sleep, and seemed as though he too would imitate the notes. Take him, and may he repay in song the kindness with which you have brightened his mother's dying-bed."

So she died; and the next Sunday the bishop himself preached her funeral sermon, and the Doctor played the Dead March in "Saul;" and the childless Dr. Hautboy and Madeline his wife found themselves with a child in their home and in their hearts again.

Confidences now became interchanged between the organist of Harlestone Minster and his wife. When she told her husband all that little Gabriel's mother had told her, then the Doctor saw as in a mirror a transcript of some of what he had read in Fra Bonavia's book; but he was cautious. Could it be so? It might, and yet it might not. Was this the child through whom, after almost long ages, Fra Bonavia was to pay the debt to the monastery that had sheltered him in his sorrow? He would wait and see. Meantime he would tell his wife what he had read; and they could together watch the development of the child.

And so little Gabriel was brought up in his small early years, Mrs. Hautboy watching over his body, and indeed his mind; and the Doctor keeping his eyes and his thoughts upon him in the matter of music. There was no one more alive to the fact that to strain a voice was to ruin it—that gradually its powers must be unfolded, that here a little and there a little was to be the rule of musical advance. But the Doctor ever kept that one thought uppermost in his mind; and while counterpoint, and far-burden, and descant, and fugue, and all the mysteries of music, were for the dim future, there was much for the present; and that little Gabriel should have,



"'I became her friend.'"—*p. 57.*

So it came to pass that the little lad was sung to very often by the Doctor's favourite chorister, who for that very purpose was had in for a playfellow for his adopted child. So it came to pass that the Doctor had him in the Minster many a time, and played flute and flageolet to him on the organ. So it was that there were song-birds in little Gabriel's room, and an Æolian harp in the window, and that the organist habituated him to the violin's high notes, so that the boy's ear became formed true as a silver bell. But what about the voice? I cannot stop, good reader, to prove to you by examples, which I undeniably could do, the wonderful exaltation of the natural powers during sleep, so that, even in the matter of sound a rustic has so imitated the violin's finest notes in his sleep that it was long before it was found out where the supposed instrument was being played.

But hearken to what brought great hope to the organist's heart. Stealing through the house in dead of night the Doctor, as he lay awake, heard the sound of song. He lay and listened to make sure it could be true. It was song without words. It was the flageolet stop of the organ playing somewhere near Gabriel's room. Putting on his dressing-gown, he followed it, and there, sitting up in his little cot, he saw the child—the tiny fingers apparently playing upon the organ, and from the voice streamed forth the sounds which belonged thereto. The Doctor dared not wake him, and so he listened—listened until, to his great joy, he heard the very notes which he had despaired of ever hearing rendered in the anthem; and at last the sound ceased, the child smiled and lay down again, with his chubby cheek on his hand, and his golden hair all over his pillow; and the Doctor returned to his bed to dream of the triumph of his anthem, which would yet worthily be sung.

Soon, without any pressing from Dr. Hautboy—eager as the latter was to develop the talent which he had within his house—the voice of the little lad was heard here, there, and everywhere, and many a time, as he stopped and sat down to rest from his play in the old cloister near the organist's abode. And all through the precincts of the Minster that little nightingale was known. The old bishop was known to hide behind a pillar lest he should disturb a song; and the dean was caught listening with his hand up to his ear, for the good man was a little deaf.

And more than once, when the good old bishop met the child, he put his hand upon his head, and said, "Out of the mouth of this babe, ordain Thou Thy praise."

It was on one of these occasions that the bishop sat down on a piece of a ruined column, and drawing the child to him, put his arm round him and said, "Gabriel, would you like to be a chorister?"

"Aye, some day," said the boy, with a sparkling eye; "and I shall wear a white dress, and look like the angels, and perhaps sing like them too."

"Nay, you shall be one now," said the bishop; "you shall have a surplice, and stand amongst the choristers, and you shall sing when you can."

So the good old man took the child by the hand to the deanery, and the dean took the child home to Dr. Hautboy's; and it was settled that Gabriel should have a little surplice, and come in with the rest of the choir.

Gabriel's little surplice was made by the bishop's



"The Doctor had him in the Minster many a time."

wife with her own hands. She could not entrust the work to anyone else, for there was a secret about it which the bishop did not care for gossipers to get hold of and toss about. It was out of one of his own rochets that the surplice was made. A fancy had seized him which he could not shake off—that, old as he was, and dignified as he was, he would like to be identified even so far with the brightness and simplicity of youth—such youth! He liked to think that the songster's chest would swell under what had been his garb. It seemed as though he himself would be able to make more melody within, though from his quavering voice no sound of song could come again.

It was a sight to see; that little mite—for he was but small, even for his age—heading the procession of choristers in Harlestone Minster; the long golden hair floating down his back, and the clear-cut features of the Cecilia of ages past lit up with a brightness which always came upon them when in the hallowed house.

All Harlestone loved to see him. The bishop forgot that he ever gave him top and ball, with which he had played like any other child, and saw in him only one that minded him of the heavenly choirs. The dean lifted his reading spectacles on to his forehead to have a look at him. Mrs. Scrubbers and her faithful sub each said, "Bless his little heart!" and believed that they had succeeded in making his little surplice whiter than any of the others. It was a moot point whether they could beat the bishop's sleeves; but prebends, canons, choristers, succentor, precentor, archdeacon, and dean himself—Mrs. Scrubbers had to keep them all white outside; but their pet was the whitest of them all.

It was a curiosity, that little surplice. Had not Mrs. Scrubbers held it up in her hands when it was fresh ironed, and shown it to the Misses Peach, and their great-aunt, Mrs. Perch, and given them her views on it, that it was only a pattern of what the little lad would have by-and-by? "Talk of coorosities," said Mrs. Scrubbers' sub, "I have a young crocodile stuffed, as my half-brother brought me home from Ameriky, but it ain't half the coorosity as is this surplice, as is fit for the British Museum, or the Bank of England."

But Mrs. Scrubbers and her sub, the good bishop and his wife, and Dr. Hautboy and his gentle Madeline, were not the only admirers which little Gabriel had. No greater admirer had Gabriel than Daw, the costermonger boy.

Ah! poor Jack, yours was a hard fate—a fate that comes to many in higher degree than yourself. You had that which wanted to be expressed, but had no power of expression. You were condemned by a gap in your being to a life which above all others was distasteful to you. You—mere Jack Daw, the costermonger lad—had a soul full of music. You would have been an organ, Jack, if you had only had the pipes and the pedals, and the stops and the keys; the bellows were all complete; but as it was, you had only two or three notes of a badly voiced reed, and no one more than yourself thought how awful was the sound when you cried out "Herrings!" and "Turnips!" and whatever the costering at the moment happened to be.

"Stop!" cried Jack to little Gabriel, as the child rushed for a moment outside the Close after his ball, "'ere's cherries, only fourpence a pound; look on 'em—'ere's every one as big as a halfpenny."

"But I haven't a halfpenny in my pocket," said Gabriel, rummaging his very best.

"It don't need," said Jack; "you shall have a whole pound, good weight, if you'll tell me how you makes those sounds—I means, how you sings about the Close. I'd give all the costering and the donkey—though she'd kiss me if I asked her; and you might make necklaces out of her tail, that you might—if you'd make me sing like you. What is it makes you sing?"

"I don't know what makes me sing," said the child. "It is something inside—it comes, that's all."

"It makes my life miserable to be half-croaking, half-screaming, and I longing all the time to be singing in the choir. Well, here's a handful of cherries for you; and some day I'll sing—maybe I will in heaven——"

A hand was laid on Jack's shoulder, and looking up, to his great dismay he saw no less a personage than the bishop himself.

The good old man had come on the two boys unawares, and seeing the earnestness of Jack Daw's manner, was sure that there was something between them both.

The episcopal hand was not above touching a ragged coat. After touching a coster, it was not less a bishop's than before; in one sense, it was perhaps a little more.

Then Jack Daw poured forth all his longings and all his sorrows (there was that in the good bishop which made him pour it all out); and oh! how happy did that boy go on his rounds that day, and many days! Oh, how happily did he cry his "Turnips" and his "Herrings" all his days, until his release from costering came, when he heard, and believed it—for hadn't the bishop himself said it?—that in the ear of God there was as much music in the voice of the coster as in that of the chorister, when he was doing his best with such powers as God had given him, and in the position in which God had placed him.

"There's music," said the bishop, "in your widowed mother's heart, Jack, when you take her your earnings; and in your brothers' and sisters' when they laugh over the meal that you have enabled them to have. *God's choir*, Jack, is in your home—aye, and you may have it also in your heart."

It took Jack some time to take in the thought, but when he did he leant on his Jew's-harp for comfort far less than before, and was happy bawling "Bloaters" and "Turnips," until by the kind bishop's influence, having learned and mastered the clarinet, he finally became the leader of a band; for though Nature had said he should not sing, she had not said he should not blow.

One only unloving eye in all Harlestone fell on the little Minster sunbeam; it was the one set in the skull of Crawford Growles, the wicked old Bass, who could not abide the child, or to hear people talk of how wonderfully he could sing.

Time flew over the old towers of Harlestone Minster as it flies over palace and hut; and over the heads of the people belonging thereto, even as it does over the heads of people belonging to all other places. The good old bishop was feebler, the dean could not see so well, and now Gabriel, the choir-boy of Harlestone Minster, could really sing. Dr. Hautboy had trained him—or, I might almost say, had helped him to train himself. But I might almost say that it was only in voice that Time had done anything for little Gabriel. True, he was a little, a very little taller than he used to be, but somehow the face continued childish still, and he had still his long golden hair. Gabriel was never destined to be more than a child.

But Time, well improved under Dr. Hautboy's teaching, had done everything for Gabriel's voice, and the Bass was now nowhere as the attraction of the Harlestone choir. It was bitter vexation to him to see himself surpassed, and he did not surrender (no, he

never surrendered) without a struggle. The higher mounted Gabriel's notes, the deeper went his, until at last he might be said to have only rumbled, as if a volcano were gettir ready for an eruption, or an earthquake were coming on.

"I'm a most afeered to touch that surplice of his," said Mrs. Scrubbers; and the sub said "she was afraid, too." "I'm glad when it's well under the water," said Mrs. Scrubbers; and "I'm glad," said her sub, "too." And "I wouldn't wash it in the same tub with that blessed darling's if you gave me ever so." "No," said the sub; "not for ever so." And Sunday always found Mrs. Scrubbers and her sub at the Minster; and at anthem time their eyes were fixed on "their dear boy."

At last Harlestone was to have another red-letter day in its musical history—such as it had not had since the memorable day of the concert, to assist in which brought Gabriel's mother there. Dr. Hautboy's great anthem was to come off. Great things were expected of it. Country-folk came in in their carriages to hear it. Mrs. Scrubbers washed all the surplices clean for it; the bishop had a clean pair of sleeves put in for the occasion; every choir-boy's father and mother were there; the dean was tremulous; Dr. Hautboy was anxious, but calm and collected; Mrs. Hautboy was pale, and carried a salts-bottle (recently refilled); every choir-boy had had a raw egg that morning, and everyone wished Gabriel well through it, and was thankful that as regards a certain part he himself was out of it. The falsetto felt himself more weird than ever, and his wife was proud to think that they could not do without him. But, ah! there was one malevolent spirit there: it was Crawford Growles—as Mrs. Scrubbers said, "that 'ere wicked Bass"—Growles, who would go so low that day that Dr. Greaves would be hardly able to keep his hands off of him there and then, and that it would be worth the while of the College of Surgeons to have, not only his larynx, but also his lungs.

A deep pedal note! Was it a note? Yes! it stole on the ear, and made people vibrate internally in unison with itself. Then followed the faintest indication of the forthcoming musical thought, repeating itself in fugue-like fashion, and becoming more distinct as it reappeared in related keys, modulating first into the dominant, and then into the relative minor; then snatches of the principal melody caught



"'Gabriel, would you like to be a chorister?'"—*p.* 61.

the ear in the bass and tenor parts as they opened with the words, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" in the form of a duet. They ceased, and then followed an interlude of surpassing beauty on the organ. To an ordinary listener, perhaps, it seemed only a succession of chords; but the educated ear could discern a melody none the less real because difficult to describe, as it leaped from harmony to harmony, preparing the mind for the musical answer to the question embodied in the deep tones of bass and tenor. As with one consent, the congregation almost started from their seats. It was as if the cathedral's groined roof had opened, and heaven itself had opened above that, and from its pearly gate a seraph's voice had dropped—"Hope thou in God!" The note touched in those words had never been heard in Harlestone Minster before; it may be that they will never be again. It can be found in Fra Bonavia's book and in Dr. Hautboy's anthem; but the one to render it cannot, perhaps, be found again.

Fra Bonavia's offspring paid in that anthem his forefather's debt to the Harlestone Minster.

High up the people looked—but they should have looked down. The golden-haired little lad, with head thrown back, was the author of the thrilling note; from him it streamed to heaven, but so as that it seemed to come from heaven instead. "Hope thou in God!" and up and down that silver voice seemed to discourse all the mystery and power of Hope. It was as though the sunbeams had changed themselves into music notes—such light and gladsomeness came upon many a burdened heart. The good old bishop took hope where hope was to be had, and had a huge diocesan burden rolled off his soul. The dean's wicked son—the shame and disgrace of his father—given up, was hoped for again, not in himself, but in Another. A wife again took heart of grace for the husband of whom she despaired; and black demons by the score had to leave the Minster that day, cast out from hearts where Hope had not for a long time been.

But heaven's door never stands open long. The message given, the voice ceased—it closed—and with it I might say closed the life of the choir-boy of Harlestone Minster, for from that day he slowly but surely failed. His mother's disease was on him. He became weaker and weaker as the winter came on, and he never sang his part in that anthem again. The anthem, altered to suit a less gifted voice, has been often sung, but there were those who, having heard Gabriel sing in it, did not care to listen to another's voice.

On that day Growles—the wicked Bass—outdone in song, could have eaten the little choir-boy raw; he would not even have stopped to cut him up, much less to treat him to the attentions of a knife and fork. Growles would have opened his mouth, and if he could, would have swallowed up this dainty morsel whole. In his humiliation and his shame, he smote upon his breast, not as the publican asking for forgiveness—which for his evil feelings he might well have done—but angry even with that much of himself; asking it ironically "what good its contents were, when its lungs couldn't beat even those of a little lad;" and scoffing, actually scoffing at his larynx, declaring that he would forthwith put a codicil to his will, revoking his gift thereof to the College of Surgeons, and so depriving it of all posthumous fame.

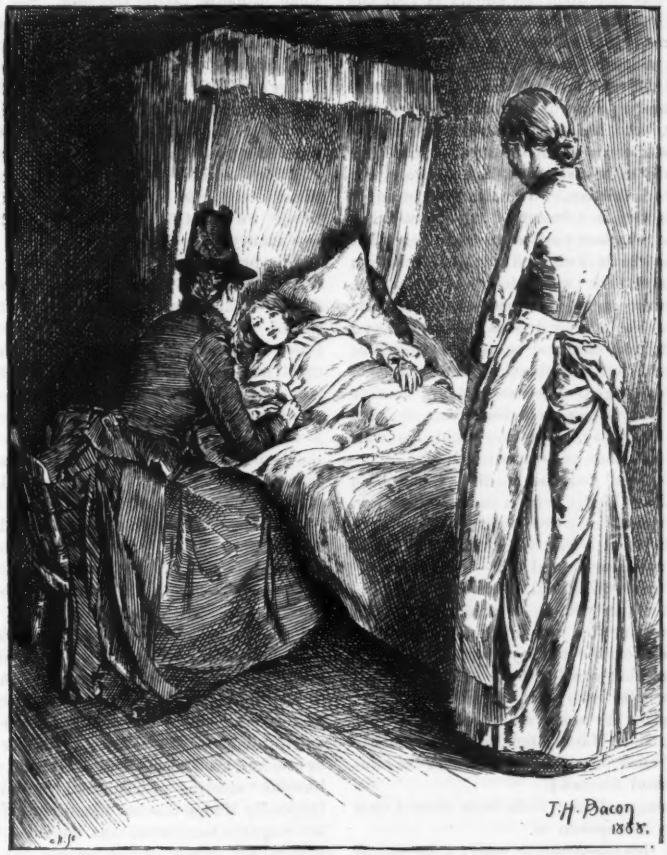
In such an undesirable frame of mind was the Bass, that his wife was afraid to take his arm as he went home. And when his pet dog and cat ran out to meet him as usual, seized with some demoniacal impulse he sang out his deepest note at them, so that the poor animals bolted instantaneously—the cat, I may say, with a hiss and a spit, "flying" up the nearest tree; and the poor dog, with its tail between its legs, making, with a dismal howl, for its kennel at the very top of its speed.

It is a happiness to me that I am not obliged to conclude this story without chronicling the repentance of Mr. Crawford Growles. As that envious and jealous man saw Gabriel day by day opposite him—thinner and thinner—his little surplice hanging on him like a peg, and heard the voice thinner and thinner too; and as when his own child lay nigh unto death he reheard that silvery note echoing in his heart, and he hoped—and in hope prayed—and the prayer was heard, and he believed he owed his boy's life to the inspiring hope of that little lad, he relented, and almost hated the deep bass of which he had been so proud. He was the last visitor the little choir-boy had, and almost the child's last words were a promise that when Mr. Growles was sad, if he knew it, and if there were ever so little a blue hole in the sky through which he could look, he would sing down to him from heaven—"Hope thou in God!" and so died

THE CHOIR-BOY OF HARLESTONE MINSTER.

"ALL FOR OTHERS."

BY S. A. ARNOLD, AUTHOR OF "UNDER FOOT," "JOHN HESKETH'S CHARGE," "HIS BY RIGHT," "HIS ONLY ENEMY," "MISJUDGED," ETC. ETC.



"The visitor held one of the girl's hands in her own."—*p.* 68.

CHAPTER I.—HER HOME LIFE.

"OH, Madge! how delightful to think that we have really had an invitation to a party, and from the Howards, the very people whom we all decided would be certain to cut us after papa's failure; for they get the name of being so proud and exclusive. After this we must not believe all we hear, and we must not allow ourselves to be the least bit cynical in our judgment of people."

Here the speaker, Lily Faulkner, stopped for want of breath. She was a bright, impulsive maiden of eighteen, with laughing blue eyes, and a fair, fresh face, whose rich bloom was like the soft, warm colour on a ripening peach. Lily was considered the beauty of the family. She had just rushed excitedly into the scantily furnished sitting-room, where her eldest sister was busily preparing tea. In those days of adversity the Faulkners kept no servant, all the help they could afford for the rough work of the house being that of a charwoman in the neighbourhood, who came in daily for a few hours. But even this was not managed without a strain upon the family resources, and many small economies that were never suspected by the world outside; for there was "little to earn, and many to keep," in that seven-roomed suburban villa. The family had drifted from affluence to poverty. Mr. Faulkner, the bankrupt merchant, had been stricken by a long, wasting sickness, and when at last he had struggled back to health, fretful, irritable, with limp, depressed spirits and a generally lowered tone of mental and physical

power, he had been glad to accept a city clerkship at a salary which in his better days he would have hesitated to offer to his manager. It was a bitter experience for the once prosperous man to have to make a new start in the world under such altered circumstances, but it was not upon his shoulders that the weight of the burden fell heaviest. His wife and daughters suffered with him, but in a greater degree. Mrs. Faulkner, a mild, easy-tempered woman, was constitutionally delicate, and the family misfortunes had tried her sorely. Thus it was that Madge, the eldest daughter, who had just entered her twenty-fourth year, was often called upon to fill her mother's place. The family consisted of six daughters and one son, a schoolboy of thirteen. With the exception of Madge, the girls were in a flutter of rapture at Lily's news. Papa had chanced to meet his old friend, Mr. Howard, and the result had been cards of invitation to a birthday party on the twenty-fourth of the month. Of course they were to go, and papa was to be their escort. But what about their dresses? Papa had said that they were to take care and be as well dressed as they possibly could, but he had not said a word as to how it was to be managed. The sisters looked blankly at each other. Difficulties were beginning to loom unpleasantly in their way. But they decided to wait until after tea, and then consult with Madge.

The meal was over, and the tea-things had been removed, but orderly Madge, with a large white apron fastened over her neat grey dress, was still busy with the crumb-brush, when a gay voice, in which there was a ring of impatience, cried out—

"Oh! Madge, do be quick and finish with that tiresome brush. How can you be so precise when you know we are waiting for you to come and advise about our dresses for the twenty-fourth? Anyone would think, dear, that you had been a housemaid all your life, you seem to take to it so naturally."

"A good thing for the house, and for all of us, that Madge does," joined in Master Dick, looking suddenly up from the French exercise over which he was wrinkling his broad forehead.

"Hold your tongue, Dick; little boys should only speak when they are spoken to."

Miss Lily gave this exasperating retort with one of the sweet smiles which generally accompanied the little stings of her tongue.

Dick's face burned; he was not tall for his age—he was thirteen, and resented the personal reflection on little boys.

At that moment he felt a soft hand laid gently on his, and heard the whisper of his name in a voice that seldom failed to influence him.

"Dick, if you get angry you will spoil your exercise. Remember the talk we had yesterday about fighting little battles with ourselves; this is one for you—do not disappoint me, dear."

Before he could answer a word Madge had turned away and joined her sisters at the other end of the room. He bit the point of his pencil, and, under his breath, muttered something about "Lil being so aggravating."

But the hot, passionate glow cooled down, and he bent over his exercise, with a dim consciousness that he had gained something. It might be one of the victories that Madge had meant when she talked about fighting battles with self.

Very eagerly was the discussion of the party resumed; Agnes, the second daughter, a tall, handsome brunette, taking the lead. She threw back her sleek, dark head, with its coronet of braided coils, and said, with a flash of her fine eyes—

"I wonder what Bertha Howard will wear? Her father's wealth gives her many advantages, but she has no pretensions to beauty."

"Never m'nd Bertha and her pretensions just now, Aggy," said saucy Lily; "we have to deal with questions which, at present, concern us far more. What are *we* to wear, and how are we to get the things we want, if papa cannot afford to give us any money?"

This practical view of the subject involved such dreadful possibilities of disappointment, that the sisters uttered an exclamation of dismay as they turned to Madge. It was odd how they had all fallen into the habit of looking up to her, and leaning upon her, as though she stood on higher ground, and was separated from them by maturer wisdom and experience. For herself, Madge had decided not to go to the party; but she liked to make others happy, so she responded to their appeal, and entered into the subject with interest, while she busied herself with a troublesome tear in a frock belonging to little Polly, her five-year-old sister, which she had set herself to mend. But she stifled a sigh. In her heart there was regret that the invitations had been given and accepted, for she had a misgiving about the affair; but the girls only laughed when she told them.

From her childhood Madge Faulkner had been regarded as the plain one of the family, and she had meekly accepted the verdict, without a shade of envy at the honours of beauty divided among her sisters. Yet to some there was an irresistible charm about quiet, unobtrusive Madge, with her small, slight figure, her kind smile, and large, soft eyes, that were like the "meeting of gentle lights without a name." Decidedly Madge was not like other girls—each one of her relatives recognised that, but none of them seemed able to tell where the difference lay. Her brother Dick paid her his characteristic tribute by declaring that "Madge was the best and jolliest sister in the world, and that he did not know how they could go on without her."

The sisters Agnes and Lily may have privately held the same opinion, but they did not express it in words, though they certainly realised what they owed to Madge with respect to the party. They had been filled with consternation when they discovered how little capital was available for the purchase of things needful. But Madge came to the rescue. She had a talent for dressmaking, and set herself to the task of remodelling and retrimming their last evening dresses, divesting her own of every yard of ribbon and lace that could be made to serve for the adornment of the others. The result was successful beyond her hopes, and her labour was amply rewarded by the delight that it gave.

Lily went into ecstasies at the final inspection of

the dresses. "They look lovely. Oh! Madge, you are an angel!"

"Nay," laughed Madge, "I never heard of an angel being a dressmaker."

At this moment they were joined by Agnes, whose delight was an echo of Lily's.

"What a clever darling you are, Madge! Mamma said you would manage them if anyone could."

"I am glad you are both pleased with my work."

"Pleased! How could we be anything else? You dear, kind old Madge to do so much for us, after all the cross things we have said to you."

Mr. Faulkner was not sorry that his eldest daughter had decided to decline the invitation to the Howards'. He had a very high respect for her character, but he thought her plain and unattractive; she was not his favourite. Their natures were so opposite, and there were so few points of sympathy between them. The gentle mother did not say a word. She was satisfied that Madge knew best, but the girls were much astonished that their sister could voluntarily forego such a pleasure.

"Are you quite sure, Madge?" Agnes said, wistfully regarding her—"quite sure that you would not like to go? Yours is such a dull life for a young person, and we might meet some of your old friends—for instance, the Dellingtons."

"The Dellingtons!" Madge repeated, with a little gasp of surprise, as she stooped to smooth out a fold of lace in one of the dresses. "Why do you mention them?"

"Because they were rather nice people, and used to notice you a good deal before the son went abroad; and I used to fancy that you and Percy——"

"Hush, Aggy, don't talk nonsense," Madge interrupted, hastily adding, "There is papa's ring."

She hurried to the door, keeping her face turned from her sister, who saw nothing of the changing colour, nor the swift look of pain that passed into the dark eyes.

The morning after the party was a miserable experience to some of the household. Mr. Faulkner went late to business, with one of the headaches which always made him unreasonably irritable. The truth was that the evening had proved a trial and a disappointment to the Faulkner party. They had been made to feel the difference in their social position—that they had no longer a place in that section of the upper world represented by the Howards. The girls had found themselves by turns patronised and politely overlooked by the fair Bertha and the circle of satellites who followed her lead. Lily went over it all to Madge, with a few hot, angry tears in her blue eyes, adding with a dismal little shrug—

"It seems to me that when one looks forward very much to anything in this world, one is sure to find out that it falls far short of expectation."

"True, dear; we find that it is all 'vanity and vexation of spirit.'"

"Yes, Madge, I understand now what that means," Agnes put in softly; "but last night everything seemed very different, when Lily and I left you at work in your old grey dress, mending the children's things, while you answered Dick's tiresome questions about his lessons, and patiently listened to Ada practising her scales; it seemed all so dreadfully dull and commonplace, that I wondered how you could sacrifice yourself in such a way, and I pitied you, dear—but that wretched party has taught me a lesson I shall never forget."

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As the chill autumn days crept on to winter, the girls' disappointment was almost forgotten under the pressure of more real trouble. There was sickness among the children, increased expenses without proportionate increase of income, and all the wearing care and worry that made the burdens of the day seem at times too heavy to be borne by weak shoulders.

Madge had bravely fought a battle on her own account, and had so far overcome the family prejudice as to gain consent for her to take out needlework from a city warehouse. In this, after a short time, she was assisted by Agnes and Lily. And about the same time the fourth daughter, Ada, had the good fortune to obtain a situation as pupil-teacher at a school in the neighbourhood. So it was that the approach of Christmas found their worldly circumstances improved. Madge was hopeful, and worked on with a lighter heart, for she welcomed the change as a rift of light among the clouds.

CHAPTER II.—FOR ONE OF "HIS LITTLE ONES."

"I HAVE not seen Hettie Moss here to-day. She is always punctual. Can any of you tell me why she is not in her place?"

This question was addressed by Madge Faulkner to her class when school was over on the afternoon of the Sunday before Christmas. One sharp-looking little girl held up her hand as a sign that she could furnish the desired information.

The young lady's kind eyes turned to her with an encouraging—

"Well, Jane, what is it?"

"Please, teacher, Hettie Moss is sick, and she do take on sadly 'cause there's only one more practice night for Christmas Eve."

Madge would have felt puzzled by the last words if they had not been explained by a kind-looking old gentleman, who had chanced to overhear what the child said.

"Ah! poor Hettie, I can well understand that. You know, Miss Faulkner, she is one of our carol-singers for the Walmer Christmas Festival—one of our best voices, I believe. The loss of the guinea will be sorely felt by her widowed mother; she is a good, hard-working woman, and I know they have been in great distress this winter, but I hope the poor child will be able to sing her part."

This account was certain to touch the heart of a listener like Madge Faulkner, particularly as she had a strong personal interest in the quiet lame girl. She made up her mind to pay Hettie a visit that evening, and kept her word. So the sick scholar was unexpectedly gladdened by the sight of her dear teacher, whom she loved because "she had such a tender way with her." That visit to the poor home was a revelation to Madge. The cleanly kept room was so bare of

comfort, and there was such pathetic experience of suffering shadowed out in the pinched, patient face of the over-worked mother, that Madge was filled with pity, and wondered what she could do to help the need that was greater than her own. Hettie was suffering from an attack of bronchitis, which made it almost certain that she would not be able to take her part in the singing on Christmas Eve. Madge saw the mother's lip quiver when it was mentioned. She understood why, when she learned that the Christmas money had been depended upon for the repayment of some arrears of rent.

"It cannot be helped, miss; God knows best what is best for us. My poor Hettie did not bring this sickness on herself."

The visitor held one of the girl's hands in her own, and said a few soothing words as they parted. She could scarcely keep the tears out of her eyes when Hettie looked up in her face and whispered hoarsely—"Oh! teacher, I am so glad you came here to-night. You've often told us that the Lord Jesus likes us to ask for what we want, so I'm going to ask Him to make me well enough to sing my carol, because I'm so sorry for mother, and I want to help her."

"If it be His will, my dear," Madge added softly: "don't forget to say that in your prayer."

The young lady returned home with her mind full of Hettie and her trouble. If she had been rich enough she would herself have given the guinea to the poor widow. As it was, she had nothing to bestow, except her sympathy and pity. But—"If I cannot give, perhaps I can *earn* it for her." This thought flashed upon her mind as she slowly put away her hat and ulster, then sat down to think.

In what way could she befriend Hettie and her mother?

A flush came into her face, and her heart beat quickly, as the answer suggested itself. She might sing in Hettie's place. She knew what carols had been selected. A few hours' practice would suffice. She had a good voice, which in better days had been well trained. Why should she not make an offer of her services in the event of Hettie's continued illness? Perhaps it would be an answer to the poor girl's prayer. So she decided to speak to the superintendent of the Sunday-school, who was also one of the managing committee in connection with the Walmer Christmas charities.

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It was all settled. Miss Faulkner was to sing instead of Hettie Moss. The committee felt it a relief to be so soon provided with an efficient substitute. The old superintendent entered warmly into the kindly motive which influenced the girl's teacher. At home Madge had to endure some cynical raillery from her father that was rather trying to bear, but with her usual sweetness of temper she joined in the laugh against herself, and gave her mother a reassuring smile in answer to her wistful protest.

"Why, Madge, my dear, this is really a strange undertaking for you, and to go on Christmas Eve. Just think—how can you possibly manage to spare the time?"

"Just working a little harder, mother mine," said Madge cheerfully.

Mrs. Faulkner shook her head.

"You are always working hard, child. You will wear yourself out."

The daughter bent lower over her mother's chair as she whispered—

"Don't fear for me, dear mother; I shall have strength given sufficient for my day. If you had seen poor Hettie and her mother as I saw them on Sunday night, I know you would feel as I do about them; and it will make me all the happier on Christmas Day if I can think that I have helped to bring a little more brightness even into one poor home."

Mrs. Faulkner was silent, but Madge felt a little tender pressure of her hand, and was satisfied that she was won to her cause.

The Walmer Festival had become quite an institution. It was given annually on Christmas Eve, to a certain number of old people among the respectable poor of the parish. The custom on the occasion was to have carols sung by a few selected voices from the Sunday-school in connection with the church attended by the Walmer family: each singer being presented with a guinea.

Christmas Eve at last. A clear, bright, frosty Christmas Eve: how it would always stand out in Madge Faulkner's memory!—the spacious lighted hall, gay with appropriate decorations of evergreen and holly, so pleasantly suggestive of the spirit of the season, with the long white tables spread for the feast, and lined with the humanity which gave the crowning interest to the whole.

Madge took her seat with the rest, in the place beside the harmonium, which had been reserved for the singers—the rest of the platform being filled by the clergymen and gentlemen who were expected to address the assembly. A few of the leading families of the neighbourhood had honoured the occasion by their presence. Squire Walmer, of course, was there, with his wife and daughter and two sons, who had recently returned from India with a friend who was now the guest of the Walmers.

Some attention was directed towards the singers as they filed into their places. And a few well-bred glances lingered upon one small, slender figure, perhaps surprised to find such perfection of taste in conjunction with such simplicity. A closely fitting dress made of some soft clinging stuff, whose colour was like the plumage of a dove. A narrow frill of lace round the throat, fastened with a knot of ribbon, which gave just the required touch of colour.

The carol-singing was most effective, and scored a decided success for all engaged in it. If there had been any doubt in the minds of those concerned as to the efficiency of Hettie's substitute, it was happily dispelled when the first clear notes of the full, pure voice rang through the hall. It was just before the close of the last carol that Madge chanced to lift her shy eyes, and found herself an object of fixed attention to a gentleman on the opposite side of the platform. One swift, startled glance showed her a bronzed, bearded face, surely unknown to her, yet how

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strangely familiar! For a moment there was confusion of thought. Six years had rolled away from her life, and she was again in her father's drawing-room, on a memorable summer night, hearing someone say "Good-bye" to her.

She sat like one in a dream, scarcely conscious that the festivities of the evening had come to an end, though she saw the hall being rapidly cleared, and heard around her the stir and bustle of dispersing crowds. Suddenly there was a light touch upon her arm, and the sound of her name.

"Miss Faulkner, pardon me if I am making a mistake; but no—I feel sure that I am right—you are Madge."

"Percy—Mr. Dellington."

For a moment their eyes met, then the shy, flushed face was hastily averted from the stranger's eager gaze; but their mutual recognition was complete. Both were agitated by the meeting, and it took some minutes to recover their self-possession.

"Miss Faulkner, you must allow me to introduce you to my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Walmer; they have heard me talk of you."

Madge was embarrassed, and would have drawn back, but Percy would have his way. He esteemed Madge so highly that he thought anyone would be glad to know her. It was in vain that she timidly tried to explain in a few hurried words the change in her own and her father's worldly position.

"What does that signify, Madge? Your father is a gentleman and you are a lady; no worldly reverses can alter that."

Then he bent his head, and added something in a lower tone, that brought a glow to the soft cheek.

Oh! cherished dream of a young heart, how it woke to new life in the joy of his presence, and the knowledge that he had come back, loyal and true as he was handsome and brave: her girlhood's hero, whom the world could not spoil!

When Mr. Walmer heard the story of Percy Dellington's friend, Miss Faulkner, singing in the carol as substitute for a sick scholar, his benevolent interest was won at once. He showed his appreciation of the act and its motive by supplementing Hettie's guinea by a second one; and Mrs. Walmer thoughtfully added a well-stocked basket of Christmas dainties for the invalid. To Hettie the wonderful visitation of prosperity and Christmas plenty seemed like a direct answer to her prayer.

How little did Madge anticipate what was to follow that Christmas Eve!—how it would influence her own life, and the lives of those whom she had loved and served so faithfully. Such a rich harvest to be reaped from the sowing of one little seed of kindness! All the increased toil and sacrifice of rest were to be paid back to her a hundredfold in the dawn of the happier time. Percy Dellington was true to his species, and, like the rest of lovers, was impatient until he had taken the initiative in securing his treasure. He had loved Madge Faulkner before he went to India, though there had been no engagement between them. Since then, he had been made rich by the death of an uncle, who had left him a large fortune and estate, which he was now free to offer with himself to the sweet English girl who had been the one love of his life.

It was not long before a lucrative appointment was procured for Mr. Faulkner, thanks to the united exertions in his behalf of Percy and Mr. Walmer. The father was very much astonished that this unexpected improvement in his fortunes should have come to him through his eldest daughter.

Master Dick went into raptures, and made a football of his best cap in his enthusiasm at the family prosperity, declaring that "sister Madge was like a fairy princess who did good to everybody all round," and giving further vent to his feelings by a prolonged "Hurrah! no more stitching late at nights for our Princess Madge!"

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Percy Dellington and Madge Faulkner were married before the next Christmas Eve came round. The happy husband announced his intention of making that night the anniversary of a special festival to be always honoured in his home. He is a kind benefactor to Hettie Moss and her mother, for he says that he owes the girl a debt of gratitude for being sick on that particular Christmas Eve, from which he dates the dawn of his greatest earthly happiness.

And Madge in her happy wifehood is blessed as she deserves to be. She has carried into her richer home all the qualities that sweetened the time of adversity. Whatever her earthly station, she will be always true to the Gospel of self-sacrifice, and the Divine Christian charity "that seeketh not its own." So she lives her beautiful life of love and duty. And we know that she is blessed in blessing the lives of others.



HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.

HOW sweet the glad home-gatherings
When Christmas Day is drawing near!
How joyous is the hour that brings
Those parted often through the year
Back to the nest they hold so dear!

The boys from school, the sons who went
To win their way in Life's swift race,
The daughters who have gone, intent
On honest work, where'er the place,
Are clasped once more in fond embrace.

One picture such as this I see:
A daughter home from foreign lands,
The children rushing up in glee,
While lovingly the mother stands,
Fond welcome in her outstretched hands.

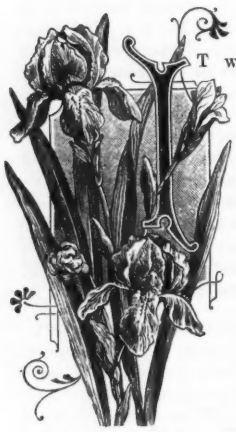
One picture more: a dear sweet face
That each will miss on Christmas Day!
She cannot fill the accustomed place,
Though in all hearts she'll ever stay:
For God has taken her away.

But grief is not what Christmas brings!
Welcome the joyous Christmastide,
With wealth of glad home-gatherings
Of dear ones met from far and wide!
All hail! all hail! sweet Christmastide!

GEORGE WEATHERLY.

A CHRISTMAS DREAM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST," ETC.



IT was rather lonely, waiting for Grandpapa. The scanty daylight of the short December day had faded long ago, and as her nurse had gone out shopping, and the other servants had forgotten to bring in the lamps, the little child who was sitting so quietly in the firelight began to grow very tired of having nothing to do. She had curled herself up in the big arm-chair, and the little face which was turned towards the glowing, crackling fire had already lengthened into a succession of weary yawns, for it was *such* a long afternoon!

It was very stupid, living in Paris, thought Doris, disconsolately. She remembered last winter, when she and Grandpapa had been living in London—what a number of little friends she had had then, who were always coming in to share her nursery tea. Or if it happened that she was left by herself, why, then there was the great house in which to play all sorts of games. But here she had no friends, and no house either, for she was living on what people called "a flat," which meant a long passage with big rooms on both sides, and where there were no wide staircases to scamper up and down. And now she had found out that the poor little French boys and girls did not have any Christmas presents at all! That seemed a most dreadful thing to Doris. It was no use for Grandpapa to point out that she should have hers all the same, and that they would have theirs a week later, upon New Year's Day. That was not at all the same thing.

Partly thinking about this sad difference in her new life, and partly wondering how much longer she would be left alone, her blue eyes were just beginning to blink sleepily at the warm fire, when the door opened, and Adolphe came in with a big bright lamp in his hand.

Doris was secretly somewhat afraid of Adolphe, who was a tall young footman, with a very round head, and a rather alarming way of jerking up his shoulders; but now she was so glad to have someone to talk to, that she scrambled out of the big chair, and ran up to him.

"Oh, Adolphe," she began, and then stopped short, for a lady had followed the servant into the room, and now stood smiling at her. Adolphe said

something quickly, and the lady answered him, and then he went away and shut the door, and the newcomer stooped and gave Doris a kiss.

"Shall you mind if I stay here with you for a little, dear?" she asked; "I want to see Grandpapa, and I hear he is coming in soon. Are you Doris? Ah! I thought so. Now, won't you come and sit on my lap, and let us have a nice little talk?"

"French talk?" said Doris doubtfully. "Please, I'd rather not. We have only been here a little while, an' I can't talk French talk yet."

"You queer child!" said the visitor, and she laughed as she spoke; "you don't imagine I am French, do you? I am Lady Renton. Did you ever hear that name?"

"No," said Doris, but she came slowly nearer to her questioner's chair, and left off twisting her fingers together, which was a trick she had when shy.

"That's better," said her new friend, holding out her hand to draw her closer still. "Now I can see what you look like. Turn round to the light. So!"

Doris did as she was bid, and the lamplight fell full upon the child. She was a pretty little thing, with big, grave-looking eyes, and a mass of tawny curling hair, but there was something about her—a pitiful, unchildlike droop of the pretty, soft lips, a certain unmothered look in the careless setting of the rich velvet frock—which brought the impulsive tears to the kindly eyes which were watching her.

"You poor little darling!" she said, and Doris found herself suddenly nestled in her arms. "What do you do with yourself all day? Do you ever laugh? Isn't it dull?"

Lady Renton had passed from a large Irish household, full of loud-voiced, boisterous brothers and sisters, to become mistress of a house where a rapid succession of small sons bade fair to rival them in noise, and she could not understand the soft-toned, grave-eyed child who was now confronting her.

"Dull? what is that?" asked the little girl. "Oh, I do plenty of things, but hide-and-seek is the best game when you are all by yourself, I think."

"Is it?" said her ladyship, puzzled in her turn. "How do you play it?"

"Why, with the sunshine, of course," said Doris, thinking how funny it was that grown-up people never could understand. "You go into all the rooms, one after the other, and at last you find a scrap of sunshine. Sometimes it is on a patch of the carpet, and sometimes it is in the butler's pantry, hiding in the glasses or the silver spoons; and sometimes you find it on the top of a picture, on the yellow rim part, you know, just where you wouldn't expect it. Oh, it is such fun!" Flushed and laughing, she raised her eyes, from which the seriousness had vanished. "It is such fun!" she repeated.

Lady Renton gave her head a comical little shake. "You will make me envious if you talk like that," she said ruefully. "Why, I ruin myself in buying fresh games for my boys, and yet they are always getting tired of them. But I suppose Frank's child would be naturally imaginative."

Doris sat and pondered. It is always difficult for children to recognise their friends under different names, and although she still retained some vague remembrance of her dead father, it took her some seconds to recall his name.

"Frank was my father, wasn't he?" she asked at last. "Did you know him?"

"Of course I did. When we were all little children like you, we used to be great friends, Frank, and Daisy, and I. We used to run about the fields together."

"Who was Daisy?" asked the child quickly.

Lady Renton stared in answer, and then she turned rather red. "Oh, she—she was a little girl I knew," she said hastily; and Doris had the uncomfortable feeling that she ought not to have asked the question.

When Lady Renton began talking about the coming Christmas, Doris felt at her ease again, and chatted happily on about the presents she would give to everybody, and the presents they would give to her; how she would have Christmas cards from England; and how Adolphe had promised her to bring in some snow, so that she might make a snow man in her nursery. And, lastly, how she was going out in the carriage with grandpapa, to buy a collar for her dear little dog Jack.

Lady Renton listened and sympathised, and advised upon the important question of the collar, and then she waited a full minute before she asked her if there were no other reasons for which she looked forward to the Christmastide. The child glanced up at her curiously. It was not so much the words as the grave, tender way in which they were spoken, that attracted her attention.

"No; nothing more," she said slowly.

"Are you quite sure, dear?"

"Quite sure."

"Do you know, Doris," Lady Renton continued quietly, "I have a little lad named Terence, who is just your age—you are about six, aren't you?—and when we have been talking about the presents he is to buy for his brothers, and all the secrets we have between us, he says:—'Now let us talk about the *religion* part, mammy dear!'"

With a sudden movement Doris freed herself from the encircling arms, and, sitting upright, fixed her bright eyes upon the speaker. Evidently she had not understood.

"Don't you know what I mean, dear?" went on the gentle voice.

A troubled expression came into the child's face, and her lips trembled. What *was* it that Lady Renton wanted her to say? To little Doris D'Eyncourt "religion" meant the hasty prayers night and morning, which were as often as not omitted altogether, and a dreary two hours' service on Sunday mornings, when she was being constantly jerked on and off a high seat, and receiving emphatic injunctions to "sit up and behave." To grandpapa she thought—but she was not quite sure of this—that "religion" meant dusting the pretty china cups and bowls with which the rooms were filled, and of which he was so proud, for that was what he generally did on Sundays. But it could not be this that her kind friend meant.

"Oh! the holly in the church," said the soft voice at last; but she spoke slowly, for she could not be quite sure even yet. And then—seeing in the other's

face a look which was very loving but strange to the child, because neither grandpapa nor nurse ever looked at her in quite such a way—she lifted her warm arms and clung about her neck. "Tell me all you tell to Terence," she whispered.

A long pause followed. The fire had settled into a dull red glow, and the cosy, luxurious room was half hidden in deep shadow. Only dimly could be traced the outline of the rare old china with which Sir Eustace D'Eyncourt had crowded his brackets, and the beautiful pictures were merely shadowy frames.



"Trotted soberly between the two footmen."—*p.* 75.

All the colour and light of the quiet room seemed to have concentrated themselves upon the woman and child who were sitting so silently in the circle thrown by the lamplight; and the sweet white flowers which were blossoming on a table hard by were no stiller nor more beautiful than Doris' upturned face. And then, in the intense silence, which was broken only by the soft breathing of the listening child, Lady Renton began speaking.

Very simply and very plainly she told her the story of the Christ-Child, the most beautiful story that ever was lived, hoped for, or dreamed. How the kind, wise Father Who was in heaven, Who had made the world so lovely, decking it with flowers that rivalled the colours of His own jewel-studded city, and burnishing even the beetle's wing in the perfection of His care; how He had sent His only Son, the dear Lord Jesus, in the guise of a helpless baby. How sweet and holy and beautiful He had been, and yet how thoroughly a tiny infant, Who cried and stretched His dimpled hands for food, and Who laughed for joy as other babies laugh when the sunbeams gilded the straw which formed His cradle, or His girl-mother clasped Him in her arms.

Then, with her pretty Irish voice still hushed and serious, and still choosing the simple, easy language in which she talked to her own wee sons at home, Lady Renton went on to speak of the shepherds to whom the angels carried the wonderful tidings—how this dear Baby, whom nobody knew and hardly anybody cared for, was the great King of Heaven, the Prince of Peace, and the gift He brought to this earth was *Peace and Goodwill*.

So this was what was meant by Christmas Day! Little Doris lay motionless, with flushed cheeks and parted lips. While listening to the gentle words a strange, undefined feeling of having heard it all before came over the child. Gradually it came back to her. It was her father who used to talk to her like that. She could not recall him able, as Lady Renton had said, "to run about the fields," but she could recollect quite well being lifted up to sit upon the bed, and fondle the thin, grave face which was lying back

so wearily upon the white pillows. And it was there she had heard about the cradle in the stable, and of the Holy Child who had lain in it, and Who was born upon Christmas morning. Was it possible that every Sunday in the church, when Doris had been chiefly busied in keeping herself awake, they had been talking about the same things as that dear father whom it was daily becoming more difficult to remember? How much she wished she had listened more attentively!

There was no time for further questioning, for at that moment the room door was opened again, and Sir Eustace came in, holding a small wooden box with the greatest possible care. He was a handsome old man, with a tall, thin figure and a colourless face, and he greeted Lady Renton as if he were honestly glad to see her.

"Have you been here long? Is Bert with you, and the children?" he asked her presently.

"Bert is attached to the Embassy here. Didn't you hear of the appointment?" she said in answer. "And, of course, I have all my lads with me. Doris must come and make friends with them."

"Doris will be delighted, I am sure," he answered. "Look, dear heart, what Grandpapa has been buying. —You will let us undo this box, won't you, Lady Renton? China always weighs upon our minds until it is unpacked."

"Oh, suppose it should be cracked!" cried Doris, fearfully.

With a great deal of care the box was unfastened, and a tiny bowl was taken out, while Sir Eustace talked learnedly of its age and value, and when Lady Renton laughingly declared her ignorance of such matters, turned eagerly to his grandchild for sympathy. Doris' admiration of the rich colours was quite equal to his own, and the old gentleman was so pleased that he told her she might stay where she was instead of going off to the nursery.

"She is her father over again, isn't she?" he asked, fondly stroking the tawny head.

"Very much in her way of speaking, but not an atom in face," was the decided answer. "She reminds me of someone, certainly, but not of Frank."

"Of whom, then?"

"She reminds me of your daughter. She is exactly as I remember her at the same age."

There was a long pause, while the grasp upon Doris' shoulder became painful in its intensity.

"You will oblige me by never mentioning that name," said Sir Eustace at last. "I have no daughter."

The cold, measured tones were too much for little Doris. Frightened, like all children, at a strange ring in a familiar voice, she gave a piteous cry, and clung to him with both her tiny hands.

"Don't talk like that!" she sobbed. "It frightens Dorrie."

The old man stooped to take her in his arms, but he made no effort to check her tears. His pale cheeks were flushed, and his dim old eyes were sparkling.

"I love this child as I love nothing else on earth," he said, still speaking very quietly, though his voice trembled a little; "but I would rather my darling died in my arms now than that she lived to grow up and defy me as *she* did."

Pushing back the tumbled hair, he kissed the soft, tear-stained cheek which was resting upon his shoulder, and then carried her gently from the room.

"Go to the nursery, my dear one," he said tenderly, as he put her down in the corridor; "and don't come back to Grandpapa. Good-night."

CHAPTER II.

HER little terrier, Jack, was waiting for her just outside the drawing-room door, and as it suddenly occurred to Doris that he had not had his lessons that day, she instantly began to give them him. As Jack was an idle dog, and much preferred the play of running races with his mistress to the work of learning to walk upon his hind legs, the lesson took up all Doris' attention, and by the time she reached the nursery she had forgotten her troubles.

"I haven't had any tea, and neither has Jack. I expect we shall starve to death very soon, like the Babes in the Wood," she announced as she entered the nursery. "An' oh, please, nursie dear, do show me what you have bought."

Of course it was a much greater honour to unpack Grandpapa's parcels in the drawing-room, but she had to be so dreadfully careful not to jerk the string, or in any way to risk hurting the precious contents, that Doris was not at all sure she did not prefer the more unwieldy bundles which were handed her in the nursery. Here, if the stiff knots would not yield to the impatient little fingers, she might tear open the paper and get at the inside any way she liked best; and though, of course, it was grander to be called upon to admire the tones of a certain priceless bit of blue, it was not such fun, after all, as the gaudy picture-book, or the sticky slice of gingerbread which was sure to be found somewhere amongst nurse's purchases.

To-night it was a brightly coloured stick of cream candy, and after she had had her tea, and been made ready for bed, Doris curled herself up in her little red dressing-gown, and sat blissfully sucking her sweetmeat in front of a blazing fire. There were open fireplaces in all the rooms, for Sir Eustace had abolished the shut stoves he had found there when first taking possession of the Parisian flat.

"Nurse," said Doris suddenly, "you are quite old, aren't you?" The maid laughed. She was a pleasant-looking woman of thirty, and had been with the child from her birth, every fresh proof she gave of injudiciousness or stupidity—and Mary's best friends could not exonerate her from either—being condoned by her master for the sake of her indisputable devotion to her young charge.

"What have you got in your head now, missie?" she asked.

"Well, you are old enough to remember my father, aren't you?"

"Deary me, I should think so! Why, you remember him yourself, missie. That don't prove I'm old."

"So I do," said Doris thoughtfully; "I forgot that," and she went on with her candy. Presently she looked up again. "Then, why don't I remember Daisy too?"

"Because you were only a baby of a few months when Miss Daisy went away," returned Mary, with a prolonged stare of amazement. "But, there! Miss Doris dear, don't go thinking about it, there's a dear child. The master won't even have her name mentioned."

"I don't want to mention it," said Doris; "'cause I don't know what that means. I want to know where she's gone to."

Mary drew in her lips and shook her head. "That's what nobody knows," she said mysteriously. "When your aunt married Mr. Brown——"

"My aunt?" echoed Doris, with widely opened eyes. "Was Miss Daisy my aunt?"

"Of course she was," said Mary testily. "Who should she be, I should like to know? Mr. Brown was her music-master, and when she ran away and married him, your Grandpa said we were never to speak of her again."

Doris looked at her with reproachful eyes.

"Why didn't you say that at first?" she demanded; "and then I wouldn't have listened to you. Of course, you shouldn't talk about her if Grandpapa told you not. He didn't tell me, so I shall talk about her as much as I like."

"Oh, but, my dearie, you mustn't. You must promise me never to say a word about it!" cried Mary in very real alarm. "The master would be dreadfully angry with me, Miss Doris; unless you hold your tongue I will never tell you another thing as long as you live."

"Very well," said Doris serenely. "I don't want to talk about her. But I wish she hadn't gone: she might have helped me teach Jack. That dog is quite a dunce."

Mary carried her off to bed with many repeated injunctions not to forget her promise, and then she went back to the day nursery, where she spent the evening in grumbling at herself for having been so foolish. "But when she looks up in that pretty way I can't gainsay her. I do hope she will forget all about it," she thought ruefully.

Had she but known, she need not so have distressed herself, for little Doris was far too excited about the wonderful Christmas story to which she had been listening earlier in the evening to have any thought to spare for minor interests. She would have paid no heed to her Grandfather's words about the mysterious Daisy but that his strange manner had frightened her, and so had impressed it upon her memory, and having now satisfied her curiosity as to what it meant, the matter passed out of her mind. Not so Lady Renton's story. All that night her usually quiet sleep was broken by eerie little snatches of delighted laughter, and once she woke the faithful woman who was sleeping near her by sitting up in bed and exclaiming, "He is coming to Doris—He is coming on Christmas morning." The happy thoughts which had brightened her rest were still with her throughout the next day, and being a dreamy, imaginative child, the idea of the coming Christ gradually took so intense a hold upon her that she thought of nothing else. For He was coming: she was sure of that. Much as she had pondered over all she had been told—and to no sage of old were they more fully "glad tidings" than they were to little Doris D'Eyncourt—it had not been made clear to her baby understanding that the Holy Birth had taken place once and for always, and that our yearly festivals were only held in commemoration. She believed fully that on that Christmas Day to which another week would now bring her, the infant Lord would be again born in our midst, and she suffered acutely from those vague and undefined fears which make a positive martyrdom of the lives of some sensitive and nervous children. He was going to be born while the big pale star was still shining in the clear grey skies; so much she knew for a surety. Why, that must mean very, very early in the morning, for the stars had all gone away before Doris opened her sleepy blue eyes. Suppose He should come, and all the house should be asleep and not know it! That was what was troubling her. Once, she knew, He had been cradled in a manger, but she did not think that there were such things in Paris: she had never seen one.

She was far too shy to speak of her trouble, but one day it occurred to her to wonder who else it was who lived in this big house, for a cradle might have been prepared in one of the upper rooms. So she went to find her grandfather, and asked him who lived above and below them.

"There are only shops down-stairs, darling," he answered. "Don't you remember them? And on the flat just above us lives a banker, a Monsieur Rouvier. Above him again there are some young musicians, who make an abominable noise just when I want to have a quiet afternoon nap."

"But aren't there some more flats at the top of the music-ers?" persisted the child. "Who lives in them?"

"Oh, nobody one knows—only common people," said the old aristocrat. "What do you want to know for? I can tell you something much more interesting than that. See here, pet," and he took a thick envelope out of his pocket.

It was addressed to "*Miss D'Eyncourt*," and Doris gave a cry of delight.

"A letter! A letter all to my own self? Oh, Grandpapa, dear Grandpapa, do read it to me! I can't. I can only read story-book writing."

"And you think it is a great pity everyone does not write like print? I quite agree with you," said Sir Eustace.

He put on his gold-rimmed glasses and slowly unfolded the letter, while Doris gave a delighted laugh of anticipation.

"Do begin quick!" she urged.

This was the letter--

"DEAR DORIS,—Mamma says you are coming to see us. Will you come to-morrow and have tea in our new nursery? and will you bring Jack? We want to see him very much. Please give Jack our love.

"We remain, your friends,

"BRIAN, PATRICK, HERBERT, TERENCE, ROGER, AND GEORGE RENTON."

"Humph! Seems to me that this letter was really meant for your dog," commented the reader; but Doris was charmed.

"One—three—five—*six* little boys!" she announced gleefully, drawing a rosy forefinger slowly along the list of names. "Terence is going to be my fa'v'ite, G.andpapa."

"Is he, my pet? Why?"

But Doris only shook her head, and ran away.

The next day was Christmas Eve, and the little girl spent the morning in tying up and directing, in what she had called "story-book writing," the quaint collection of gifts she was going to make upon the following day. She had chosen them all herself, and, in true child-like fashion, had accredited her friends with the possession of her own tastes. Thus Adolphe had a box of chocolate, and the surly old cook a tricoloured flag; and now she was divided in opinion as to whether it would be best to present her grandfather with a flaming print of the French army or a wax-candle which had been moulded into the shape of a Cupid.

"I think I'll give him the picture, and then I can take that pretty candle to Terence Renton," she said at last, when she had duly explained the matter to Mary, and, as the latter invariably agreed with her, it was so arranged.

"Now, don't you think you had better dress me at once, so I am quite sure to be in time!" she said persuasively, the moment her early dinner had been despatched; and though Mary assured her that there were still two hours before they could possibly start, she finally allowed herself to be coaxed into getting her ready.

The short drive seemed long to impatient Doris, who chatted incessantly to Jack about the unknown delights of having a romp with her six new little friends, but when the carriage drew up at the door her courage suddenly failed her. She gave a backward, despairing glance at Mary, and then trotted soberly between the two solemn footmen who were taking her to the nursery.

"How funny they look! White at both ends, and red in the middle," she said to herself, gravely scanning their well-floured heads, white silk stockings, and scarlet liveries. "I shall ask Grandpapa to let our Adolphe dress like that."

In spite of her appreciation of their grandeur, she felt considerably relieved when an ever-increasing hubbub warned her that they must be approaching the children's part of the house, and when one of the men threw open a door and, in a very loud voice, announced "*Miss D'Eyncourt*," Doris gave a little cry of delight.

Clustering round an old rocking-horse which stood in the centre of the room, clinging to the stirrups, to the rockers, to its back, were six boys of all ages and sizes. Two were in sailors' clothes, a couple more were in tunics, and two others were in white frocks, and they were all shouting and laughing at the top of their voices. They were making such a noise that they did not even hear the solemn young footman, and he had to go right into the room and catch hold of one of the sailor-boys before he could make him listen.

"Masther Brian, will ye 'ould yer noise now?" he said. "Shure an' it's meself as 'as brought a young leddy to see ye, an' ye won't even spake to her at all, at all!"

"I did not see her, Kelly," said the boy, "and now I can't get off because I'm holding Georgie. You take Georgie, and then I'll get off."

Kelly picked one of the white-frocked children off the horse, and gave him three big tosses in the air before he put him down on the floor and went away, and though Doris often saw him after that, and though he always looked dreadfully stiff and solemn, and not a bit as if he ever played with little boys, she never felt afraid of him again.

Meanwhile Brian had come up to her, with his face rather red, and he shook hands in an up-and-down way, as if he were still working the rocking-horse.

"How do you do? I didn't see you before. Is that your dog? He *is* a jolly one!" he said all in a breath; and then the others came crowding up to her too.

"Can he beg? Oh, do make him beg," said one.

"'Tand him on his head," lisped Georgie.

"Let 's play he is Toby, and we'll be Punch and Judy," said somebody else; but instead of sharing in their fun, Doris turned and clung to Brian's arm, hiding her eyes upon his rough sleeve.

"Oh, please," she said piteously, "we don't want to be silly, Jack and me. But he is rather a shy dog, and I don't think he would like to play at being Toby."

Brian stooped, and rather awkwardly gave her a reassuring kiss. He was a kind little lad, and though he could not in the least have explained what he meant, he felt that whatever Jack might be, Doris herself was decidedly shy at the sight of so many new faces. What was to be done? Nurse was busy in the inner nursery; mamma—his universal refuge—had been obliged to go out.

"Look here," he said suddenly, "I tell you what: you shall come and see my white mice."

With all the authority of his ten years, he ordered his brothers to the other end of the room, and proceeded to show his pets.

"I tell you what," he said again, confidentially: "when you are feeling—I mean when Jack isn't shy any more, we 'll have Georgie over here with us. He is such a cuddlesome little chap."

Doris agreed, for evidently her protector had an especial weakness for his baby brother, and the white mice having proved a wonderful cure for shyness, she managed to whisper, "Have Terence too."

"All right," said Brian promptly; "but he is not a funny boy at all.—Georgie and Terry, this little girl wants you."

Terence proved a great disappointment, for he was a round-faced boy, who was the only one of the six who disliked strangers. After staring gravely at Doris for fully five minutes, he went back to his former p'ace, and as, the entire time she was in the little Rentons' nursery he could not find a single word to say to her, Doris was obliged to agree with Brian that his brother was "not at all a funny boy."

But the afternoon passed very happily, for all that, and Doris returned home in a great state of glee.

"Terence is a nice little boy when you haven't seen

him," she said to Mary, when, as usual, they exchanged confidences at bed-time; "but the mouse-boy is the best. He is going to keep my candle for ever and ever."

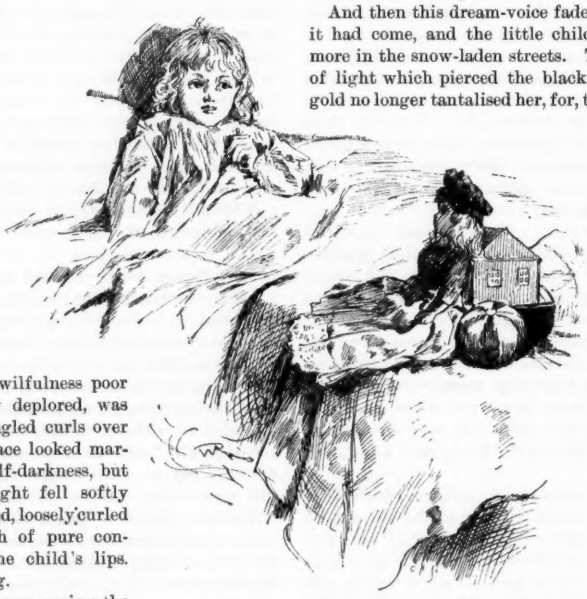
CHAPTER III.

IT was Christmas morning, and the first grey glimmer of the coming dawn was creeping slowly over the sleeping city. On the outspread wings of the night it came silently stealing, softening with its loving charity all those signs of sorrow and wickedness which the night had blotted out, and which the bright day would even more cruelly bring into full relief. The grim, bloodless faces of those poor souls whose only shelter had been the wintry streets looked quieted and more human in the grey, gentle light; and the beautiful marble angels, which here and there broke the sad monotony of the city graveyards, caught the first rosy gleam of the morning upon their folded hands and meekly bowed heads, until the tender mysterious radiance seemed to warm them into some semblance of life, and transform them into patient spirits watching over their dead.

As yet, all was still. No chime of Christmas bells had broken the absolute calm of the clear crisp air: of the stir and bustle of a few hours hence there was as yet no sign. Presently, the grey light, growing purer and more silvery as the blackness slowly withered and slunk away under its magic touch, crept through the uncurtained window of a richly furnished bedroom, and fell upon the motionless form of little Doris D'Eyncourt.

The little child was sleeping, with her dimpled arms, bared to the elbow, flung above her head, and the tawny hair, whose wilfulness poor Mary so constantly deplored, was tossed in rough, tangled curls over the pillow. The face looked marble-white in the half-darkness, but as the incoming light fell softly upon the pink-palmed, loosely curled hands, a little sigh of pure contentment parted the child's lips. Doris was dreaming.

She dreamed she was pacing the cold, snow-laden streets, a miserable and footsore child. All around her was darkness, the ground was slippery, and unknown dangers beset her on every side. Only the Star in the East—that great yellow star of which Lady Renton had spoken—was shining down from the black skies above in one long, beautiful stream of golden light, which reached from earth to heaven. Somehow the knowledge came to her—though through no human speech or human agency—that if she could but once grasp that bar of light all her troubles would be ended, and the darkness and the dangers which were encompassing her would be changed into light and beauty. Straining her eyes, she could catch glimpses of the shadowy forms of men, women, and children, who, like herself, were groping their way; and, frightened and weary, the little child burst into tears.



"They were Christmas presents."—*p.* 77.

Then a wonderful thing happened. Doris felt herself lifted up in two strong arms, while a sweet, low voice, which was not one she knew, but still which seemed strangely familiar, began hushing her tenderly.

"Don't cry, my darling. Don't cry, dear little girl," it said. "Do you find the world so hard a place, my child?"

"It is so dark!" sobbed the baby voice in answer. "I want to have the light, and make the darkness go away."

"'Peace and Goodwill' will lighten the gloom, little Doris," said the voice gently. "Those are the words which first came into our midst with the Light of the World, and those are the means by which we lighten trouble now. Help those near you. Be sweet, and good, and kindly hearted. Seek others' happiness rather than your own."

And then this dream-voice faded away as swiftly as it had come, and the little child found herself once more in the snow-laden streets. The beautiful stream of light which pierced the blackness like a thread of gold no longer tantalised her, for, turning her attention to those about her, she began following the counsel of the unknown guide who had said, "*Help those near you.*"

Two children were quarrelling; Doris made peace between them, and, moving farther away, came to an old man who was limping painfully as he walked. She helped him for some distance, and was so absorbed in her task that she did not notice the marvellous transformation which was taking place. It was only when the old man thanked her gratefully—"God bless your kind little heart!" he said; "it brings sunshine wherever you go"—that Doris looked around her, and lo! the narrow thread of gold had changed into a wide flood of sunshine, which brightened and



"She knelt in reverent silence."—*p.* 79.

beautified wherever the little child had trod upon her errands of mercy.

It was at this moment that the grey dawn fell across the sleeping child, and that the pretty lips parted in that little sigh of happiness.

"Mother!" she said, dreamily recalling the soft, sweet voice; and the blue eyes opened slowly. In her waking hours her thoughts went lovingly back to that dear father who was the only parent she could even dimly remember, but in sleep the baby-spirit clung more closely to the Paradise from which she had wandered earthwards, and in dreamland the little child was no longer motherless.

Presently she awoke more fully, and lay blinking in drowsy bewilderment at a table which had been placed by her bed, and which was heaped high with toys and parcels of all shapes and sizes. That was funny, surely. That big doll with the gorgeous pink silk frock was certainly not there when she went to sleep. Was she asleep still, or were they——? Yes! Doris sat up and clasped her hands together in a rapture of delight. They were Christmas presents! It was Christmas Day at last!

She was just stretching out her hands to touch her treasures, when a sudden thought sent the warm blood flowing to her face. Scrambling out of bed, she ran to the window, from which on the previous night she had begged Mary to fasten back the heavy curtains, and anxiously lifted her eyes to the dawn-lighted skies. Far away to the east the silvery haze was tinged and warmed by the rosy glows of the promised sunlight, but Doris never heeded its splendour. The star, the morning star, was what she wanted, and when she found it, gleaming palely in its solitary grandeur, she gave a little breathless gasp of wonder.

"He is given to us; He is born," she whispered reverently, pressing her eager, awe-struck face closer against the window-pane, and unconsciously using the words of the herald angels; and then, stealing with bare noiseless feet over the thickly carpeted floor, she pulled open the bed-room door. In another moment it had swung-to behind her. Doris had gone in search of the infant Christ.

"I won't have that nasty toothache any more of nights!" Mary had said the evening before, without any inkling of the intended expedition. "I shall take this physic stuff the doctor gave me, and if it makes me sleep like a block of wood, so much the better."

So now she lay placidly sleeping, and heard nothing of Doris' movements.

Fortune seemed to favour the child, for when she came to the flat door which led on to the staircase, and which was generally bolted and barred, she found that through some carelessness of Adolphe's it had been left unfastened, and so yielded readily enough to the soft pressure of the little hand. She had only glanced into one or two of their own rooms, for their shutters were closed, and she was afraid to move about in the gloom. Besides, she felt sure that no one had prepared a cradle, or indeed thought anything about it, upon their flat, so it was not much use looking. She shivered violently with the cold when she first stepped out upon the staircase, for it seemed icy after their own well-warmed rooms, but she would not go back for fear of arousing someone and being kept from her search, and very soon she forgot all else in the absorbing excitement of the moment.

Clutching very tightly to the iron posts of the banisters, for she was too small to reach the hand-rail, Doris clambered slowly up the broad staircase until she came to a great oaken door which was very like

their own. This, she supposed, led to the rooms which were occupied by the French banker, Monsieur Rouvier, of whom her grandfather had spoken; and eying it rather doubtfully—for the high windows and great brass knobs did not look at all inviting—the child laid both her hands upon its broad expanse, and put all her baby strength into a mighty push. The door did not yield. Doris tried again and again, hurling the whole of her weight against the stubborn oak, and bruising both hands and feet in her endeavours to force an entrance. It was all of no use, and the tears were perilously near the blue eyes when she remembered that there were still a great many rooms over her head into which she had not looked. Climbing farther up the great white staircase, she came to another door, but this, to her exceeding joy, was wide open, and the child went fearlessly in.

"This must be the home of the music-ers," she said softly, her words scarcely breaking the silence of the bare, desolate room in which she was now standing. "I wonder if He has come here! Oh, I do wish I knew if He is here!"

A large violoncello was standing in the corner, and it now fell to the floor, emitting a hollow, sighing note, which went echoing mournfully around the startled child. It sounded like a long-drawn, sorrowful *No—o!* and Doris accepted it as an answer to her wistful question.

"Very well; but I think I had better just peep into the other rooms," she said resignedly, speaking to the instrument as if it could understand her, and then she trotted into the next room. Here was even greater disorder. A young man, still in full evening dress, had flung himself down upon the bed; some crumpled music was lying about the floor; some crimson roses were finishing their little day of life upon the dusty mantel-shelf. The face of the sleeper was turned from her, but presently he rolled over and opened his haggard-looking eyes. In another minute the young fellow's gaze had fallen upon the tiny white-robed figure which was framed by the great doorway, and with a sudden exclamation, which little Doris could not understand, he half raised himself upon his elbow.

"I declare to you, *mon cher*," he said, later in the day, to the comrade who shared his flat, and improving upon the story in true French fashion, "I declare that it was not a dream, and it was not imagination. I woke up suddenly, and a little angel was standing on the threshold! I saw her as plainly as I see you—all in white, with a cloud of soft yellow hair flying about her head and shoulders, and with her great blue eyes shining like the skies upon a summer's day. I called out to her—but one does not like a baby angel in one's bed-room!—and then she spread her silvery wings and flew away."

This meant that poor little Doris, frightened at his cry, had run back again in dismay to the outer room, and that ere the Frenchman had stumbled into the passage, she was out on the landing and up the next flight of the never-ending stairs.

Here there were three doors, for, as Sir Eustace had explained, the nearer one climbed to the top of the houses, the poorer were the people who lived there, and consequently the fewer rooms they possessed. Two were shut as firmly as Monsieur Rouvier's, and although the third was standing wide open, it only needed a glance for Doris to be quite sure the place was empty. Some loose cards, some dirty straw, and the remains of a couple of old boxes in the middle of the floor, was all there was to see there; and very slowly and sorrowfully Doris turned back again, and went up to the top storey. The little gravely set mouth was drooping pitifully with the continued disappointment, and now that the excitement was wearing off she began to feel the bitter cold. How poor and miserable everything looked up here! Surely the Saviour would not come to so wretched a home as this! The landing was a much darker place than had been any other upon the lower stairs, and standing there in the gloom, thoroughly chilled and sick at heart, the little child remembered her dream. She looked upward, vainly hoping to see the beautiful star through the little skylight, which was nearly clogged with snow; and then, as if she half thought to invoke its light by the words of her dream-guide, she said gently, "Help those near you."

Immediately in front of her was a battered door, one panel of which was broken and cracked, and through this hole little Doris could see the form of a woman lying in bed. Her face was very white, and the poor coverlet was drawn over shoulders that looked painfully sharp and thin; but what fascinated the child who was watching her so intently was the way in which she kept restlessly moving her head from side to side, and opening and shutting her dry lips.

"I am sure she wants something," decided the child. "I think she wants some water."

She gave a little sigh as she remembered that if she went to help this poor woman she would be delayed in her search.

"For of course He is not there, or she would not be like that," argued the little girl; and then feeling ashamed of her selfishness, she pushed open the rickety door.

"Please, may I help you——?" she was beginning timidly, but the words died away as her eyes wandered to the other end of the small room.

There, on his back, wrapped in an old blue cloak, and cradled on a pillow which had been placed upon the floor, lay A BABY! The dawn had fully come, and the first streaks of the sunlight were falling upon the hair which lay in even golden rings about his tender head. His eyes, which were blue as Doris' own, opened suddenly as the elder child ran towards him, and he lifted his tiny hands with a soft crow of delight.

Doris fell upon her knees beside him. All thought or fear of the sick woman had vanished, and the gleaming sunlight was not more brilliant than the happy radiance of her face.

"I have found Him! I have found Him! And it *was* through trying to help other people!" she cried exultantly; and then she stooped still lower, and took the tiny dimpled hands between her own soft palms. "Oh, baby! sweet baby!" she said, while his fingers clung feebly to her hold. "Are you the Christ-Child, baby? Have you come wandering through the dark night skies? Did the starlight teach you the way,

you darling? and was it the pretty pink of the dawn which made your fingers so rosy?"

In all the unconscious majesty of babyhood, which takes all homage as its due, the little fellow lay wrapped in his blue draperies, and continued smiling up at her with his still bluer eyes. He was nearly three months old, but little Doris did not know that, and thought that not only had his birth just taken place, but that it was God's own gift to the world at large.

A great awe crept over her presently as she knelt on in a reverent silence, until it struck her that the infant would be better rested if he were lying in her arms instead of upon the floor. Raising him with a great deal of care, she seated herself upon the pillow, and drew the cloak closely around them both. It was while she was sitting thus, that for the first time she remembered the woman, and glanced towards her. She was lying perfectly still, and her eyes were shut. Doris gave a little gasp of horror. She had had a little friend once who had died, and something in this white still face made her think of little Dick now. Was she going to die too?

Doris looked round the poverty-stricken room, at the broken door, at the bare walls, and for the first time a sense of loneliness came over her. She wanted nurse, she wanted Grandpapa, she wanted her cosy nursery, with its bright fire and pretty, familiar pictures. Two great tears gathered in her eyes, brimmed slowly over, and rolled down her cheeks.

"Dorrie will go home; Dorrie is f'ightened," she whimpered, using the baby talk into which she always fell when she was unhappy; and then she glanced downwards. "You shall go too; you can't stop here all alone," she said, after a perplexed pause, and then with some trouble she rose to her feet.

Her difficulties would have been greater, but that the increased warmth had hushed the baby to sleep, and he lay placidly enough in her arms. Outside the door, rough and harsh voices reached her from the other rooms; but though her heart beat quicker at the sound, she was afraid to hasten her steps for fear of dropping her precious burden. Oh, what a long journey it was down that great staircase! Often she stopped for breath, and every now and again she was forced to sit down and rest. She had had no idea that there had been so many steps or that she had passed so many doors. But at last, like every other journey, it came to an end, and she had reached their own flat.

The door stood wide open this time, and Adolphe was cleaning the brass name-plate, but though he broke into a brisk torrent of French, and shrugged his shoulders, and opened his black round eyes in astonishment, Doris went steadily by him without any answer at all. She was anxious to find her grandfather, and did not want to stop to explain to anybody else.

Sir Eustace was an active old man, and long before his usually sleepy little granddaughter had opened her eyes, he was busied with his books or his china. This morning proved no exception to the rule, and Doris found him in the drawing-room where she had listened to the wonderful story of the Christ-Child.

"Grandpapa dear," she began as she entered the room, and then stopped short in dismay, for, startled at her sudden appearance, a rose-bowl slipped from the old man's hands, and now lay in fragments upon the floor.

For the first and last time in his life Sir Eustace was heedless of his loss.

"Why, my darling, what are you doing? Are you ill?" he cried anxiously. "And what on earth have you got there?"

"It is Christmas Day," said Doris in answer, pushing back the folds of the cloak, and showing the baby head which was pressed against her shoulder. "Lady Renton said He would come. And He did come. And I went to find Him. And here He is."

Sir Eustace gazed at her open-mouthed in his speechless astonishment. The baby rosy face, with its soft aureole of golden hair; the little barefooted, white-robed child, herself but little more than a baby, but with her upturned face quivering with rapturous delight; the soft blue draperies swathing the younger child's body, and falling in careless folds to the ground—they all contributed to form a picture which appealed strongly to his beauty-loving soul.

"Yes, my darling, yes; but who is he?" he said at last.

There was a little pause, while Doris stooped and kissed the smooth brow.

"Don't you remember who comes upon Christmas morning?" she said at last. "It is the Lord. He is bringing us peace and goodwill!"

Two hours later, little Doris D'Eyncourt, warmed and clad, was nestling on the soft, thick rug in front of the nursery fire. In every room but this there seemed to be bustle and disturbance, for after she had told her grandfather about the poor sick woman upon the topmost storey, and had seen him go to her assistance with a couple of the maids, a most wonderful thing had happened. Sir Eustace had come hurrying down again; Adolphe was despatched for one doctor, the page François was sent for another; Mary was told to prepare the spare bed-room with all possible haste. Then Lady Renton was sent for, and then—strangest of all—the poor woman was carried down from that dismal cold room, and put to rest in one of their own comfortable beds.

Doris could not understand it at all. She was very glad, of course, for now they would know what she meant if she moaned and threw herself about; and, besides that, they would not want to take the baby away again. That sweet baby! Doris turned her eyes to glance happily at her own cot, which had been wheeled into the day-nursery, and which now held the little stranger; and then she looked back again at the fire, leaning her curly head languidly against the bars of the tall brass guard. Now that her task was over, she was feeling very tired, and far too sleepy to wonder much about the changes it had brought about.

Presently Lady Renton and Sir Eustace came into the nursery where the two children had been left alone, and went straight up to the cot. They were talking so earnestly that they did not seem to notice Doris, and she, on her part, was feeling far too drowsy



"What a long journey it was down that staircase!"—*p.* 79.

even to welcome her kind friend. She heard what they were saying, but their words did not hold much meaning for her, although they were clear enough.

"So this is Daisy's boy! The dear little fellow! And you say the porter tells you that she has been occupying that wretched room for the past month? If only you had known, I am sure you would have spared her this!"

"No." Doris hardly knew that it was Sir Eustace who was speaking, for his voice sounded so gentle and so tender. "I can't take any of the credit your own kind heart would give me. Had I known Daisy was in Paris, I should probably have gone back to England and left her to the path she chose. But coming on her like that, I forgot everything, except that she was ill and that I was her father."

"But she will live now. The doctor says she was dying from lack of nourishment, and that with proper care she ought to make a strong woman again. I wonder if her husband is dead?"

"Don't wonder anything," said Sir Eustace. "The finding of this little fellow, as Doris said, means peace and goodwill to this household, and I am not going to remember or wonder about anything else."

Then they stole away again as softly as they had come, and Doris gave a little sigh of supreme satisfaction, and stretched her tired limbs upon the soft, fleecy rug. She remembered those last few words, and they made her very happy.

The little child would grow older soon, and would learn to accept and understand the changes in her quiet life, but for the present her Christmas dream was unbroken.

She had gone in search of the Infant Christ, and peace and goodwill had followed on her quest. Who shall say she had not found Him? M. E. W.